

DRAFT ASTHMA POLICY

Purpose

Asthma affects up to one in four primary aged children and it is therefore important for all staff members to be aware of asthma, its symptoms and triggers, and the management of asthma in a school environment.

Background

- 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.

Management

- All students with asthma must have current written asthma management plan.
- All students with asthma will have the opportunity to submit to the school, an up-to-date (annual) written asthma management plan completed by their doctor or paediatrician.
- Asthma plans will be attached to the student's records for reference.
- 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 puffer (blue canister)
i.e. Ventolin and spacer devices held in first-aid room and included in 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 first aid staff member will be responsible for checking reliever puffer expiry dates.
- Teachers will update their knowledge about asthma through short presentations, printed information and professional development. Charts of asthma management will be on display in the First Aid Room and Duty File (see attached).

Room and Duty File (see attached).

- A school camp asthma management plan medical form must be completed and returned to the staff member in charge for a student to participate in school camps. A teacher will be responsible for administering 'preventer' medications on camp.
- 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 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.
- Teachers should notify parents of attacks and students daily condition in classroom where appropriate