

Asthma Policy

Policy Statement

Asthma is a chronic health condition affecting approximately 10% of Australian children and teenagers. Asthma is one of the most common reasons for child admissions to hospital and missed days of school. In order to meet the duty of care obligations and to ensure the health and wellbeing of all students attending, Dandenong South Primary School recognises the importance of staff education and the implementation of an asthma policy. The school 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.

Purpose

- 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

Procedures

- Staff will be provided a copy of the school's asthma management policy to ensure staff are aware of asthma management strategies
- Asthma education and first aid training will be provided for staff as required
- Parents and carers will be provided 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
- 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 offsite 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
- 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
- Identify and minimise, where possible, triggers of asthma symptoms for students
- 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 000 to attend 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

Asthma First Aid

- 1 Sit the person upright** 
- 2 Give 4 puffs of reliever puffer**
Use a spacer if possible, 1 puff into the spacer at a time, taking 4 breaths after each puff. 
- 3 Wait 4 minutes**
If there is no improvement, give 4 more separate puffs of reliever as above. 
- 4 Call ambulance (Dial 000) if no improvement**
Keep giving 4 separate puffs every 4 minutes until the ambulance arrives. 

Asthma Management Plan

1. PARENTS

Parents must provide the school with an “[Asthma Care Plan](#)”. This plan must be updated annually to ensure the school is aware of any current changes to their Asthma Management. The child’s doctor as well as the parent must sign and date the Asthma Care Plan.

Parents are also required to supply their child with their own reliever puffer and a spacer for personal use while they are at school. The child with asthma must have easy access to their puffer and spacer at all times. If the child does not have their own spacer and a disposable spacer is supplied by the school, the parents may be asked to pay for the disposable spacer each time one is used.

2. TEACHERS

Teachers must ensure that students with asthma have easy access to their own reliever puffer and their spacer at all times (in the child’s bag or preferably in a safe and prominent place in the classroom). If a CRT is replacing the class teacher, they must

be able to access the child's asthma medication easily. The spacer must be rinsed with water only and air-dried if used. Only the mouthpiece can be wiped on the outside with an antibacterial wipe. For activities out of the classroom such as sport and excursions, the student must take their asthma medication with them. Some students have "Exercise Induced Asthma" and may need 1-2 puffs, 5 – 20 minutes before a warm-up at PE/ sport. Following sport or exercise, the student should always cool-down. If symptoms of asthma occur – stop activity & take reliever. They may return to activity only if symptom free. If symptoms reoccur – take a reliever and do not return to the activity.

Forms are available in asthma kits for teachers to fill out if asthma medication was necessary whilst at school. These forms are used to inform parents that their child required medication at school. If they have any minor symptoms of an asthma attack (coughing/wheezing) during the recess break or lunch break, they should be sent to the sick bay immediately. If the symptoms are more severe (difficulty breathing/talking), the yard duty teacher must phone the office & send a red card for a Ventolin puffer and disposable spacer to be brought to the child as soon as possible. The school is to phone 000 and the parent if not responding to treatment.

3. STUDENTS

Students who do not have their own reliever puffer can use the one in the sick bay at any time. Students who have their own reliever puffer, but do not have their own spacer are to be given a disposable spacer to be kept with their own puffer at school and can be reused by that same child for up to a week. A new disposable spacer will need to be given to this child when the previous one is disposed of. (Parents may be charged for the cost of disposable spacers).

4. School supplies of Ventolin reliever puffers and disposable spacers are kept:

- In each portable First Aid Kit Bag used for excursions and out of school activities
- there is a First Aid Kit in the Music Room which includes a Ventolin puffer & disposable spacers
- there is a First Aid Kit in the Gymnasium and Gymnasium Kitchen which each includes a Ventolin puffer & disposable spacers
- there is a First Aid Kit in the Breakfast Club in the Learning Centre and the Conference Room in the Discovery Centre which includes a Ventolin puffer & disposable spacers
- the sick bay (metal cupboard) has a Ventolin puffer and a supply of disposable spacers

Relevant Documents/Links

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