

## Asthma Policy

### Background

Asthma affects up to one in nine children and one in ten adults. It is important for all staff members to be aware of asthma, its symptoms and triggers, and the management of asthma in a school environment. Asthma attacks involve the narrowing of airways making it difficult to breathe. Symptoms commonly include difficulty breathing, wheezy breathing, dry and irritating cough, tightness in the chest and difficulty speaking. Children and adults with mild asthma rarely require medication; however severe asthma sufferers may require daily or additional medication (particularly after exercise).

### Purpose

To:

- Ensure all staff (including casual relief staff, contractors, volunteers), parents and students understand their role in asthma management.
- Ensure that Huntingdale Primary School supports students diagnosed with asthma.
- Manage asthma and asthma sufferers as effectively and efficiently as possible at school.
- Ensure open communication of children's asthma between parents and the school.
- Administer asthma medication to children when in need in a competent and timely manner.
- Ensure the school is compliant with asthma policies and procedures as outlined in DET's *School Policy and Advisory Guide* <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/pages/spag.aspx> and the Asthma Foundation Victoria <http://www.asthma.org.au/>
- Ensure the school is compliant and meets the standards to be an Asthma Friendly School.
- Maintain the DET values of leadership, respect, responsiveness, human rights, integrity, impartiality and accountability.

### Implementation

- The Principal has the overall responsibility of implementing this policy, but may delegate certain roles to suitably qualified staff.
- This policy works in conjunction with the school's First Aid Policy.
- Professional development will be provided for all staff on the nature, prevention and treatment of asthma attacks and also how to administer asthma medication. The Asthma Foundation of Victoria provides a free one hour training session for school staff to be aware of the importance of daily asthma management and know how to assess and manage an asthma emergency.
- All students with asthma must have an up to date (annual) written Asthma Management Plan consistent with Asthma Victoria's requirements completed by medical practitioner. It is the responsibility of parents/caregivers to inform the school if the child's plan has changed. Appropriate asthma plan proformas are available at <http://www.asthmaaustralia.org.au/Tools-and-asthma-action-plans.aspx>



The plan must include:

- the prescribed medication taken by the student and when it is to be administered, for example as a pre-medication to exercise or on a regular basis
  - emergency contact details
  - the contact details of the student's medical practitioner
  - the student's known triggers
  - the emergency procedures to be taken in the event of an asthma flare-up or attack.
  - a photo of the student to be included as part of the student's Asthma Care Plan.
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- School staff may also need work with parents/carers to develop a Student Health Support Plan, for students with severe asthma, which will include details on how the school will provide support for the student, identify specific strategies and allocate staff to assist the student. This will be considered on a case by case basis.
  - Updated separate Camp Asthma Management Forms are required before a student who has asthma may attend camp. When embarking on an overnight camp the school should ensure parents provide enough medication for their child.
  - Asthma plans and posters reminding of asthma treatment will be kept in the Health Centre and also be given to classroom teachers in their attendance role.
  - Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring their child has an adequate supply of appropriate asthma medication with them at school. This must contain their own prescribed reliever medication labelled with the student's name and their spacer (if they use one)
  - Students will have access to Ventolin and a spacer provided by the school.
  - The school will provide 3 asthma emergency kits that can be taken on excursion, camps and sporting events. These are in the Health Centre
  - The First Aid staff officer will be responsible for checking reliever puffer expiry dates and to ensure students have up to date asthma plans at school.
  - Immediate care must be provided to any student who develops signs of an asthma attack whether they have a plan or not.
  - Children suffering asthma attacks should be treated in accordance with their asthma plan.
  - If no plan is available children are to be sat down, reassured, administered 4 puffs of a shaken reliever puffer (blue canister) delivered via a spacer – inhaling 4 deep breaths per puff, wait 4 minutes, if necessary administer 4 more puffs and repeat the cycle. An ambulance must be called if there is no improvement after the second 4-minute wait period, or if it is the child's first known attack. Parents must be contacted whenever their child suffers an asthma attack.
  - The school will endeavour to reduce asthma triggers such as having regular cleaning and dusting, cutting grass, maintaining air conditioners/heaters, ensuring students with exercise induced asthma have a chance to warm up and cool down, to take a reliever medication before exercise, and to stop activity and take reliever medication if symptoms occur and examine cleaning products that could potentially impact students with asthma.
  - Huntingdale PS 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.



### **Evaluation**

Review of eduSafe and CASES21 reports.

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year cycle or as needed to comply with DET policy changes.

### **Document Status**

<b>Reviewed</b>	<b>School Council Ratification</b>	<b>Next Review</b>
April 2018	15 <sup>th</sup> May 2018	15 <sup>th</sup> May 2021