



ASTHMA

POLICY

Rationale:

It is important for Iramoo Primary School to appropriately support students diagnosed with asthma.

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 hard 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 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 and 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.

Aim:

- To explain to all parents/guardians, staff and students the processes and procedures in place to support students diagnosed with asthma.

Implementation:

- Students and adults with mild asthma rarely require medication; however moderate to 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 about the nature, prevention, treatment of asthma flare-ups/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 Casual 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.
- The school will use disposable spacers when required.
- A 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 will check reliever puffer expiry dates. Parents/guardians will be notified if reliever puffers need to be replaced.
- **Epidemic Thunderstorm Asthma** - our school will be prepared to act on the warnings and advice from the Department of Education and Training when the risk of epidemic thunderstorm asthma is forecast as high.
- 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.
- Care must be provided immediately for any student who develops signs of an asthma attack.
- Children suffering symptoms of asthma 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 Asthma Australia) 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.
- Year 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.

Parents'/Guardians' Responsibility:

- All students with asthma must have an up to date (annually) written asthma management plan consistent with Asthma Australia's requirements completed by their local GP or paediatrician. Appropriate asthma plan proformas are available at www.asthma.org.au
- Ensure that their child/ren have an adequate supply of appropriate asthma medication (including a spacer) with them at school at all times. This will be kept in our sick bay.
- 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 diagnosed with asthma and requires asthma medication.
- Inform the school of any changes to their child's asthma 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.

Further information and resources:

Asthma Australia: [Resources for schools](#)

School Policy and Advisory Guide: [Asthma](#)

Evaluation:

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