Asthma Management Policy

Issue date:	May 2025
Last Review date:	September 2024
Recent review date:	June 2024
Review cycle:	Annual
Approved by:	SCC Board

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE

In order to meet the duty of care obligations and to ensure the health and wellbeing of all students, Shepparton Christian College 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.

Asthma is a long-term lung condition characterized by recurrent attacks of breathlessness and wheezing which can vary from mild to severe and can vary from person to person.

The person with asthma has sensitive airways that narrow in response to a trigger. (Common triggers include exercise, smoke, colds/flu, weather changes, chemicals, strong emotions, etc) This causes inflammation and swelling, narrowing and increased mucous production. These episodes can be seasonal and signs and symptoms can vary and may include shortness of breath, wheezing, chest tightness, cough, difficulty speaking and indrawing of skin between ribs or at the base of the neck.

PURPOSE

- To provide, as far as practicable, a safe and supportive environment in which students diagnosed with asthma can participate equally in all aspects of the student's schooling
- To raise awareness about asthma and the School's Asthma Management Policy within the school community
- To engage with parents/carers of students diagnosed with asthma in assessing needs and providing care strategies for the student
- To ensure that each staff member has adequate knowledge about asthma and the school's Asthma Management Policy to assist in further reducing risk and for responding to instances where an asthma attack occurs

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- All staff, including causal relief staff, contractors and volunteers

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- All students who have been diagnosed with asthma or who may require emergency treatment for asthma and their parents/carers.

IMPLEMENTATION

Where a family has indicated that their child has asthma, the school requires parents to provide a colour copy Asthma Plan completed by their doctor or other registered medical practitioner. These are to be updated annually by the student's medical practitioner.

Parents are requested to inform the school if their child's medical condition changes, and if relevant, provide an updated Asthma Plan. This is to ensure that the School can fully discharge its duty of care and provide the best possible medical assistance.

The First Aid Officer will keep record of when student Asthma Plans expire and will contact the student's parents in a timely manner to request an updated plan.

When the school is provided with an updated Asthma Plan, it will be uploaded to the Operoo system and the parent/caregiver will be requested (by text message) to log in and approve the changes. Once this is done, the new Asthma Plan will show on the student's medical notes and be available for viewing via Operoo.

Shepparton Christian College wants students with asthma to feel safe and supported while at school. The School is able to provide parents with blank asthma plans to take to their doctor.

ASTHMA MEDICATION & ACTION PLANS

Families of all students with asthma are requested to provide reliever medication (in date) and a spacer (and a face mask if required) at all times their child attends the school. Students should have these in their school bags at school and on excursions and outings.

Students may provide an additional reliever medication, spacer and mask to be kept in the First aid room if assistance is required.

Parents/Guardians are also required to provide an Asthma Action Plan for their student, completed by their Dr., and updated annually. These action plans are kept in the Sick Bay, on Operoo, and the College's Server. This Action Plan should 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

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EMERGENCY KITS

In addition to parent-provided asthma kits for specific students, SCC has and maintains a minimum of three asthma emergency kits, kept in the First Aid Bay. The number of kits is increased dependent upon the number of students in the school presenting with asthma. The emergency kits contain:

- Blue-Grey reliever medication (Ventolin)
- two volume spacer devices
- asthma first aid instructions and a record form
- A record sheet/log for recording the details of an asthma first aid incident, such as the number of puffs administered
- The Assistant Principal in accordance with the First Aid Officer will monitor and maintain the Asthma Emergency Kits. They will:
- ensure all contents are maintained and replaced where necessary
- regularly check the expiry date on the canisters of the blue or blue/grey reliever puffers and replace them if they have expired or a low on doses
- replace spacers in the Kits after each use (spacers are single-person use only)
- dispose of any previously used spacers

Emergency kits are checked regularly to ensure medication has not expired and that any of the spacers that have been used are replaced.

TRAINING

Staff are provided with a copy of the school's Asthma Management Policy via our centralised network drive and are made aware of asthma management strategies upon employment at the school.

