



## ASTHMA MANAGEMENT POLICY

### 1. RATIONALE

To provide an understanding and the appropriate management of asthma in the School community.

The School has a duty of care to support students and staff with asthma.

### 2. SCOPE

The scope of the policy includes:

1. All school: Senior School, Boarding House, Junior School
2. All members of the community: staff, students, parents.

### 3. BACKGROUND

One in nine people in Australia has asthma. It affects people of all ages. Asthma cannot be cured, but for most people it can be well controlled by following a daily management plan.

Asthma is one of the most common reasons for school absenteeism and hospital admission in school aged children.

Asthma attacks must be identified quickly and treated correctly to ensure the best outcome for the person affected. Teachers and staff must be aware of the symptoms, triggers and best practice management of asthma so they can assist their asthmatic students while at school.

St Hilda's is an Asthma Friendly School. Asthma Friendly Schools are recognised by Asthma Australia for taking extra measures to ensure the safest possible environment is provided for students with asthma.

### 4. DEFINITIONS

Asthma is a long-term lung condition. People with asthma have sensitive airways in their lungs which react to triggers, causing a 'flare-up'. In a flare-up, the muscles around the airway squeeze tight, the airways swell and become narrow and there is more mucus. These things make it harder to breathe.

An asthma flare-up can come on slowly (over hours, days or even weeks) or very quickly (over minutes). A sudden or severe asthma flare-up is sometimes called an asthma attack. Asthma cannot be cured, but for most people it can be well controlled by following a daily management plan.

### 5. LEGISLATION

Not applicable

## 6. POLICY

St Hilda's is committed to supporting students who suffer from asthma and assisting them to participate in all school activities. It is our policy that:

- We provide a clear set of guidelines for the management of asthma in our school. The guidelines in this policy have been developed having regard to the publications of the Asthma Australia
- We establish procedures for responding to and dealing with students who have been diagnosed with asthma and procedures for responding to an asthma attack
- We identify and, where possible, minimise asthma triggers identified on a student's health plan
- Student medical records and Asthma Action Plans are communicated to relevant staff in a confidential manner, stored appropriately and updated regularly
- Where possible, we encourage students with asthma to self-administer medication and keep it on their person at all times
- We inform parents/carers as soon as possible of concerns regarding a student's asthma, particularly where it is limiting the student's ability to participate fully in all activities
- Where necessary, we modify activities for the student with asthma in accordance with their needs
- We provide education, support and resources for staff, parents/carers, students and the wider school community on asthma awareness
- We place Asthma Emergency Kits - spacer device, Ventolin inhaler and Asthma First Aid Action Plan - in appropriate areas within the school and ensure staff know where to access them
- Our staff are trained to provide Asthma First Aid and how to use the equipment and medication in our Asthma Emergency Kits
- We display emergency Asthma First Aid posters in key locations around the School

## 7. GUIDELINES/PROCEDURES

### 7.1 Students

- Are supported to self-manage their asthma in line with their age and stage of development. Asthma and asthma care is explained to the student.
- To advise staff of Asthma symptoms

### 7.2 Parents/Carers

- Provide an Asthma Action Plan, signed by the treating doctor. To be updated every three years or confirmed no changes.
- Provide their child's medication, clearly dated and in the original labelled container. A spacer, and mask as required, should also be supplied
- To give permission for administration of Ventolin
- Parents are responsible for replacement of expired medications
- Alert staff to any changes in their child's asthma management

### 7.3 Nursing Staff

- Provide appropriate treatment as per Asthma Australia guidelines
- Document any asthma attack and advise parents/carers as a matter of priority
- Review documentation regularly to ensure compliance with procedures
- Ensure all parents of students identified with asthma provide a current Asthma Action Plan and medication

### 7.4 Staff

- Are aware of the School's Asthma Management Policy
- Know the students with asthma in their care

- Know where the Asthma Emergency Kits or duty bum bags are located in the School
- Know how to implement First Aid treatment in the event of an asthma attack (as per attached generic Asthma First Aid plan)
- Access students' written Asthma Action Plans as required from the school database
- Know asthma triggers and how to recognise asthma symptoms
- Know that use of a spacer with a puffer is more effective than puffer alone
- Know that asthma puffers have an expiry date and ensure that a staff member has the responsibility for checking generic asthma puffers regularly
- Always inform the school nurse of an asthma incident and send for review if required
- Attend asthma education three yearly or update with e-training

#### **7.5 School**

- Meet all legal, regulatory and policy requirements related to health care planning and asthma management
- Maintain a central record of students health care needs, including asthma, and review regularly
- Induct new staff in asthma policies and procedures including asthma training and information for all staff
- Review policies and practices on an annual basis or as need arises

#### **8. BREACH**

If you breach this policy you may be subject to disciplinary actions.

**Responsibility:** Dean of Students  
**Review Date:** June 2017  
**Next Review Date:** June 2018

# Asthma First Aid

## 1 Sit the person upright

- Be calm and reassuring
- Do not leave them alone



## 2 Give 4 separate puffs of blue/grey reliever puffer

- Shake puffer
- Put 1 puff into spacer
- Take 4 breaths from spacer

Repeat until 4 puffs have been taken

Remember: Shake, 1 puff, 4 breaths

OR give 2 separate doses of a Bricanyl inhaler (age 6 & over) or a Symbicort inhaler (over 12)



## 3 Wait 4 minutes

- If there is no improvement, give 4 more separate puffs of blue/grey reliever as above

OR give 1 more dose of Bricanyl or Symbicort inhaler



## 4 If there is still no improvement call emergency assistance - Dial Triple Zero (000)

- Say 'ambulance' and that someone is having an asthma attack
- Keep giving 4 separate puffs every 4 minutes until emergency assistance arrives

OR give 1 dose of a Bricanyl or Symbicort every 4 minutes - up to 3 more doses of Symbicort



Call emergency assistance immediately – Dial Triple Zero (000)

If the person is not breathing

If the person's asthma suddenly becomes worse or is not improving

If the person is having an asthma attack and a reliever is not available

If you are not sure if it's asthma

If the person is known to have Anaphylaxis- follow their Anaphylaxis Action Plan, then give Asthma First Aid

Blue/grey reliever medication is unlikely to harm, even if the person does not have asthma



Contact your local Asthma Foundation

1800 ASTHMA Helpline (1800 278 462) [asthmaaustralia.org.au](http://asthmaaustralia.org.au)

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