



Our Lady of the Way Catholic Primary School **Asthma Policy**

RATIONALE:

Asthma affects up to one in four primary aged children, one in seven teenagers and one in ten adults. 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.

AIM:

To manage asthma and asthma sufferers as effectively and efficiently as possible at school.

PROCEDURES:

- 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).
- Children with asthma should be taught how to take their own asthma medication.
- Asthma medication must be provided by parents.
- Professional development will be provided regularly for all staff on the nature, prevention and treatment of asthma attacks. Such information will also be displayed on the First Aid Room wall.
- All students with asthma must have an up to date (annual) written asthma management plan consistent with Asthma Victoria's requirements completed by their doctor or paediatrician. Appropriate asthma plan proformas are available at www.asthma.org.au
- Asthma plans will be kept in the Asthma Plans folder stored in First Aid Room.
- Students with asthma will be recorded in the Off-site Activities Medical Register located in the First Aid Room for teachers to sign when asthma medication is taken off-site and returned.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring their children have an adequate supply of appropriate asthma medication (including a spacer) with them at school at all times.
- The school will provide, and have staff trained in the administering of, reliever medication (blue canister) such as Ventolin, Airomir, Asmol, Bricanyl or Epaq and

spacer devices in all first-aid kits, including kits on excursions and camps. Clear written instructions on how to use these medications and devices will be included in each first aid kit, along with steps to be taken to treat severe asthma attacks. Kits will contain 70% alcohol swabs to clean devices after use.

- The Admin Officer will be responsible for checking reliever medication expiry dates.
- Schools are not required to provide a nebuliser pump for their students to use.
- Asthma spacers are single-person use only. To avoid infection transmission via mucus spacers and masks must only be used by the one person. They should be: stored in a dustproof container. Spacers should not be stored in a plastic bag as this can cause static inside the spacer; and cleaned once a month by the student/parent/carer
- Blue/grey reliever medication 'puffers' may be used by more than one student, as long as they have been used with a spacer. If a spacer comes in contact with the mouth it cannot be re-used.
- All devices used for the delivery of asthma medication will be cleaned appropriately after each use. See <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/Pages/asthma.aspx> for Cleaning of Delivery Devices.
- Care must be provided immediately for any student who develops signs of an asthma attack.
- Children suffering asthma attacks should be treated in accordance with their asthma management 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 re-new it's application to Asthma Foundation Victoria's to continue participation in the Asthma Friendly Schools Program.

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the School Improvement Plan review cycle.