

Asthma Policy

Purpose:

To ensure schools support students diagnosed with asthma.

Melton Primary School will:

- ensure all staff with a duty of care for students are trained to assess and manage an asthma emergency and complete required DET training.
- ensure those staff with a direct student wellbeing responsibility such as nurses, PE/sport teachers, first aid and camp organisers have completed the Emergency Asthma Management (EAM) course at least every three years
- provide equipment to manage an asthma emergency in their asthma first aid kits, see: Asthma First Aid Kits in [Related policies](#).

Successful Practice

Symptoms of asthma may include, but are not limited to:

- shortness of breath
- wheezing (a whistling noise from the chest).
- tightness in the chest
- a dry, irritating, persistent cough.

Symptoms vary from person to person.

Triggers

- exercise
- colds/flu
- smoke (cigarette smoke, wood smoke from open fires, burn-offs or bushfires)
- weather changes
- dust and dustmites
- moulds
- pollens
- animals
- chemicals
- deodorants (including perfumes, after-shaves, hair spray and deodorant sprays)
- foods and additives
- certain medications (including aspirin and anti-inflammatories)
- emotions.

A detailed description of triggers can be found on the Asthma Foundation of Victoria website, see: [Other resources](#).

School Management

- refer to Medication Policy (to be used in conjunction with this policy)

Strategy	Description
Developing an asthma action plan	<p>The Asthma Foundation Victoria's School Asthma Action Plan should be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • completed by the student's medical/health practitioner in consultation with the parents/guardians • provided annually by the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - doctor to the parents/guardian - parents/guardians to the school. <p>The plan must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the prescribed medication taken: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - on a regular basis - as premedication to exercise - if the student is experiencing symptoms. • emergency contact details • business and after hours contact details of the student's medical/health practitioner • details about deteriorating asthma including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - signs to recognise worsening symptoms - what to do during an attack - medication to be used • an asthma first aid section and should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - specify no less than 4 separate puffs of blue reliever medication, with 4 breaths taken per puff every 4 minutes, using a spacer if possible. <p>Note: It is recommended that if the plan has less than the required number of puffs per minute period it should be sent back to the parent/guardian and doctor for review. For the School Asthma Action Plan, see Asthma Foundation Victoria in Other resources</p>
Training staff	<p>All school staff with a duty of care responsibility for the wellbeing of students should be trained in being able to manage an asthma emergency appropriately. Training should be conducted at least every three years.</p> <p>The Asthma Foundation of Victoria provides a free one hour training session to educate school staff on how to manage asthma in the school setting including how to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • manage asthma in the school setting • assess and manage an asthma emergency. <p>The Asthma Foundation also has Asthma First Aid posters available to schools for free which should be displayed in the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • staff room • sick room • areas where asthma attacks are likely to occur or be treated.
Reducing asthma triggers	<p>To reduce asthma triggers schools can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mow school grounds out of hours • plant a low allergen garden - for a brochure see Asthma Foundation of Victoria in Other resources • limit dust, for example having the carpets and curtains cleaned regularly and out of hours • examine the cleaning products used in the school and their potential impact on students with asthma • conduct maintenance that may require the use of chemicals, such as painting, during school holidays • turn on fans, air conditioning and heaters out of hours when being used for the first time after a long period of non-use.
Providing an asthma first aid kit	<p>Anyone with asthma can have a severe attack, even those with mild asthma. Schools should have at least two asthma emergency first aid kits.</p>
Encouraging camps and special event participation	<p>Schools should ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • parents provide enough medication for the student if they are going away overnight • enough asthma emergency kits are available for the camp or excursion needs

Strategy	Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> that parents/guardians to complete the Asthma Foundation's School Camp Asthma Action Plan and the Department's Confidential Medical Information for School Council Approved School Excursions form.
Managing exercise induced asthma (EIA)	<p>If a student has diagnosed EIA schools should ensure that they allow adequate time for the following procedures; before, during and after exercise</p> <p>Before:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reliever medication to be taken by student 5-20 minutes before activity student to undertake adequate warm up activity <p>During:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> if symptoms occur, student to stop activity, take reliever, only return to activity if symptom free if symptoms reoccur, student to take reliever and cease activity <p>After:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure cool down activity is undertaken be alert for symptoms <p>If a student has an asthma attack during exercise, follow their Asthma Action Plan if easily accessible, or commence first aid procedure.</p> <p>Always notify parent of any incidents.</p>
Communicating with parents	Regularly communicate with the student's parents about the student's successes, development, changes and any health and education concerns. In particular the frequency and severity of the student's asthma symptoms and use of medication at school.

Ratified at School Council on 18th March 2020