



# ASTHMA POLICY

## **Rationale:**

Asthma affects many children and adults. Asthma attacks occur with the narrowing of airways making it difficult to breathe. Symptoms commonly include difficulty breathing, wheezy breathing, dry and irritating cough, tightness in the chest and difficulty speaking.

It is important for all staff members to be aware of asthma, its symptoms and triggers, and the management of asthma in a school environment.

## **Aim:**

- To manage asthma and asthma sufferers as effectively and efficiently as possible within the school environment.

## **Implementation:**

- Students and adults with mild asthma rarely require medication; however severe asthma sufferers may require daily or additional medication (particularly before and/or after exercise).

## **School's Responsibility:**

- Professional development will be provided for all staff on the nature, prevention, treatment of asthma attacks and in the administration of reliever puffers. Up to date information will also be displayed on the staffroom wall and in classrooms.
- Asthma plans are kept in our First Aid room and a copy of the plan is provided to the student's classroom teacher.
- Specialist teachers are given information about children with asthma in the Medical Alerts Folder.
- Information about children with asthma is placed in Replacement Teachers Folders.
- Students' asthma medication is stored and managed from our First Aid room and administered under supervision by a trained staff member in accordance with the first aid policy.
- Students' individual asthma medication will be carried by a member of staff during out-of-school activities including camps, sporting activities and excursions as part of the school First Aid kit.
- The school will provide a spacer and reliever puffer in an emergency.
- Spacer device and reliever puffer will be included in first aid kits and taken on excursions and camps. Clear written instructions on how to use these medications and devices will be included in each first aid kit, along with steps to be taken to treat severe asthma attacks.
- The delegated first aid staff member to check reliever puffer expiry dates. Parents/Guardians will be notified if reliever puffers need to be replaced.

- A nebuliser pump will not be used by the school staff unless a student's asthma management plan recommends the use of such a device, and only then if the plan includes and complies with the Victorian Government School's Reference Guide – Asthma Medication Delivery Devices.
- The school will use disposable spacers when required.
- Care must be provided immediately for any student who develops signs of an asthma attack.
- Children suffering symptoms of asthma attacks should be treated in accordance with their asthma plan.
- If no plan is available children are to be sat down, reassured and have a shaken reliever puffer administered using the 4 x 4 X 4 method (as recommended by the Asthma Foundation) delivered via a spacer if necessary. An ambulance must be called if there is no improvement after the second 4-minute wait period. Parents must be contacted whenever their child suffers an asthma attack.
- Grade 6 students who are chronic asthma sufferers and require asthma medication several times during the day may have their asthma medication in their classroom and will be monitored by the classroom teacher.
- Our school will register as an asthma friendly school – [www.asthmafriendlyschools.org.au](http://www.asthmafriendlyschools.org.au)

**Parents'/Guardians' Responsibility:**

- All students with asthma must have an up to date (annually) written asthma management plan consistent with Asthma Victoria's requirements completed by their local GP or paediatrician. Appropriate asthma plan proformas are available at [www.asthma.org.au](http://www.asthma.org.au)
- Ensure that their children have an adequate supply of appropriate asthma medication (including a spacer) with them at school at all times.
- Ensure that Asthma medication is replaced before the expiry date and new medication is provided to the school.
- Inform the school if their child is asthmatic and requires asthma medication.
- Inform the school of any changes to their child's asthmatic condition and/or changes to their asthma medical needs.
- Notify the school if their child no longer requires asthma medication and provide a written letter from their local GP.

**Evaluation:**

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