



Asthma Management Policy

Introduction

Asthma is a chronic health condition affecting approximately 10% of Australian children and teenagers. Asthma is one of the most common reasons for child admissions to hospital and days missed at school. Asthma is a narrowing of the small air passages in the lungs. The narrowing happens because the air passages become swollen and inflamed, causing wheezing, coughing and problems with breathing. It is not always possible to know when an attack will occur, but some common triggers are: colds, exercise, changes in weather, cigarette smoke, dust mites, pollens and pets.

Thunderstorm Asthma

Thunderstorm asthma is a form of asthma that is triggered by an uncommon combination of high pollen (usually late spring to early summer) and a certain kind of thunderstorm.

The College will be aware of forecast thunderstorms in the pollen season particularly on days with a HIGH or EXTREME pollen count. Students will be advised to remain indoors with doors and windows closed until the storm front has passed. On days of HIGH or EXTREME pollen counts, asthma and hay fever sufferers will be advised to remain indoors during recess and lunch.

The two types of medication used by people with asthma are:

- *Relievers* such as Ventolin (most common), Bricanyl, Asmol and Airomir. These help during an attack and act quickly.
- *Preventers* such as Becotide, Intal, Becloforte, Flixotide, Tilade, Pulmicort. These help prevent attacks from happening and are usually inhaled.

Asthma Management Plans

All students with Asthma must complete an annual Asthma Management Plan and have this signed by their doctor. These plans then need to be uploaded to CareMonkey. Copies of the Plans are available from PAM or the College's website. Hardcopies will also be held by the Health Centre Coordinator (HCC). If the College doesn't receive the annual Asthma Management Plan completed by the doctor, the College will follow the recommended School's Asthma Management Plan of the 4 x 4 x 4.

Access to Medication and Equipment

Students are responsible for carrying their own asthma medications and equipment. First Aid, all staff areas, Quambi (sports stadium) and all First Aid Kits are provided with spare Reliever inhalers and disposable spacers for emergency use where the student's medication cannot be quickly accessed.

First Aid Response

If a person experiences an asthma attack, the person in charge needs to:

- Sit person upright, remain calm and provide reassurance. Do not leave the student/person alone.
- Without delay, shake a blue reliever inhaler and give 4 separate puffs, 1 puff at a time, preferably through a spacer device. Ask the person to take 4 breaths from the spacer after each puff.

Advise First Aid Staff or Health Centre Coordinator of the asthma attack.

- Wait 4 minutes.

If there is little or no improvement, repeat 4 x 4 x 4 as above or hand over to First Aid Staff to seek their assistance to request an ambulance immediately. If the patient is a student, contact is to be made with their parents.

Responsibilities

The Principal/Health Centre Coordinator will:

- Provide asthma education and first aid training for staff as required.
- Direct parents and carers of students with asthma to the College Website to access a copy of the school's Asthma Policy.
- 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.
- Where possible, ensure that all students with Asthma have a current written asthma plan (must be updated at least annually) and uploaded to CareMonkey.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the asthma first aid procedure which is outlined at the twice-yearly briefings.
- Ensure adequate provision and maintenance of asthma emergency kits for the school and that each asthma emergency kit contains reliever medication, two spacer devices, and instructions outlining the first aid procedure.
- Ensure that reliever medications within the asthma emergency kits are replaced regularly and have not expired, and that disposable spacers are replaced after use.
- 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 how to locate a list of students with Asthma.
- Attend asthma education and training sessions when required.
- Be aware of where to locate asthma emergency kits and that spacers are a single use device. They must be disposed of once used.
- 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.
- Ensure that they have uploaded CareMonkey to their electronic device prior to any excursion or camp.

Parents and Carers will:

- Inform the school if their child has asthma upon enrolment.
- Read the school's Asthma Management Policy.
- Provide a signed asthma plan to the school, and ensure that it is updated at least annually and that it is uploaded to CareMonkey.
- Ensure that their child's CareMonkey profile is up to date prior to excursions and camps.
- Ensure that if their child is self-managing their asthma correctly and that the child carries their reliever medication and spacer at all times.
- Promptly communicate all medical and health information relevant to their child, to the HCC 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).

RESPONSIBILITY:	College Leadership Team, Asthma FS Liaison Person and Health Centre Coordinator
DATE DEVELOPED:	2000
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