

#AskAboutAsthma

How asthma affects children & young people's quality of life and how we can address it

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The fight for breath

1_{IN} 5 PEOPLE

people in the UK will
experience a lung
condition

Poor lung health is the

**3_{RD} BIGGEST
KILLER**

in the UK

Every

10 SECONDS

someone has an
asthma attack

Every

5 MINUTES

someone dies from
a lung condition

Children with asthma

- Asthma is one of the most common childhood health conditions, affecting 1 in 11 children
- 1 million children in the UK are receiving treatment for asthma.
- Children are less likely than adults to receive good basic asthma care – less than 25% of children with asthma have a personalised asthma action plan (PAAP).
- Outcomes are worse for children and young people living in deprived areas, following the same trend for adults



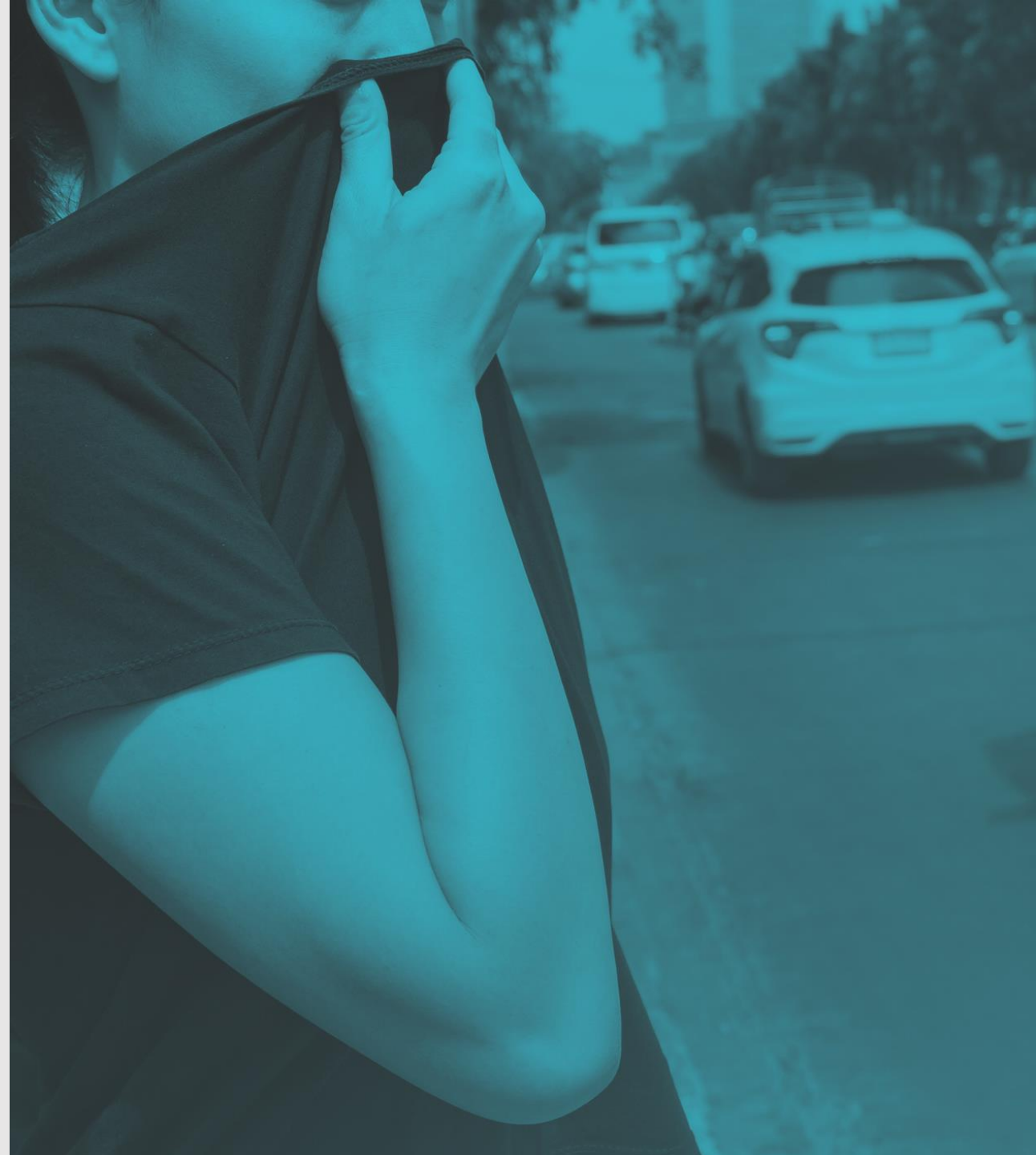
Childhood asthma: condition prevalence

- A SABINA Jr study published in 2023 found that asthma prevalence rates in 1-17-year-olds had decreased by 76% between 2008 and 2018.
- Despite this, the exacerbation rate for the 1-17-year-olds has increased by 36% in the same period.
- Every year since 2019/20 the most deprived 10% accounted for 1 in 5 while the least deprived accounted for 1 in 20 of all childhood emergency hospital admissions
- The most deprived 10% were 2.5x more likely to be admitted to hospital with an asthma exacerbation compared to the least deprived 10% of children under 5



