



# St. Anne's

## Primary School

60 KNEES ROAD, PARK ORCHARDS, VICTORIA 3114

### **POLICY:           ASTHMA POLICY**

#### **RATIONALE:**

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. These things make it harder to breathe.

An asthma flare-up can come on slowly (over hours, days or even weeks) or very quickly (over minutes).

One in nine people in Australia has asthma. It affects people of all ages. Some people get asthma when they are young; others when they are older.

Asthma cannot be cured, but for most people it can be well controlled by following a daily management plan.

**Reference:** <https://www.asthmaaustralia.org.au/national/about-asthma/what-is-asthma>

Asthma policy is consistent with the recommendations from the Victoria State Government Education and Training School Government Policy and Advisory Guide

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/Pages/spag.aspx>

#### **AIMS:**

In order to meet the duty of care obligations and to ensure the health and wellbeing of all students attending, St Anne's 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.

## **IMPLEMENTATION:**

The school must:

- Obtain a written asthma plan for all students diagnosed with asthma upon enrolment at the school and ensure they are updated at least annually
- Store medical information and medications appropriately
- Parents need to ensure medication is up to date. The school will check medication is up to date before administering.
- Ensure that students feel safe and supported at school
- Provide and maintain at least two asthma emergency kits, with an extra kit required for every 300 students in a large school
- Ensure that key staff (e.g. First Aid Officers, Physical Education/Sport Teachers undertake Emergency Asthma Management (EAM) training and that all other staff with a duty of care for students attend an asthma education session provided by The Asthma Foundation of Victoria or another qualified facilitator
- 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
- Provide the necessary information to effectively manage episodes of asthma within the school following guidelines within the School Policy and Advisory Guide

[https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/Pages/asthma\\_attack.aspx](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/Pages/asthma_attack.aspx)

## **Responsibilities**

### **The Principal will:**

- Provide staff with a copy of the school's asthma management policy and ensure staff are aware of asthma management strategies upon employment at the school
- Provide asthma education and first aid training for staff as required
- Provide parents and carers 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 Plans can be downloaded from the Asthma Australia website

<https://www.asthmaaustralia.org.au/vic/home>

- 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 off- site activities where possible,
- Request that 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
- Implement an asthma first aid procedure consistent with current national recommendations and all staff are aware of the asthma first aid procedure
- 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
- Ensure that reliever medications within the asthma emergency kits are replaced regularly and have not expired, and that spacers are replaced after each use
- Facilitate communication between management, staff, parents and carers and students regarding the school's asthma management policy and strategies
- Promptly communicate to parents and carers any concerns regarding asthma and students attending the school
- Identify and minimise, where possible, triggers of asthma symptoms for students
- Ensure that students with asthma are not discriminated against in any way
- Ensure that students with asthma can participate in all activities safely and to their fullest abilities

Staff will:

- Be aware of the school's asthma management policy
- Be aware of the asthma first aid procedure
- Be aware of students with asthma and where their medication and personal spacers are stored
- Record in the First Aid book after a child has received any treatment for Asthma provided from the first aid kit
- Attend asthma education and training sessions when required
- Be aware of where to access written asthma plans, School Camp and Excursion Medical Update Forms, and asthma emergency kits
- Identify and minimise, where possible, triggers of asthma symptoms for students
- Ensure that students with asthma are not discriminated against in any way
- Ensure that students with asthma can participate in activities safely and to their fullest abilities
- Promptly communicate to the principal, parents and carers any concerns regarding asthma and students enrolled in the school

#### Parents and Carers will:

- Inform the school if their child has asthma upon enrolment or diagnosis of the condition
- Read and adhere to the school's asthma management policy
- Provide a signed written asthma plan to the school, and ensure that it is updated at least yearly (or earlier if permanent changes to action plan)
- Provide a School Camp or Excursion Medical Update form as required
- Provide the school with their child's reliever medication along with a spacer (required for 'puffer' medication) for all times the child is attending the school, unless the child is carrying the medication and spacer for self-management purposes
- Ensure that if their child is self-managing their asthma correctly the child carries their reliever medication and spacer at all times
- Promptly communicate all medical and health information relevant to their child, to the principal and staff of the school
- Communicate any changes to their child's asthma or any concerns about the health of their child

#### Students will:

- Immediately inform staff if they experience asthma symptoms
- Inform staff if they have self-administered any asthma medication
- Carry asthma medication and a spacer with them at all times (if self-managing their asthma)

#### Asthma First Aid:

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 to attend (000) 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

Recognising an asthma attack

<b>Mild</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Severe</b>
<b>Talk in sentences</b>	<b>Shortened sentences</b>	<b>Few words per breath</b>
Cough	Persistent cough	Persistent cough
Soft wheeze	Loud wheeze	Wheeze may be absent
Minor difficulty breathing	Difficulty breathing	Gasping for breath/distress
Tightness in chest		Pale, sweaty, blue lips
Young children may complain of a "sore tummy"		Muscle exertion

# Asthma First Aid

## 1 Sit the person upright

- Be calm and reassuring
- Do not leave them alone



## 2 Give 4 puffs of blue reliever puffer medication

- Use a spacer if there is one
  - **Shake** puffer
  - Put **1 puff** into spacer
  - Take **4 breaths** from spacer
- Repeat** until **4 puffs** have been taken
- Remember: Shake, 1 puff, 4 breaths**



## 3 Wait 4 minutes

- If there is no improvement, give **4 more puffs** as above



## 4 If there is still no improvement call emergency assistance (DIAL 000) \*

- Say 'ambulance' and that someone is having an asthma attack
- Keep giving **4 puffs** every **4 minutes** until emergency assistance arrives



\*If calling Triple Zero (000) does not work on your mobile phone, try 112

### Call emergency assistance immediately (DIAL 000)

- If the person is not breathing
- If the person's asthma suddenly becomes worse, or is not improving
- If the person is having an asthma attack and a puffer is not available
- If you are not sure if it's asthma

Blue reliever medication is unlikely to harm, even if the person does not have asthma



To find out more contact your local Asthma Foundation  
**1800 645 130** | [asthmaaustralia.org.au](http://asthmaaustralia.org.au)

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**EVALUATION:**

Evaluation of the Asthma Policy will be reviewed every four years or when necessary.

This policy was reviewed in 2018

The next review will be in 2022