

YARRA ROAD PS

Asthma

Rationale:

To ensure schools support students diagnosed with asthma.

Pre Requisite Policy:

See: [Health Care Needs](#).

Policy:

Schools must have for each student diagnosed with asthma, a written:

- Asthma Care Plan
- Student Health Support Plan.

Schools should have a whole school policy to manage asthma that addresses staff asthma awareness training, [Asthma 2013.docx School.docx](#)

Asthma Emergency Kit content and maintenance, medication storage and management of confidential medical information. Schools should:

- ensure all staff with a duty of care for students are trained to assess and manage an asthma emergency and complete the free one-hour Asthma Education session at least every three years - this session can be through a school visit or [online](#) through the Asthma Community and Health Professional e-Learning Hub
- ensure those staff with a direct student wellbeing responsibility such as nurses, PE/sport teachers, first aid and school staff attending camp have completed an accredited Emergency Asthma Management (EAM) course at least every three years
- provide equipment to manage an asthma emergency in the form for an Asthma Emergency Kit, see: Asthma Emergency Kits in [Related policies](#).

Definition:

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 harder 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.

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• a 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.

Triggers:

A trigger is something that sets off or starts asthma symptoms. Everyone with asthma has different triggers. For most people with asthma, triggers are only a problem when asthma is not well controlled with medication. Common asthma triggers include:

- exercise
- colds/flu
- smoke (cigarette smoke, wood smoke from open fires, burn-offs or bushfires)
- weather changes such as thunderstorms and cold, dry air
- house dust mites
- moulds
- pollens
- animals such as cats and dogs
- chemicals such as household cleaning products
- deodorants (including perfumes, after-shaves, hair spray and aerosol deodorant sprays)
- food chemicals / additives
- certain medications (including aspirin and anti-inflammatories)
- emotions such as stress and laughter.

A detailed description of triggers can be found on the Asthma Foundation of Victoria website, see: [Other resources](#).

Strategies

The table below describes the tools and steps that schools use to manage students with asthma.

<u>Strategy</u>	<u>Description</u>
<u>School Asthma Policy</u>	A school based policy describing the school's support for students with asthma. Schools only need to develop a School Asthma Policy if the school has a student enrolled who is diagnosed with asthma.
<u>Communication Plan</u>	A plan developed by the school which provides information to all school staff, students and parents about asthma and the School's Asthma Policy.

	<p>The Asthma Foundation of Victoria also has Asthma First Aid posters available to schools for free which should be displayed in the</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • staff room • sick room • areas where asthma attacks are likely to occur or be treated. <p>For Asthma First Aid posters, see Asthma Foundation of Victoria in Other resources</p>
<p><u>Emergency Response Plan</u></p>	<p>Procedures which each school develops for an emergency response to a severe / life-threatening asthma attack for all in-school and out-of-school activities.</p> <p>The procedures, which are included in the School’s Asthma Policy, differ from the instructions listed on the student’s individual Asthma Action Plan.</p>
<p><u>Individual Asthma Action plans (for each student diagnosed with asthma)</u></p>	<p>Parents must provide the school with an Asthma Action Plan completed by the student’s medical practitioner. The plan must outline the students known triggers and the emergency procedures to be taken in the event of an asthma flare-up or attack.</p> <p>The Asthma Action Plan for Victorian schools should be completed/reviewed annually for each student with asthma and contain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the prescribed medication taken and when it is to be administered e.g.: - on a regular basis - as premedication to exercise - if the student is experiencing symptoms • emergency contact details • contact details of the student’s medical/health practitioner • details about deteriorating asthma including:- signs to recognise worsening symptoms - what to do during an attack - medication to be used. <p>For the Asthma Action Plans for Victorian Schools, see Asthma Foundation of Victoria in Other resources.</p>
<p><u>Student Health Support Plan</u></p>	<p>An individual plan for each student diagnosed with asthma, developed in consultation with the student's parents. These plans include the Individual Asthma Action Plan..</p> <p>The Student Health Support Plan includes details on how the school will provide support, identify specific strategies and allocate staff to assist the student.</p>
<p><u>Asthma training for school staff</u></p>	<p>All school staff with a direct duty of care responsibility for students should be trained in being able to manage an asthma emergency appropriately.</p>

Training should be conducted at least every three years. This can be face-to-face or online. More formal, accredited training should be completed by staff in a direct role of health and wellbeing support.

Annual Asthma Briefing for all staff

Schools may wish to conduct an annual Asthma Briefing at the beginning of the school year on:

- the school's asthma management policy
- causes, symptoms and treatment of asthma
- the identities of students diagnosed with asthma and where their medication is located
- how to use a puffer and spacer
- the school's general first aid and emergency response procedures
- the location of, and access to, reliever medication that has been provided by parents or the Asthma Emergency Kits.