The impact of air pollution

- Air pollution is the greatest environmental threat to human health
- It causes new lung conditions like lung cancer and worsens existing ones like asthma and (COPD)
- It can stunt the growth of children's lungs and contribute to up to 43,000 early deaths a year in the UK
- The two worst pollutants for health are fine particulate matter (PM2.5) which comes from a range of sources including wood burning and road transport and nitrogen dioxide (NO2) which predominantly comes from the exhaust of polluting vehicles



Drivers of poor outcomes

The UK has one of the highest prevalence rates for childhood asthma in Europe and among the highest emergency admission rates for childhood asthma.

This is often driven by:

- Long-term under-prioritisation and lack of investment in respiratory care
- Underestimating asthma's severity and potential lethality
- Low levels of good basic asthma care for children and young people
- 12% of children admitted to hospital because of their asthma have been using an empty inhaler



Drivers of poor outcomes

Children from minority ethnic backgrounds have worse health outcomes

Half of all children and young people admitted to hospital are minority and ethnic backgrounds, compared with 28% white children

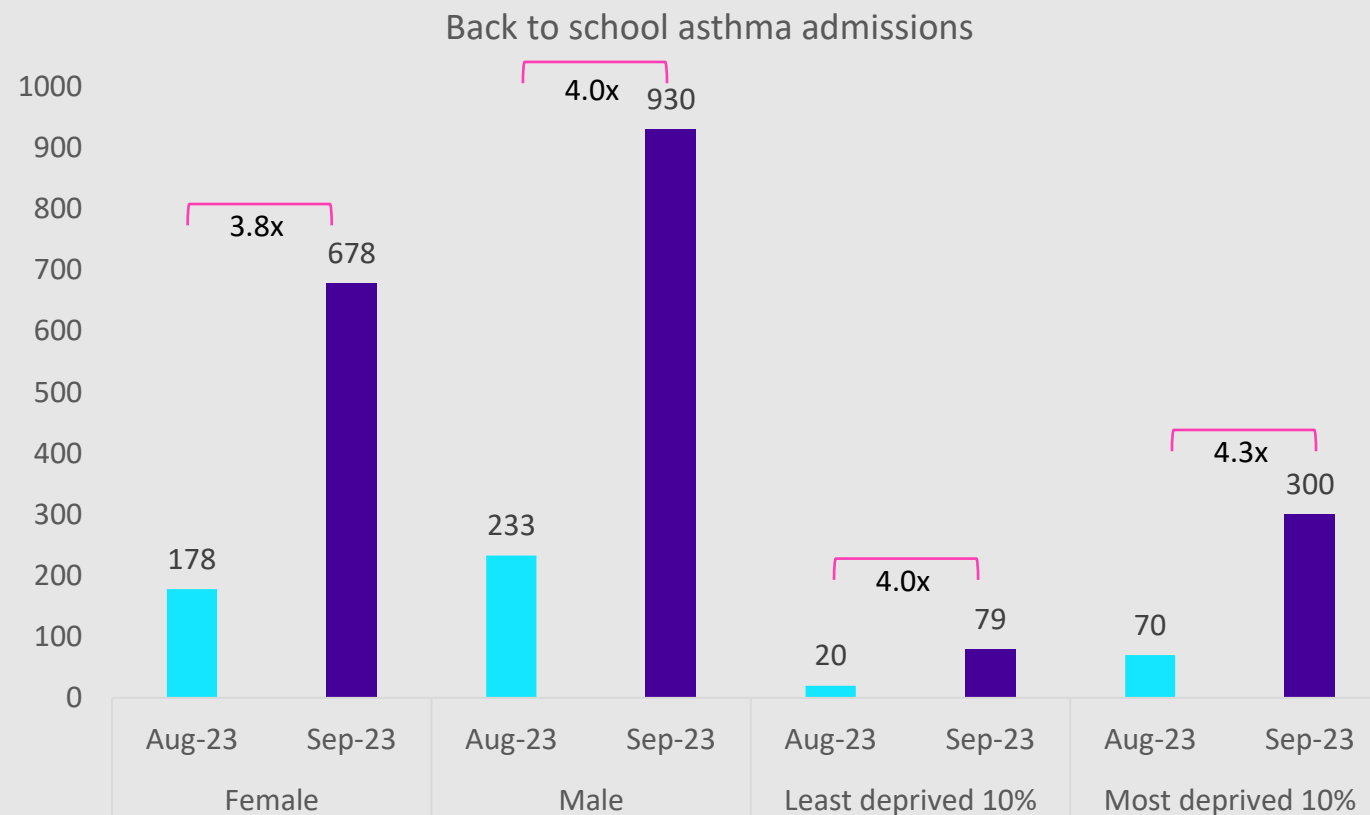
People from black ethnic minority groups are 54% less likely to receive follow-up care after a hospital admission. Follow-up appointments are vital for assessing uncontrolled asthma and reducing potential harm.

