



PATTERSON LAKES PRIMARY SCHOOL

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ASTHMA POLICY

RATIONALE

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 missed days of school. In order to meet the duty of care obligations and to ensure the health and wellbeing of all students attending, Patterson Lakes Primary School 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.

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). To 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. To provide the necessary information to effectively manage episodes of Asthma within the school.

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.
- All school staff with a duty of care responsibility for the wellbeing of students will be trained in being able to manage an asthma emergency appropriately. Training will be conducted at least every three years. The will be done face-to-face or online.
- 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.asthmaaustralia.org.au.
- 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 as well as camps, excursions and school outings.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

ASTHMA FIRST AID

Follow the written first aid instructions on the student's Asthma Action/Care Plan.

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 Early Childhood Development).**

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

REFERENCES

- The Asthma Foundation Victoria (TAFV) - (The Victorian Schools Asthma Policy Revised 2011)
- Official web address: www.asthmaaustralia.org.au
- Asthma Friendly Schools- Program Guidelines booklet
- School Policy and Advisory Guide, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (2011), www.education.vic.gov.au/management/governance/spag/default.htm

EVALUATION

Guidelines are updated annually and/or as per DET recommendations.

CERTIFICATION

This policy was ratified at the School Council Meeting held at Patterson Lakes Primary School on October 18, 2016

Signed  School Council President

Signed  Principal