A presentation template and facilitators notes can be downloaded from the Asthma Foundation of Victoria website See: Other resources

Reducing Asthma Triggers

To reduce asthma triggers schools can:

- mow school grounds out of hours
- plant a low allergen garden - for a brochure see Asthma Foundation of Victoria, see Other resources
- limit dust, for example having the carpets and curtains cleaned regularly and out of hours
- examine the cleaning products used in the school and their potential impact on students with asthma
- conduct maintenance that may require the use of chemicals, such as painting, during school holidays

turn on fans, air conditioning and heaters out of hours when being used for the first time after a long period of non-use.

Student Asthma Kit

Where a student is enrolled diagnosed with asthma, the child is required to bring their own prescribed reliever medication. This should be stored in their asthma kit, with a copy of their Asthma Action Plan and their spacer.

The student's personal spacer should be washed monthly or as required, to wash the spacer:

- wash the spacer in warm soapy water
- do not rinse the spacer
- leave it to air dry
- wipe the mouthpiece before use.

	The students spacer should be replaced if contaminated with blood or vomit.
<u>Asthma Emergency Kits</u>	Anyone with asthma can have a severe attack, even those with mild asthma. Schools should have at least two Asthma Emergency Kits and an additional kit for every 300 students enrolled. See: Asthma Emergency Kits in Related policies
<u>Encourage Participation in camps and special events</u>	<p>Schools should ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • parents provide enough medication (including preventer medication) for the student if they are going away overnight • enough Asthma Emergency Kits are available for the camp or excursion needs • that parents/guardians complete the Asthma Foundation's School Camp and Excursion Medical Update Form and the Department's <i>Confidential Medical Information for School Council Approved School Excursions</i> form. • <p>See: Related policies for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Care Needs • Health Support Planning Forms <p>Excursions - Student Medical Information</p>
<u>Managing Exercise induced Brinchiinstriction (EIB)</u>	<p>If a student has EIB schools should ensure that they allow adequate time for the following procedures: before, during and after exercise.</p> <p>Before:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • blue or blue/grey reliever medication to be taken by student 15 minutes before exercise or activity (if indicated on the students' Asthma Action Plan) • student to undertake adequate warm up activity <p>During:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if symptoms occur, student to stop activity, take blue or blue/grey reliever medication, only return to activity if symptom free • if symptoms reoccur, student to take blue or blue/grey reliever medication and cease activity for the rest of the day. This is known as 'two strikes and out'. <p>After:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure cool down activity is undertaken

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be alert for symptoms <p>If a student has an asthma attack during or after exercise or activity, follow their Asthma Action Plan if easily accessible, or commence Asthma First Aid. Always notify parent of any incidents or medication usage.</p>
<u>Communicating with Parents</u>	Regularly communicate with the student's parents about the student's successes, development, changes and any health and education concerns. In particular the frequency and severity of the student's asthma symptoms and use of medication at school.

Staff Training

The following school staff should undertake **non-accredited training** in *Asthma first aid management for education staff* through the Asthma Foundation:

- all staff with a direct teaching role with students affected by asthma
- any other school staff identified by the principal, based on an assessment of the risk of an asthma attack occurring while a student is under the care or supervision of the school.

The training should be conducted at least every three years, is available to all schools free of charge and can be accessed by schools in the follow ways:

- a one hour face-to-face school visit (for as many school staff the school wishes to train), contact the Asthma Foundation on 1300 314 806, or
- through online training, see: [Asthma First Aid for School Staff](#)

The following table indicates the school staff who should undertake **accredited training** in asthma management by a Registered Training Organisation.

<u>Course</u>	<u>Provider</u>	<u>Completed By</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Accreditation</u>
22282VIC <i>Course in Management of Asthma Risks and Emergencies in the Workplace</i>	Any RTO that has this course in their scope of practice	Staff working with high risk children with a history of severe asthma	Paid by each school	3 years
OR -:		Staff with a direct student wellbeing responsibility such as nurses, first aid and camp organisers		
10392NAT <i>Course in Emergency Asthma Management</i>		Staff in high risk teaching areas, such as PE/Sports teachers, Home		
<i>Note: Schools only need complete one of these courses to</i>				

<i>meet the requirements</i>		Economics/ Cooking Teachers		
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If a staff member has not yet completed training, the principal is responsible for developing an interim Student Health Support Plan that includes the student's Asthma Action Plan in consultation with the student's parents. Training should take place as soon as practicable after the student diagnosed with asthma enrolls, preferably before the student's first day at school.

Related Policies:

- [Asthma Attacks: Treatment](#)
- [Asthma Emergency Kits](#)
- [Excursions - Student Medical Information](#)
- [Health Care Needs](#)
- [Health Support Planning Forms](#)
- [Parental Responsibility](#)

Other Resources

- [Asthma Australia](#) - see Asthma Foundation Victoria resources for Victorian schools
- [Asthma, Chronic Illness Alliance](#)

- [Asthma Australia](#)

This Policy was last ratified by School Council in - 2017