london.gov.uk/increaseinasthmaadmissions
University of Birmingham. 2024. 82% of asthma hospitalisations not getting recommended two-day follow-up. Accessed [here](#) (March 2024)



Back to School

- Seasonal spikes see more children and young people admitted to hospital because of their asthma.
- The ‘back to school’ effect can be frightening and potentially life-threatening for children with asthma.
- Hospitalisation caused by a life-threatening asthma attack increases by 430% for children from the most deprived areas when returning to school



Kate and Sorcha

Kate and Sorcha

- Sorcha was diagnosed with asthma when she was five.
- Kate, Sorcha's mum, said Sorcha's diagnosis was prompted by her symptoms: "She would have a tight chest, a severe cough."
- Sorcha's condition was uncontrolled, and she was admitted to the hospital multiple times because of her asthma.



“ During the winter, it is very hard to control Sorcha’s asthma as the cold weather, colds and viruses can trigger her symptoms.

Kate, Sorcha’s mum

Kate and Sorcha

- Kate, Sorcha's mum, explained Sorcha's care: "We have great support from our asthma nurse who does regular reviews and has made sure we have an asthma action plan for her."
- Sorcha started figure skating when she was eight, progressing quickly and taking part in competitions.
- Figure skating can sometimes trigger Sorcha's asthma. She takes her preventer inhaler every day as prescribed to reduce her risk and takes her blue reliever inhaler before going on the ice.



What are we doing?

Health Advice

- Asthma + Lung UK produces child-focused asthma resources.
- These help parents and carers understand their child's condition and treatment.
- Resources like our '[My Asthma Calendar and Stickers](#)' help children understand their condition and keep track of their treatment in a fun way.

I will see my doctor or asthma nurse **at least** once a year (but more if I need to)

Date my asthma plan was updated:

Date of my next asthma review:

Doctor/asthma nurse contact details:

Parents and carers – get the most from your child's action plan

- Take a photo and keep it on your mobile (and your child's mobile if they have one)
- Stick a copy on your fridge door
- Share your child's action plan with their school

Learn more about what to do during an asthma attack asthmaandlung.org.uk/child-asthma-attacks

ASTHMA QUESTIONS?

