



Serpell Primary School Asthma Policy



Rationale

This policy is to ensure that all members of Serpell primary school are aware of the strategies for best practice asthma management. All staff will be trained in symptom awareness and the correct management of asthma. Parents / Carers are required to provide the school with an up to date Asthma Action Plan, medication for their child, and notification if there are any changes.

Definitions

Asthma

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. Symptoms vary from person to person. Symptoms of asthma may include, but are not limited to, shortness of breath, wheezing, tightness in the chest and coughing.

Epidemic Thunderstorm Asthma

Every year during grass pollen season there is an increase in asthma and hay fever symptoms, and during grass pollen season there is also the chance of an epidemic thunderstorm asthma event. Epidemic thunderstorm asthma events are thought to be triggered by an uncommon combination of high grass pollen levels and a certain type of thunderstorm, resulting in large numbers of people developing asthma symptoms over a short period of time.

Aim

To provide a safe and healthy school environment that takes into consideration the needs of all students, including those who suffer from asthma.

Implementation

1. An action plan will be developed for every child and staff member who suffers from Asthma. The Asthma Foundation Victoria's School Asthma Action Plan (Attachment 1) will be completed by the student's medical / health practitioner in consultation with the parents / guardians. The plan will be reviewed annually. An asthma first aid section and should specify no less than 4 separate puffs of blue reliever medication, with 4 breaths taken per puff every 4 minutes, using a spacer if possible.
2. Asthma first aid kits are in the Health Centre, on excursions and camp and in the yard duty first aid kit for the oval.
3. Where a student is enrolled diagnosed with asthma, the child is required to bring their own prescribed reliever medication. It is recommended that the child uses a spacer with the reliever medication. The student's personal spacer should be washed monthly or as required.
4. All school staff with a direct duty of care responsibility for students will be trained in being able to manage an asthma emergency appropriately. Staff with will be trained by the Asthma Foundation in management of an asthma emergency. Training will be conducted at least every three years. The Asthma Foundation Asthma First Aid posters will be displayed in the, staff room, Health Centre, Sports Stadium.
5. Asthma triggers in the school grounds will be reduced by:
 - The mowing of school grounds out of hours;
 - Planting a low allergen garden;
 - The limiting of dust, for example having the carpets and curtains cleaned regularly and out of hours;
 - Examination of the cleaning products used in the school and their potential impact on students with asthma, in accordance with OHS standards;
 - Conducting maintenance that may require the use of chemicals, such as painting, during school holidays;
 - Turning on fans, air conditioning and heaters out of hours when being used for the first time after a long period of non-use.

6. The school will Act on the warnings and advice from the Department when the risk of epidemic thunderstorm asthma is forecast as high, including:

- Act on advice and warnings from the Department Education and Training's Emergency Management Division associated with a potential thunderstorm asthma activity.
- Place notices in the newsletter and Flexi Buzz to inform the school community and parents.
- Implement procedures to avoid exposure such as staying indoors with windows and doors closed.

7. During camps, excursions, incursions, in the playground:

- The asthmatic child who requires regular inhalers is to always carry an inhaler, e.g. in their pocket or in an inhaler pouch.
- Parents will provide enough medication for their child if they are going away overnight.
- Asthma emergency kits will be available for the camp and excursion / incursion.
- Spacers are to be used if the school's reliever is required.
- Parents will provide the 'Asthma Action Plan' (Attachment 1).
- Parent will complete the Department's 'Confidential Medical Information for School Council Approved School Excursions' (Attachment 2).
- Parents / guardians will complete the Asthma Foundation's 'School Camp and Excursion Asthma Update Form' (Attachment 3).

8. If a student has diagnosed Exercise Induced Asthma (EIA), the P.E. and Sports teachers will ensure that they allow adequate time for the Asthma Management Plan to be followed before, during and after exercise.

9. Communicating with parents will occur on a regular basis regarding changes to each student's health in relation to their asthma. This will occur through the school nurse by providing a written report.

10. Asthma Friendly School Accreditation will be reviewed every three years.

Companion Policies:

- Asthma: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/pages/conditionasthma.aspx>
- Asthma Attacks Treatment: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/pages/asthmaattack.aspx>
- Asthma Kits: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/Pages/asthmakits.aspx>
- Medication: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/Pages/medication.aspx>

Resources:

- Attachment 1 – Asthma Action Plan
- Attachment 2 – Confidential Medical Information for School Council Approved School Excursions
- Attachment 3 – School Camp and Excursion Asthma Update Form

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

Ratification:

This policy was ratified by the School Council on Monday the 20th of November 2017.