

1. Rationale:

Asthma is a chronic health condition affecting approximately 10% of Australian children and Asthma is one of the most common reasons for child admissions to hospital and missed days of school. Asthma exacerbations can commonly occur while attending schools, particularly in February and May.

2. Aims:

In order to meet the duty of care obligations and to ensure the health and wellbeing of all students attending, Greenvale Primary 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.

3. Implementation:

3.1 The school will:

- Upon enrolment at the school, obtain a written Victorian Schools Asthma Action Plan for all students diagnosed with asthma and ensure they are updated at least annually. Asthma plans are to be handed into the office and a copy will be given to first aid and the classroom teacher. The plan must outline the prescribed medication taken by the student and when it is to be administered, emergency contact details, the contact details of the student's medical practitioner, the student's known triggers and the emergency procedures to be taken in the event of an asthma flare-up or attack. There is also to be an up to date photo on the plan.
- Store medical information and medications appropriately.
- Ensure the parents and carers of all students with asthma provide reliever medication and a spacer (with their name on it - and a face mask if required) at all times their child attends the school. Students to keep the ventolin and spacer in their school bag (with their name on it) for easy access. We have Ventolin and disposable spacers in first aid for emergencies.
- Ensure that students feel safe and supported at school.
- Provide and maintain at least two asthma emergency kits. Ensure adequate provision and maintenance of asthma emergency kits for the school and that each asthma emergency kit contains reliever medication, two disposable spacer devices, instructions outlining the first aid procedure and a record form.
- Ensure all staff undertake Emergency Asthma Management (EAM) training as required.
- Implement an asthma first aid procedure consistent with current national recommendations and all staff are aware of the asthma first aid procedure.
- 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 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.
- Upon enrolment of their child, provide parents and carers with a copy of the school's asthma policy.
- Ensure Health Support Plans are completed for students with asthma and reviewed annually.
- Ensure a School Camp and Excursion Medical Update Form is completed by parents/carers for off-site activities where possible.
- Ensure that reliever medications within the asthma emergency kits are replaced regularly and have not expired, disposable spacers are provided.

- 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.

3.2 The 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.
- Participate in Health Support Plan completion as required.
- 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.

3.3 Parents and Carers will:

- Upon enrolment, inform the school if their child has asthma.
- Read the school's asthma management policy which is on the school web-site.
- Provide a signed written Victorian Schools Asthma Action Plan to the school, and ensure that it is updated at least yearly.
- Participate and sign student Health Support Plans annually.
- Provide a School Camp or Excursion Medical Update form as required.
- Provide their child's reliever medication along with a spacer (required for 'puffer' medication) for all times the child is attending the school. This will remain in the possession of the child.
- 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.

3.4 The 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).

3.5 Asthma First Aid

- Written first aid instructions on the student's Asthma Action/Care Plan are to be followed when administering first aid.
- 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 Training).**

- **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.
 - if the person is known to have anaphylaxis.

3.6 Asthma Emergency Response Plan

- If a student is having an asthma attack.
- Difficulty breathing for an unknown cause, even if they are not known to have asthma.

School staff will endeavour to follow the Asthma First Aid procedures outlined in the table below. School staff may contact Triple Zero 000 at any time.

Step 1 – Sit the person upright:

- Be calm and reassuring.
- Do not leave them alone.
- Seek assistance from another staff member to locate the student's reliever, the Asthma Emergency Kit and the student's Asthma Action Plan (if available). Also can be retrieved from Compass or Cases21.
- If the student's action plan is not immediately available, use the Asthma First Aid as described in Steps 2 to 5.

Step 2 – Give 4 separate puffs of blue/grey reliever puffer:

- Shake the puffer.
- Use a spacer if you have one.
- Put 1 puff into the spacer.
- Take 4 breaths from the spacer.

Remember – shake, 1 puff, 4 breaths

Step 3 – Wait 4 minutes

- If there is still no improvement, give 4 more separate puffs of blue/grey reliever as above. (or give 1 more dose of Bricanyl or Symbicort inhaler).

Step 4 – If there is still no improvement call Triple Zero "000" and ask for an ambulance.

- Tell the operator the student is having an asthma attack.
- Keep giving 4 separate puffs every 4 minutes until emergency assistance arrives (or 1 dose of Bricanyl or Symbicort every 4 minutes – up to 3 doses of Symbicort).

Step 5 If asthma is relieved after administering Asthma First Aid, stop the treatment and observe the student. Notify the student's emergency contact person and record the incident.

3.7 Epidemic Thunderstorm Asthma

Greenvale Primary School will be prepared to act on the warnings and advice from the Department of Education and Training when the risk of epidemic thunderstorm asthma is forecast as high.

4. Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's ongoing policy and process review cycle.

References and Related Documents:

1. School Policy Advisory Library (PAL)
<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/asthma/policy>
2. Forms mentioned in this policy are available to download free of charge from the Resources section of The Asthma Foundation of Victoria website at www.asthma.org.au
3. Student Health Support Plan link at
<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/asthma/policy>

This policy was ratified by School Council in May 2022