Parents and carers ask our respiratory nurse specialists

Call **0300 222 5800**

WhatsApp **07999 377 775**

(Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm over 16 only)



ASTHMA+
LUNG UK

CHILD ASTHMA ACTION PLAN

Fill this in with your GP or nurse

Name and date:

What are we doing?

Research and innovation

- Our research funding portfolio includes work to understand and treat childhood lung disease, including asthma
- We are partners on research projects aiming to improve children's health, including evaluating the impact of the London ULEZ on children and monitoring near-fatal asthma attacks



What are we doing?

Research and innovation

Asthma + Lung UK is a key partner in respiratory insight work, including:

CARE - A clinical trial to test the use of ICS-formoterol as a reliever in children aged 4-11 years across a range of asthma severities

SPIROMAC – A clinical trial to test whether using spirometry in children can help guide more personalised treatment (with the aim of being able to safely reduce the amount of steroids children need to take)

BREATHE4T - Breathing Retraining for Asthma Trial of Home Exercises for Teenagers.



What are we doing?

Policy

- The new government has committed to a 10 Year Plan for Health so we will seek to influence this to focus on improving lung health
- Our upcoming first year of government report will outline the changes we need to see across prevention, diagnosis and treatment, benefitting children and young people with asthma.
- Supporting the forthcoming return of Tobacco and Vapes Bill which, when passed, will ensure the next generation can never legally purchase tobacco products.



What are we doing?

Policy

- A new asthma guideline is being co-developed by NICE, SIGN and BTS.
- Asthma + Lung UK's consultation response championed patients' needs, including those of children and young people.
- Our submission called for:
 - An increased, embedded role for FeNO in the children's diagnostic pathway
 - Inclusion of children's validated questionnaires, including the Children's Asthma Control Test
 - Clear guidance to inform clinicians about inhaler spacers
 - Clear guidance and signposting to inform clinicians about children's asthma action plans and resources specifically for childhood asthma

NICE National Institute for
Health and Care Excellence

 Healthcare
Improvement
Scotland | **SIGN**
Makes sense
of evidence

 British
Thoracic
Society

What are we doing?

Clean air

- We campaign for cleaner air for all, with a focus on towns and cities where children live, play and go to school.
- Our national campaign will call on the government to commit to a new Clean Air Act to reduce levels of air pollution
- Our local campaigning networks bring together parents, schools and children alongside others to call for cleaner air in their areas.
- Our [accessible online resources](#) empower people to better understand their condition and learn about the impact of air pollution.
- We're working with Defra to revitalise the government's air pollution information, so that it's more accessible to the general public.



What are we doing?

Clean air

- Today we are 'taking a stand' at playgrounds in London, Birmingham and Manchester to highlight the impact toxic air has on children's lungs
- New data shows that there are over 43,000 playparks in Britain and 99% exceed World Health Organization (WHO) limits on air pollution
- We're calling on the new government to introduce bold new targets for air pollution to protect future generations
- We've launched a petition to allow our supporters to join us in saying 'It's time to end toxic air'



What are we doing?

Clean air

- Jordan lives in Lewisham with her three children, Valentina, Matthias and Yanay. Jordan has severe asthma, and Matthias has asthma.
- Jordan told us “The air pollution here is so bad that I’ve ended up in A&E nearly a hundred times.”
- As Jordan and her family live in a flat without a garden, they often go to the park for fresh air and to play.
- But the park is close to main roads and air pollution around the park exceeds World Health Organisation levels, putting Jordan and her children at risk.



What are we doing?

Clean air

- Our Clean Air Champions scheme is a national programme, offering schools free air pollution monitors, as well as a range of resources linked to the curriculum.
- Over the 24-25 academic year we've had 164 schools get on board, 48 of which are in London across 26 boroughs.
- Schools can sign up on the [Asthma + Lung UK website](#)



The logo for Asthma+ Lung UK features a stylized cross shape composed of four overlapping squares. The top and bottom squares are a vibrant magenta, while the left and right squares are a deep, textured blue. The text 'ASTHMA+' is positioned on the top square, and 'LUNG UK' is on the right square, both in a clean, white, sans-serif font.

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THANK YOU

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