



ASTHMA

POLICY

Policy No. 25

Amended: February 2012
Amended: February 2015
To be reviewed: 2018

"Aims to provide a solid foundation for academic excellence and spiritual growth towards authentic Christian Living."

Purpose

This document includes information on the implementation and operation of a model policy for the best practice management of asthma in Victorian schools. It is recommended that in situations where policy alterations are required, the Principal of the school seeks the advice of The Asthma Foundation of Victoria.

Statement

Asthma is a chronic health condition affecting approximately 10% of Australian children and teenagers¹. Asthma is one of the most common reasons for child admissions to hospital and missed days of school¹. Asthma exacerbations can commonly occur while attending schools, particularly in February and May¹.

In order to meet the duty of care obligations specified by the *School Policy and Advisory Guide (SPAG)*² and to ensure the health and wellbeing of students attending Kerang Christian College, the College recognises the importance of staff education and the implementation of an asthma policy. The College recognises the importance of involvement and engagement with parents and carers of students and the ability of students to self-manage their asthma where appropriate.

Key points within the *SPAG*², relevant to an asthma management policy, specify that schools must:

- Obtain a written asthma plan for all students diagnosed with asthma upon enrolment at the College and ensure they are updated at least annually
- Complete a Health Support Plan for students with an identified health care need
- Store medical information and medications appropriately
- Ensure that students feel safe and supported at school
- Provide and maintain at least two asthma emergency kits, with an extra kit required for every 300 students in a large school
- Ensure that key staff (e.g. School Nurses, First Aid Officers, P.E. and Sport Teachers) undertake Emergency Asthma Management (EAM) training and that all other staff with a duty of care for students attend a free asthma education session provided by The Asthma Foundation of Victoria

Scope

- To ensure the whole school community (principals, staff, volunteers, parents and carers and students) are aware of their obligations and best practice management of asthma in the school setting
- To provide the necessary information to effectively manage episodes of asthma within the school

Responsibilities

The Principal/ Senior Management will:

- Provide staff with a copy of the school's asthma management policy and ensure staff are aware of asthma management strategies upon employment at the school
- Provide asthma education and first aid training for staff as required
- Provide parents and carers with a copy of the school's asthma policy upon enrolment of their child
- Identify students with asthma during the enrolment process and provide parents and carers with a blank asthma plan to be completed and signed by the child's medical practitioner and returned to the school
- Ensure Health Support Plans are completed for students with asthma
- Where possible, ensure that all students with asthma have a current written asthma plan (must be updated at least annually)
- Ensure a School Camp and Excursion Medical Update Form is completed by parents/carers for off-site activities where possible
- Ensure the parents and carers of all students with asthma provide reliever medication and a spacer (and a face mask if required) at all times their child attends the school
- Implement an asthma first aid procedure consistent with current national recommendations and all staff are aware of the asthma first aid procedure
- Ensure adequate provision and maintenance of asthma emergency kits for the school and that each asthma emergency kit contains reliever medication, two spacer devices, instructions outlining the first aid procedure and a record form
- Ensure that reliever medications within the asthma emergency kits are replaced regularly and have not expired, and that spacers are replaced after each use
- Facilitate communication between management, staff, parents and carers and students regarding the school's asthma management policy and strategies
- Promptly communicate to parents and carers any concerns regarding asthma and students attending the school
- Identify and minimise, where possible, triggers of asthma symptoms for students
- Ensure that students with asthma are not discriminated against in any way
- Ensure that students with asthma can participate in all activities safely and to their fullest abilities

Staff will:

- Be aware of the school's asthma management policy
- Be aware of the asthma first aid procedure
- Be aware of students with asthma and where their medication and personal spacers are stored
- Participate in Health Support Plan completion as required
- Attend asthma education and training sessions when required
- Be aware of where to access written asthma plans, School Camp and Excursion Medical Update Forms, and asthma emergency kits
- Identify and minimise, where possible, triggers of asthma symptoms for students
- Ensure that students with asthma are not discriminated against in any way
- Ensure that students with asthma can participate in activities safely and to their fullest abilities
- Promptly communicate to the principal, parents and carers any concerns regarding asthma and students enrolled in the school

Parents and Carers will:

- Inform the school if their child has asthma upon enrolment
- Read the school's asthma management policy
- Participate and sign student Health Support Plans as required
- Provide a signed written asthma plan to the school, and ensure that it is updated at least yearly
- Provide a School Camp or Excursion Medical Update form as required
- Provide the school with their child's reliever medication along with a spacer (required for 'puffer' medication) for all times the child is attending the school, unless the child is carrying the medication and spacer for self-management purposes
- Ensure that if their child is self-managing their asthma correctly the child carries their reliever medication and spacer at all times
- Promptly communicate all medical and health information relevant to their child, to the principal and staff of the school
- Communicate any changes to their child's asthma or any concerns about the health of their child

Students will:

- Immediately inform staff if they experience asthma symptoms
- Inform staff if they have self-administered any asthma medication
- Carry asthma medication and a spacer with them at all times (if self-managing their asthma)

Asthma First Aid

Follow the written first aid instructions on the student's Asthma Action/Care Plan.

If no specific and signed instructions are available, the instructions are unclear, or the person does not have an Asthma Action/Care Plan, begin the first aid procedure immediately (as authorised by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development).

