



ASTHMA

POLICY

Definition:

- Asthma is a long-term condition, which commonly flares up at school. 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.
- 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, swell and become narrow. 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 called an asthma attack.
- Symptoms include breathlessness, persistent irritating cough, tight feeling in chest, wheezing (a whistling noise from the chest) and inability to speak full sentences.
- Triggers for asthma flare-ups include exercise, cold/flu, smoke, weather changes (storms, wind), dust, moulds, pollens, animals, aerosols, deodorants, perfumes, chemicals, medications and emotional state (stress or laughter).
- Children and adults with asthma may require daily or additional medication.

Aims:

- To manage students with asthma as effectively and efficiently as possible at school.

Implementation:

- Professional development will be provided for all staff at least every 3 years on the nature, prevention and treatment of asthma attacks. Such information will also be displayed appropriately around the school.
- Parents must inform the school upon enrolment if their child has asthma. All students with asthma must provide to the school an up to date (annual) Asthma Foundation Victoria's School Asthma Action Plan Signed by their doctor and parent or guardian.
- When on overnight camps, parents must provide the school with a Plan for the camp, including information about preventer medication, and supply that medication if different from the Asthma Action Plan supplied by their doctor.
- On camps the school camp coordinator will ensure that first aid facilities are available and that the students asthma action plan is available.
- The asthma plans will be available to the classroom teacher and stored appropriately in the first aid room for reference.
- Casual relief staff will be given information about asthma first aid procedures at Mortlake College and informed about students with asthma in their care.
- Parents/ guardians are responsible for ensuring their children have an adequate supply of appropriate reliever asthma medication (including a spacer) with the school at all times.
- If the medical condition of a student changes, such as recent hospital visit for asthma, or if their asthma Action Plan changes, it is up to the parents to notify the school and provide an updated plan.
- The school will provide have at least 2 Asthma First Aid Kits to be located around the school and an additional Kit will be taken on excursions and camps with a copy of the students Asthma Action Plan located in the General Office photocopy room. Asthma First Aid posters will be displayed appropriately around the school.
- The delegated first aid staff member will be responsible for checking reliever puffer expiry dates, adequate supply of spacers and the date of Action Plans.

- All devices used for the delivery of asthma medication will be cleaned appropriately after each use. Spacers are single person use only. Disposable spacers can be purchased from the Asthma Foundation Victoria.
- Care must be provided immediately for any student who develops signs of an asthma attack.
- Children having asthma symptoms should be treated in accordance with their asthma plan.
- If no plan is available, children are to be
 1. Sat upright, reassured,
 2. Give 4 separate puffs of blue/grey reliever puffer via spacer
 - Shake the puffer
 - Put 1 puff into the spacer
 - Take 4 breathes from spacer
 3. Repeat until 4 puffs have been taken.
 4. Wait 4 minutes.
 5. If there is no improvement – repeat steps 1 to 4 again.
 6. If still no improvement, call the Ambulance and repeat the 4 puffs every 4 minutes until assistance arrives.
 - Parents must be contacted whenever their child suffers an asthma attack.
- The school will work towards the criteria of an Asthma Friendly School and register with www.asthmafriendlyschools.org.au
- The school will reduce asthma triggers by avoiding mowing grass during school hours, limiting high allergen plants, maintaining air conditioners regularly, ensuring students with Exercise induced Asthma have a chance to warm up, cool down and to take a reliever medication before exercise.
- Reduce aerosols at school and promote the use of roll on deodorant.
- Students able to self-manage their asthma will be allowed to carry their asthma puffers and spacers with them at all times.
- Students with asthma will not be discriminated against and staff will ensure students with asthma can participate in all activities safely and to their fullest abilities.

Evaluation:

- This policy will be reviewed annually in the review cycle.

This policy was last ratified by School Council on....

April 2017