

PURPOSE

- To ensure our school supports students with asthma.

POLICY GUIDELINES

- Asthma is a condition of the airways. When asthma symptoms are present, the muscles in the airways tighten and the lining of the airways swell and produce a sticky mucous. These changes cause the airways to become narrow, so there is less space for the air to flow into and out of the lungs (National Asthma Council, 2011).
- Symptoms may include shortness of breath, wheezing, tightness in the chest, a dry irritating persistent cough.
- Triggers can include exercise, colds/flu, smoke, weather changes, dust, moulds, pollens, animals, chemicals, deodorants/perfumes, foods and additives, medications and emotions.
- Effective management of asthma is the aim of KEPS; and the key is the knowledge of those students diagnosed with asthma, awareness of triggers and treatment of symptoms.
- Partnership between the school and families is imperative to assist with the implementation of this policy.
- To further effectively manage our students with asthma, the school will:
 - request parents to provide medical information about children with asthma;
 - provide professional training (in accordance with Ministerial Order 706) to staff responsible for the care of students with asthma. This may include teachers and non-teaching/support staff as identified by the principal based on assessment of the risk of an asthmatic episode occurring whilst in their care;
 - implement practical strategies to avoid asthma triggers; and
 - comply with the Ministerial Order 706 and its guidelines.
- Relevant Staff, defined as “staff determined by the principal as those with a direct student well-being responsibility”, must successfully complete the Management of Asthma course every three years.
- All students with diagnosed asthma must have an asthma action provided by parents/guardians following consultation with their medical practitioner.

Documents supporting this policy:

- DET Asthma Guidelines for Victorian schools;
- Government Ministerial Orders 706: Asthma Management in Schools; and
- Asthma Australia.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

- It is the responsibility of parents to notify the school that their child has been diagnosed with asthma, either at time of initial enrolment or as soon after diagnosis as possible.
- Parents or guardians of children with asthma are required to provide the school with an Asthma Care Action plan developed by Asthma Australia and signed by the family GP or paediatrician (not the parent or guardian).
- The Asthma Care Plan will contain information on:
 - managing an asthma attack (ie. first aid emergency instructions);
 - daily management of the child’s asthma;
 - signs/symptoms specific for the child;
 - medication/treatment regime;
 - doctor’s name, address and signature, as well as parents’/emergency contact’s information and signature; and
 - a current photo of the student.
- Asthma Care Plans are required by the school to be updated yearly by the student’s GP/paediatrician or during the school year if there are relevant changes to their asthma and/or treatment.

- Copies of the Asthma Care Plan will be given to the classroom teacher and placed in the classroom in a prominent position. Copies will also be held in sick bay and staffroom.
- All staff in the school, including CRT staff, will be made familiar with the details of students with asthma.
- General asthma first aid posters will be displayed throughout the school.
- The school will ensure that asthma training for staff is conducted every three years. This is made available for staff by qualified professionals and is in accordance with the Government Ministerial Order 706.
- Updates/briefings on asthma are also delivered to staff throughout the school year.
- Each yard duty bag contains a Ventolin puffer and spacer for use in an emergency situation.
- An emergency response kit resides in the sick bay. This contains a Ventolin puffer.
- In the event of a moderate/severe asthma attack, the student will be transported to hospital via ambulance and parents informed.
- If no plan is available or a child appears to be having an initial asthma attack, staff will commence asthma first aid as follows:
 1. Sit child down, upright and provide reassurance;
 2. Administer 4 puffs of a shaken reliever puffer (blue canister – Ventolin) delivered via a spacer, inhaling 4 deep breaths per puff;
 3. Wait 4 minutes;
 4. If necessary, repeat the process/cycle; and
 5. An ambulance must be called if no improvement occurs after the second 4 minute cycle or if it is the child's first attack.

Students will be responsible for:

- knowing where their medication is located, .i.e) carrying it on their person, or located in an easily accessible area like their school bag / classroom.

Parents will be responsible for:

- ensuring their child attends school with an adequate supply of their appropriate medication and a spacer. The medication must be with the expiry date; and
- ensuring open / timely communication with school staff regarding their child's asthma symptoms / treatment.

EVALUATION

- The Asthma Policy will be reviewed by the Student's Wellbeing Team on a cyclical basis in accordance with the School Council Policy review schedule or as required.