Call emergency assistance to attend (000) IF:

- the person's asthma symptoms are severe
- the person suddenly stops breathing
- the person's asthma symptoms continue to worsen
- there is no Asthma Action/Care Plan for the person
- blue/grey reliever medication is not available
- you are unsure what is causing the breathing difficulty

Recognising an asthma attack

Mild	Moderate	Severe
Talk in sentences	Shortened sentences	Few words per breath
Cough	Persistent cough	Persistent cough
Soft wheeze	Loud wheeze	Wheeze may be absent
Minor difficulty breathing	Difficulty breathing	Gasping for breath/distress
Tightness in chest		Pale, sweaty, blue lips
Young children may complain of a "sore tummy"		Muscle exertion

Asthma First Aid

1 Sit the person upright

- Be calm and reassuring
- Do not leave them alone



2 Give 4 puffs of blue reliever puffer medication

- Use a spacer if there is one
 - **Shake** puffer
 - Put **1 puff** into spacer
 - Take **4 breaths** from spacer
- Repeat** until **4 puffs** have been taken
- Remember: Shake, 1 puff, 4 breaths**



3 Wait 4 minutes

- If there is no improvement, give **4 more puffs** as above



4 If there is still no improvement call emergency assistance (DIAL 000) *

- Say 'ambulance' and that someone is having an asthma attack
- Keep giving **4 puffs** every **4 minutes** until emergency assistance arrives



*If calling Triple Zero (000) does not work on your mobile phone, try 112

Call emergency assistance immediately (DIAL 000)

- If the person is not breathing
- If the person's asthma suddenly becomes worse, or is not improving
- If the person is having an asthma attack and a puffer is not available
- If you are not sure if it's asthma

Blue reliever medication is unlikely to harm, even if the person does not have asthma



To find out more contact your local Asthma Foundation
1800 645 130 | asthmaaustralia.org.au

© Asthma Australia 2012 Supported by the Australian Government



Translating and
Interpreting Service
131 450

Asthma Emergency Kits

Asthma Emergency Kits should contain:

- Reliever medication
- X2 small volume spacer device
- Record form and Asthma First Aid instruction card

Please note that spacers and face masks are single-person use only³. It is essential to have at least two spacers (and two face masks if necessary) contained in each first aid kit and that spacers and face masks are replaced each time they are used.

Further Reading and Resources

Forms mentioned in this policy are available to download free of charge from the Resources section of The Asthma Foundation of Victoria website at www.asthma.org.au

Related Legislation

School Policy and Advisory Guide, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (2011), www.education.vic.gov.au/management/governance/spag/default.htm

Australian Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Infection in Healthcare (2010), National Health and Medical Research Council, www.nhmrc.gov.au/files/nhmrc/publications/attachments/cd33_infection_control_healthcare_0.pdf

Communication

These guidelines will be published in part or whole in the newsletter, and will be reinforced by College staff in correspondence with families as required. i.e. at the start of a new school year, in the lead up to camps and excursions, etc.

Responsibilities

The Principal has overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy.

Evaluation

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

¹ Australian Centre for Asthma Monitoring (2011), "Asthma in Australia: with a focus chapter on chronic obstructive pulmonary disease", Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Canberra 2011.

² School Policy and Advisory Guide, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (2011), available at [<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/governance/spag/default.htm>].

³ Control of Infection in Healthcare", Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, 2010.

Asthma care plan for education and care services



CONFIDENTIAL: Staff are trained in asthma first aid (see overleaf) and can provide routine asthma medication as authorised in this care plan by the treating doctor. Please advise staff in writing of any changes to this plan.

To be completed by the treating doctor and parent/guardian, for supervising staff and emergency medical personnel.

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Date of approval: July 2014
Approved by: CEO Asthma Australia
Date of review: July 2016

AA Care Plan for Ed-Care-Serv 0714
July 16, 2014 9:14 PM

Child's name

Date of birth

Managing an asthma attack

Staff are trained in asthma first aid (see overleaf). Please write down anything different this child might need if they have an asthma attack:

Daily asthma management

This child's usual asthma signs

- Cough
- Wheeze
- Difficulty breathing
- Other (please describe)

Frequency and severity

- Daily/most days
- Frequently (more than 5 x per year)
- Occasionally (less than 5 x per year)
- Other (please describe)

Known triggers for this child's asthma (eg exercise, colds/flu, smoke) — please detail:*

Does this child usually tell an adult if s/he is having trouble breathing? Yes No

Does this child need help to take asthma medication? Yes No

Does this child use a mask with a spacer? Yes No

*Does this child need a blue reliever puffer medication before exercise? Yes No

Medication plan

If this child needs asthma medication, please detail below and make sure the medication and spacer/mask are supplied to staff.

Name of medication and colour	Dose/number of puffs	Time required

Doctor

Name of doctor

Address

Phone

Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian

I have read, understood and agreed with this care plan and any attachments listed. I approve the release of this information to staff and emergency medical personnel. I will notify the staff in writing if there are any changes to these instructions. I understand staff will seek emergency medical help as needed and that I am responsible for payment of any emergency medical costs.

Signature

Date

Name

Emergency contact information

Contact name

Phone

Mobile

Email