

For any child, parent or carer, the outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19) may bring worries about their asthma and returning to school.

Here is some information, advice and guidance about helping your child back to school.



According to Asthma UK, every September there is a rise in the number of children who have asthma attacks. They suggest this could be due to children having colds, dust mite allergies and seasonal allergies; **be sure that your child is vaccinated for flu this autumn**. They also suggest that preventer routines could be disrupted over the summer holidays.

The UK Government now expects all children to return to school autumn term 2020 and this is to minimise the longer-term impact of the pandemic on children's education, wellbeing and their wider development.

Attendance expectations

Missing out on more time in the classroom risks pupils falling further behind and it is because of this that school attendance is mandatory (compulsory). From September the usual rules for school attendance apply inclusive of:

- Parents' duty to secure that their child attends regularly school where they are registered
- Schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- The availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities' code of conduct

Pupils shielding or self-isolating

The advice from UK Government on the need for some adults and children to shield or to self-isolate was paused on 1 August 2020, which comes as a result of greater understanding about coronavirus (COVID-19). This means pupils who were on the patient shielding list can now return to school.

Patients can only be removed from the shielding patient list by their GP or specialist, following consultation with the child and their family, and other clinicians where appropriate. All previously affected children should be able to return to school except where individual clinical advice not to do so has been provided.

Where a pupil is unable to attend school because they are complying with clinical or public health advice, they will have access to remote education. Such children will have a letter about this which can be shared with schools to help understand the most appropriate support and education for them.

Children with asthma returning to school

It is understandable that children with asthma, their parents or carers, may have concerns about returning to school at this time (COVID-19). The preparations below may help prepare children for returning to school and alleviate potential anxieties should they occur.

Preparing asthmatic children for school:

- To calm inflammation in airways and to reduce the possibility of an asthma attack, ensure children take their preventer medicine daily, as prescribed.
- Ensure all medicines are in date and that they have not expired.
- Arrange for children to have an [asthma review](#).
- Make sure your child's written [asthma action plan](#) is up to date and that it is shared with your child's school.
- Ask your doctor's surgery for an extra [reliever inhaler](#) (usually blue) and give it to your child's school.
- Fill in an [Asthma School Card](#) and give this to the school so they know about up-to-date medicines your child takes and when they need to take these.
- Ensure your school informs you when an inhaler has been used up and needs replacement, or, if your child is old enough, ask that they do this.

By carrying out these preparations and involving your child they are more likely to develop good habits for managing their asthma, keeping it under control and preventing attacks.

NB: If you believe your child has significant risk factors and/or you have concerns about your child returning to school, then discuss these with your child's school; perhaps understanding the measures they have in place to reduce the risk of transmission of the virus (COVID-19) would put your mind at rest.

For information and advice see:

[Information for parents and carers about going back to schools, nurseries and colleges in the autumn term – Department for Education](#)

[Avoid a back to school asthma attack - Asthma UK](#)

[More tips on how to prepare your asthmatic child for school – Asthma UK](#)

[Flu vaccination in schools 2020 to 2021 - NHS](#)

Remember, we can all make a vital contribution to help prevent the spread of coronavirus by carrying out the Hands, Face and Space measures. To watch a video about these, see the video here:

[Hands Space Face](#)

