

Cough/breathlessness pathway for children ≥ 1 year old

For use by healthcare professionals only



Clinical Assessment/Management tool for Children

Primary and Community Care Settings

CLINICAL FINDINGS	GREEN LOW RISK	AMBER MEDIUM RISK	RED HIGH RISK
Respiratory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None of amber or red symptoms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tachypnoea Mild / Moderate respiratory distress Audible stridor on exertion/distress only 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Severe tachypnoea Severe respiratory distress Audible stridor at rest or grunting Unable to complete sentences
Circulation and Hydration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None of amber or red symptoms Able to tolerate some fluids Passing urine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cold hands and feet in absence of fever Reduced urine output 50-75% usual intake Not tolerating fluids / repeated vomiting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Markedly reduced fluid intake: < 50% of normal intake
Colour and Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Normal colour of skin, lips and tongue Content/smiles Stays awake/awakens quickly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pale Decreased activity/lethargic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blue or grey colour Unable to rouse or if roused does not stay awake Confused
Other symptoms, and signs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None of amber or red symptoms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fever for ≥ 5 days Risk factors for severe disease – known asthma, chronic lung disease, bronchiectasis/CF, immunodeficiency Additional parental/carer support required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sudden onset and parental concern about inhaled foreign body
	GREEN ACTION	AMBER ACTION	RED ACTION
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide cough/breathlessness >1 year safety netting advice Confirm they are comfortable with the decisions/ advice given. Always consider safeguarding issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety net and consider planning review or advise about what to do it worsens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer immediately to emergency care – consider whether 999 transfer or parent/taxi most appropriate based on clinical acuity etc.