

# Identify and reduce common asthma triggers

A suggestion for implementing the strategy 'Create inclusive learning environments' from the Guide: [Asthma and learning](#)

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- Includes:**
- Common asthma triggers
  - Asthma and allergies
  - Allergen-free environment
  - Useful resources

Inclusive Education

From

Guide: [Asthma and learning](#)

Strategy: [Create inclusive learning environments](#)

Suggestion: [Identify and reduce common asthma triggers](#)

Date




10 June 2026

Link

[inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/asthma-and-learning/identify-and-reduce-common-asthma-triggers](https://inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/asthma-and-learning/identify-and-reduce-common-asthma-triggers)

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## Common asthma triggers

Common asthma triggers	Reducing asthma triggers
<p><b>Allergens</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pollen – from trees, plants, and grasses, including freshly cut grass</li><li>• Animal dander from pets with fur or hair</li><li>• Dust mites – in dust, carpeting, soft toys, pillows, and upholstery</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mop and damp dust often.</li><li>• Reduce classroom clutter and store materials in covered containers to make cleaning easier.</li><li>• Use wood, tile, or vinyl floor coverings instead of carpet. If a classroom has carpet, vacuum it frequently when students are out of the classroom.</li><li>• Keep pets with fur or hair out of the classroom.</li><li>• Use low-odour products for cleaning.</li><li>• Minimise eating in the classroom to reduce pests. Food stored in the classroom should be in sealed containers. Clean spills immediately.</li><li>• Do not spray pesticides during school terms.</li><li>• Do not use products with strong odors, such as perfumes and air fresheners.</li><li>• If possible, on days with high pollen counts, keep windows closed. Provide alternative indoor activities.</li><li>• Report unusual odours, mould or moisture problems straight away.</li></ul>
<p><b>Irritants</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Strong smells and sprays, such as perfumes, paints, cleaning solutions, talcum powder, and pesticides</li><li>• Air pollutants</li><li>• Cigarette and other tobacco smoke</li></ul>	
<p><b>Other triggers</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Upper respiratory infections – colds or flu</li><li>• Changes in weather, exposure to cold air</li><li>• Exercise – running or playing hard – especially in cold weather</li><li>• Strong emotional expressions – laughing or crying hard, stress, and anxiety</li></ul>	

Source:

Ministry of Education

[View full image \(411 KB\)](#)

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# Asthma and allergies

Allergens are a common cause of asthma.

Work in partnership with students, family, and whānu to identify potential asthma triggers in your learning environment.

The most common allergens that cause asthma are:

- ✓ dust mites
- ✓ dander from animals (skin, scales, and fur)
- ✓ rodent urine
- ✓ insect debris
- ✓ food dust
- ✓ pollens
- ✓ moulds.

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## Allergen-free environment



Source:

[Balestier Hill Primary](#)

<https://flic.kr/p/NU9mMg>

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## Useful resources



### Common asthma triggers

Read time: 15 min

Information on a range of asthma triggers and ways to reduce or avoid those.

Publisher: Asthma + Respiratory Foundation, NZ

[Visit website](#)



### Triggers in asthma

Read time: 19 min

Information on allergic and non-allergic asthma triggers and how to practically reduce and manage exposure to these in this downloadable booklet.

Publisher: Asthma + Respiratory Foundation, NZ

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