All staff, excluding CRTs undertake accredited Emergency Asthma Management (EAM) training on an annual basis. They course undertaken is 22556VIC.

COMMUNICATION

Information for students with asthma is stored in the School's digital student management system. A copy of students' Asthma Action Plans are made available via our online Operoo (Care-monkey) digital medical record centre and hard copies are kept in the First aid room.

For every camp and excursion, families are requested to update any details related to their child's medical condition on Operoo.

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Where there are concerns in relation to a student, these are communicated to the relevant family. Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the school to allow for open and supportive discussion in regard to their child's asthma condition.

The School works to ensure that:

- Families feel confident that their child's asthma condition will be monitored and can be suitably treated should their child have an asthma attack
- Families are provided with information for specific medical conditions such as asthma via the Parent Handbook
- There is prompt communication with families should there be any concerns
- Where possible, triggers of asthma symptoms for students are identified and minimised
- Students with asthma are not discriminated against in any way
- Students with asthma can participate in all activities safely and to their fullest abilities

Regarding communication from the Department of Education and Training, SCC will make staff aware of warnings and advice when the risk of epidemic thunderstorm asthma is forecast as high.

PROVIDING FIRST AID

Should a student suffer an asthma attack, the following actions are taken:

- Instructions are followed in line with the student's Asthma Action Plan which can be found in the First Aid Bay.
- Where no specific and signed instructions are available, the instructions are unclear, or the person does not have an Asthma Action Plan, Asthma Australia's Asthma First Aid plan is followed.
- Emergency procedures are implemented and an ambulance is called when:
    - the person's asthma symptoms are severe
    - the person suddenly stops breathing
    - the person's asthma symptoms fail to improve or continue to worsen
    - blue/grey reliever medication is not available
    - it is unclear as to what is causing the breathing difficulty

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FURTHER REFERENCES

- **Asthma Australia**
  https://asthma.org.au/
- **Department of Health Victoria**
  https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/searchresults?q=asthma
- **Better Health Channel**
  https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/thunderstorm-asthma
- AsthmaCarePlan.pdf (education.vic.gov.au)
- https://www.education.vic.gov.au/PAL/student-health-support-plan.docx

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ASTHMA FIRST AID

1 SIT THE PERSON UPRIGHT

- Be **calm** and reassuring
- **Do not leave** them alone

2 GIVE 4 SEPARATE PUFFS OF BLUE/ GREY RELIEVER PUFFER

- **Shake** puffer
- Put **1 puff** into spacer
- Take **4 breaths** from spacer
  - **Repeat** until **4 puffs** have been taken

OR give 2 separate inhalations of Bricanyl (6 years or older)
OR give 1 inhalation of Symbicort Turbuhaler (12 years or older)
OR give 2 puffs of Symbicort Rapihaler through a spacer (12 years or older)

If no spacer available: Take 1 puff as you take 1 slow, deep breath and hold breath for as long as comfortable. Repeat until all puffs are given

3 WAIT 4 MINUTES

- If there is no improvement, **give 4 more separate puffs of blue/grey reliever** as above

OR give 1 more inhalation of Bricanyl
OR give 1 more inhalation of Symbicort Turbuhaler
OR give 2 puffs of Symbicort Rapihaler through a spacer

IF THERE IS STILL NO IMPROVEMENT

4 DIAL TRIPLE ZERO (000)

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

OR give 1 inhalation of a Bricanyl or Symbicort Turbuhaler every 4 minutes – up to a max of 4 more inhalations of Symbicort Turbuhaler
OR give 2 puffs of Symbicort Rapihaler through a spacer every 4 minutes – up to a max of 8 more puffs of Symbicort Rapihaler

CALL EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE IMMEDIATELY AND DIAL TRIPLE ZERO (000) IF:

- the person is not breathing
- the person's asthma suddenly becomes worse or is not improving
- the person is having an asthma attack and a reliever is not available
- you are not sure if it is asthma
- **the person is known to have anaphylaxis – follow their Anaphylaxis Action Plan, then give Asthma First Aid**

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

Translating and Interpreting Service
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