ASTHMA POLICY

RATIONALE
Asthma affects up to one in every six children. 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 in accordance with the ‘Asthma Friendly Schools’ (AFS) program and ‘The Asthma Foundation Victoria’ (TAFV).

IMPLEMENTATION
- 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).
- Professional development will be provided annually for all staff on the nature, prevention and treatment of asthma attacks. Such information will also be displayed on the staffroom wall.
- Every three years at least 75% of all staff will attend the official Asthma Friendly Schools Training session and as a result the school will retain its ‘Asthma Friendly School’ registration.
- 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 pro formas are available at www.asthma.org.au (Appendix A).
- Asthma plans will be attached to the student’s records for reference. Care must be provided immediately for any student who develops signs of an asthma attack.
- 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 puffers (blue canister) such as Ventolin, Airomir, Asmol or Bricanyl 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.
- At the commencement of the school year, it is the responsibility of the First Aid Officer to check the expiry date of each child’s asthma medication housed in the First Aid Room and notify parents when it needs to be replaced. We don’t house any asthma medication for students – delete whole paragraph
- The first aid officer will be responsible for checking reliever puffer expiry dates before being administered in a medical situation.
- Asthma Victoria has put forth the recommendation that Spacers are classed as medical devices and are categorised as single-person use. It is now mandatory for all Government Schools to adopt this policy.
- To minimise the cost in changing over to disposable single use spacers, we will be encouraging ALL families with Asthma students to supply their own spacers. The school will have a supply of disposable spacers in the First Aid room and in our First Aid backpacks, but it will be an expectation that all parents/guardians will cover the cost and reimburse the school where we have been required to use our own supplies.
- Nebulisers are no longer in common use and schools are not required to provide a nebuliser for their students to use. If a student is prescribed a nebuliser and wants to bring their own nebuliser to school parents must call The Asthma Foundation of Victoria and request the ‘Schools and Nebulisers’ Information Sheet or download it from www.asthma.org.au.
- All devices used for the delivery of asthma medication will be cleaned appropriately after each use. See 4.5.7.6 TAFV Reference Guide – Cleaning of Delivery Devices. We can no longer reuse spacers – delete paragraph
- Children suffering asthma attacks should be treated immediately in accordance with their asthma plan.
- If no plan is available the Asthma First Aid procedure will be followed. An Asthma First Aid poster must be displayed in the staffroom and sickbay at all times.

Last Updated: May 2013
REFERENCES
The Asthma Foundation Victoria (TAFV) - (The Victorian Schools Asthma Policy Revised 2010)
Official web address: www.asthma.org.au
Asthma Friendly Schools- Program Guidelines booklet

EVALUATION
Guidelines are updated annually and/or as per DEECD recommendations.

CERTIFICATION
This policy was ratified at the School Council Meeting held at Patterson Lakes Primary School, May 2013

Signed…………………………………………………... Signed………………………………………………...
  School Council President                             Principal