



ASTHMA POLICY

Approved by School Council:

Review:
October 2021

Purpose:

To effectively implement health management plans and to provide ongoing support to students diagnosed with asthma.

Definition:

Asthma is a long-term lung condition. People with asthma have sensitive airways in their lungs which react to triggers, causing a 'flare-up'. In a flare-up, the muscles around the airway squeeze tight, the airways swell and become narrow and there is more mucus. This makes it harder to breathe. An asthma flare-up can come on slowly (over hours, days or even weeks) or very quickly (over minutes). A sudden or severe asthma flare-up is sometimes called an asthma attack.

Symptoms:

Symptoms of asthma can vary over time and often vary from person to person. The most common asthma symptoms are: breathlessness, wheezing (a whistling noise from the chest), tight feeling in the chest, a persistent cough. Symptoms often occur at night, early in the morning or during/just after physical activity. If asthma is well controlled, a person should only have occasional asthma symptoms.

Triggers:

A trigger is something that sets off or starts asthma symptoms. Everyone with asthma has different triggers. For most people with asthma, triggers are only a problem when asthma is not well controlled with medication. Common asthma triggers include:

- exercise, colds/flu
- smoke (cigarette smoke, wood smoke from open fires, burn-offs or bushfires)
- weather changes such as thunderstorms and cold
- dry air, animals such as cats and dogs
- chemicals such as household cleaning products
- deodorants (including perfumes, after-shaves, hair spray and aerosol deodorant sprays)
- food chemicals/additives.

Implementation:

- Each student diagnosed with asthma will have a written *Asthma Care Plan* and a *Student Health Support Plan*
- First Aid staff are trained to assess and manage an asthma emergency
- Staff with a direct student wellbeing responsibility such as first aid staff attending camp have completed an accredited Emergency Asthma Management (EAM) course at least every three years
- Students will be supported to learn to take responsibility for the management of their own health needs in non-emergency situations where possible.

Strategies

This table describes the tools and steps that our school uses to manage students with asthma.

Strategy	Description
School Asthma Policy	A school-based policy describing our school's support for students with asthma.
Communication Plan	A plan developed by our school which provides information to all school staff, students and parents about asthma and the School's Asthma Policy.
Individual Asthma Action Plans (for each student diagnosed with asthma)	<p>Parents must provide our school with an Asthma Action Plan completed by the student's medical practitioner. The plan must outline the students known triggers and the emergency procedures to be taken in the event of an asthma flare-up or attack. The Asthma Action Plan should be completed/reviewed annually for each student with asthma and contain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the prescribed medication taken and when it is to be administered e.g.: - on a regular basis - as premedication to exercise - if the student is experiencing symptoms• emergency contact details• contact details of the student's medical/health practitioner• details about deteriorating asthma including: -signs to recognise worsening symptoms -what to do during an attack and -medication to be used.
Student Health Support Plan	An individual plan for each student diagnosed with asthma, developed in consultation with the student's parents. These plans include the Individual Asthma Action Plan.
Asthma Training for school staff	All school staff with a direct duty of care responsibility for students should be trained in being able to manage an asthma emergency appropriately. Training should be conducted at least every three years. This can be face-to-face or online.
Annual Asthma Briefing for all staff	<p>Our school will conduct an annual Asthma Briefing at the beginning of the school year on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the school's asthma management policy• causes, symptoms and treatment of asthma• the identities of students diagnosed with asthma and where their medication is located• the school's general first aid and emergency response procedures• the location of, and access to, reliever medication that has been provided by parents
Student Asthma Kit	Where a student is enrolled diagnosed with asthma, the student is required to bring their own prescribed reliever medication. This will be stored in their asthma kit, with a copy of their Asthma Action Plan and their spacer. The student's personal spacer should be washed monthly or as required. The school also has Ventolin on hand for emergencies.

Review Cycle:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.