

**PURPOSE**

To manage asthma, support asthma sufferers, as effectively and efficiently as possible, at school and during activities such as excursions and camps.

**RATIONALE**

Asthma affects up to one in four primary aged children, one in seven teenagers and one in ten adults. It is important therefore for all staff members to be aware of asthma, its symptoms and triggers, and the management of asthma in a school environment.

**DEFINITION**

Asthma is a disease of the airways, the small tubes which carry air in and out of the lungs. Asthma symptoms are caused by the muscles in the airways tightening and the lining of the airways swelling and producing sticky mucus. This causes the airways to narrow and for less air to flow in and out of the lungs.

Asthma symptoms commonly include:

- a. shortness of breath, wheezing, tightness in chest, a dry, persistent, irritating cough.

Triggers of asthma include:

- a. exercise, cold/flu, smoke, weather changes, dust, mould, foods/additives, medications, emotions

**GUIDELINES**

- Professional development is provided annually for all staff on the nature, prevention and treatment of asthma attacks.
  - Such information is displayed on the staffroom wall.
  - Staff participate in regular first aid drills.
- All students with asthma must have an up-to-date (annual) written asthma management plan completed by their doctor or pediatrician which is consistent with Asthma Victoria's requirements.
- Asthma plans, with a photo attached, are included in the student's record for reference and is also attached to attendance rolls.
- It is the responsibility of the First Aid Coordinator to ensure parents provide completed and current Asthma Management Plans.

**RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTS/CARERS**

Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring their children have an adequate supply of appropriate asthma medication (including a spacer) at school at all times, including:

- on school camps;
- on school excursions;
- any school event outside of school grounds.

Parents/guardians are also responsible for informing the school of any changes related to their child(ren)'s medical plan.

**RESPONSIBILITY OF SCHOOL**

The School will provide appropriate training for staff, in accordance with current DET guidelines.

Staff will be trained in the administering of:

- reliever puffers such as Ventolin, Airomir, Asmol or Bricanyl; and
- Spacer devices are included in all first-aid kits, including kits on excursions and camps.
- Clear written instructions on how to use these medications and devices will be included in each first aid kit, together with steps to be taken to treat severe asthma attacks. Kits will contain 70% alcohol swabs to clean devices after use.

The School will ensure:

- All devices used for the delivery of asthma medication will be cleaned appropriately after each use.
- Care will be provided immediately for any student who develops signs of an asthma attack.
- Children suffering asthma attacks will be treated in accordance with their asthma plan.

**NOTIFICATION OF ASTHMA EPISODE (NO PLAN PROVIDED)**

- If no plan is available, children will be treated according to the Asthma Foundation First Aid Plan which is also located in the School Sick Bay and back of class roll.
- The parent will be notified if their child/student presents to School Sick Bay and is administered asthma medication by a staff member

**MEDICATION MANAGEMENT**

- Parents will bring all medication required on the first day of attendance at the school for that school year.
- Medication supplied must be made available for the entire time the student is enrolled at the school.
- The First Aid Coordinator will be responsible for regularly checking reliever puffer expiry dates and arranging new supply, as needed.
- At the conclusion of each school year, or on termination of the student's enrollment, all medication will be returned to the student's parent/carer.
- 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 even then, only if it is provided by the family with a plan which complies with the 'Victorian Government School Policy and Advisory Guide -Asthma'.

**EVALUATION:**

This policy will be reviewed as part of the School's three-year review cycle. Review Date: October 2023