



ASTHMA POLICY

Rationale:

- Asthma affects up to one in four primary aged children, one in seven teenagers and one in ten adults. 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. This policy is to be used in conjunction with The Asthma Foundations 'Victorian Schools Asthma Policy' revised 2006 and the Department of Education and Training School Policy & Advisory Guide.
- Newborough Primary School is a registered Asthma Friendly School with the Asthma Foundation.

Definition

- Asthma is a disease of the airways, the small tubes which carry air in and out of the lungs. When you have asthma symptoms the muscles in the airways tighten and the lining of the airway swells and produces sticky mucus. These changes cause the airways to become narrow so that there is less space for the air to flow into and out of your lungs.

Aims:

- To manage asthma and asthma sufferers as effectively and efficiently as possible at school.

Implementation:

- Asthma attacks involve the narrowing of airways making it difficult to breathe. Symptoms commonly include difficulty breathing (shortness of breath), 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 for all staff on the nature, prevention and treatment of asthma attacks. Such information will also be displayed on the first aid and staffroom walls.
- 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.asthma.org.au The plan must include the students name, the prescribed medication and when it is to be taken eg frequency, before exercise and business contact details of the medical practitioner.
- It is recommended that if the first aid/dosage section of the Asthma Management Plan states less than 4 puffs of blue reliever medication with 4 breaths taken per puff, it should be sent back to the parent/guardian and doctor for review.
- Asthma plans will be attached to the student's records for reference.
- 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 school & personal devices after use. Disposable spacers will be purchased by the school for student use where required.
- A nominated first aid staff member will be responsible for checking reliever puffer expiry dates.
- A nebuliser pump will not be used by the school staff unless a student's asthma management plan recommends the use of such a device. In the event a nebuliser is required to be administered during school hours, information should be sought from The Asthma Foundation Information sheets regarding correct procedures.
- Disposable spacers can be used by the same student a maximum of 5 times before it must be disposed of.

References: School Policy and Advisory Guide/Student Health/Asthma and
www.asthma.org.au

- All devices (not including disposable spacers) used for the delivery of asthma medication will be cleaned appropriately after each use to prevent cross infection.
 - Ensure the medication canister is removed from the spacer
 - Separate the spacer into two parts
 - Wash the spacer in hot water with dishwashing detergent
 - Do not rinse
 - Allow spacer to air dry do not wipe
 - When dry, wipe the mouthpiece thoroughly with a 70% alcohol swab
 - When completely dry, ensure the spacer is stored as hygienically as possible in a dustproof container
- Care must be provided immediately for any student who develops signs of an asthma attack.
- Children suffering asthma attacks should be treated in accordance with their asthma plan.
- If no plan is available children are to be sat down, reassured, administered 4 puffs of a shaken reliever puffer (blue canister) delivered via a spacer – inhaling 4 deep breaths per puff, wait 4 minutes, if necessary administer 4 more puffs and repeat the cycle. An ambulance must be called if there is no improvement after the second 4-minute wait period, or if it is the child's first known attack. Parents must be contacted whenever their child suffers an asthma attack.

Evaluation:

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in....

August 2015