



ASTHMA POLICY

Scriptural Context

*“Help carry one another’s burdens and in this way you will obey the law of Christ.”
Galatians 6:2*

Rationale

St Patrick’s School is committed to raising the awareness of asthma amongst those involved with the school community. Approximately 1 in 9 Australians have currently been diagnosed asthmatic. It is a common cause for school absenteeism and is a major cause of childhood admissions to hospital. People die from asthma and more than half of these asthma deaths are preventable. With appropriate management the impact of asthma can be minimised.

Aims

The aim of this policy is to document strategies for implementation of best practice asthma management within a school’s setting so that:

- All staff are aware of which individuals are asthmatic
- All individuals who have asthma can receive appropriate attention as required
- We can respond to the needs of those who have not been diagnosed with asthma and who have an asthma flare up or difficulty breathing.

Guidelines

Asthma management is the co-responsibility of the school and family. This Policy outlines measures that need to be implemented to ensure the safety of all students. It is the responsibility of the Principal or delegated person to ensure that these guidelines are followed and practised. Management, staff and families each have a role in the effective control of asthma. This is outlined in the indicators.

- Recognising that asthma is widespread and can be serious and we welcome anybody with asthma
- Raising the awareness of asthma amongst those involved with our school
- Providing the opportunity for staff to receive training in recognising and responding to an asthma flare up
- Keeping a record of all individuals with asthma when this information is provided to us
- Providing the necessary procedures to ensure the health and safety of all persons with asthma involved with our school
- Recognising that people with asthma need immediate access to their reliever medication at all times
- Providing an environment in which children with asthma can participate in all activities to their full potential
- Ensuring asthma emergency kits are available during all onsite and offsite activities

Guideline Indicators

Asthma management should be viewed as a shared responsibility. To this end each of the key groups within St Patrick’s Primary School gives the following undertakings:

The Management will:

- Identify children with asthma during the enrollment process. Request a copy of the child's Asthma Action plan which will be reviewed annually by a General Practitioner.
- Ensure a copy of the Asthma Policy is available to parents through the school's website.
- Provide all staff with a copy of the Asthma Policy and brief them on asthma procedures upon their appointment to the school.
- Provide opportunity & encouragement for staff to attend regular asthma training and ensure that at least one staff member responsible for first aid who has completed asthma training (Emergency Asthma Management) is on duty whenever children are being cared for or educated, including off site excursions.
- Ensure that all staff are informed of the children with asthma in their care.
- Formalise and document the internal procedures for Asthma First Aid, for both children with a diagnosis of asthma, and those with no known diagnosis of asthma (first flare up).
- Ensure that an Asthma First Aid poster is displayed in a key location. See **Appendix One**.
- Ensure that the Asthma Emergency Kit contains a blue reliever puffer (e.g. Airomir, Asmol, Epaq or Ventolin), two spacer devices and child mask if necessary and concise written instructions on Asthma First Aid procedures.
- Authorised staff member checks expiry dates.
- Promptly communicate any concerns to families should it be considered that a child's asthma is limiting his/her ability to participate fully in all activities.

Staff will:

- Ensure that they maintain current Asthma First Aid training.
- Ensure that they are aware of the children in their care with asthma.
- In consultation with the family, optimise the health and safety of each child through supervised management of the child's asthma.
- Ensure that all regular prescribed asthma medication is administered in accordance with the information on the Child's Asthma Action Plan.
- Administer emergency asthma medication if required according to the child's Asthma Action Plan. If no Asthma Action Plan is available the Standard Asthma First Aid Plan should be followed immediately.
- Promptly communicate, to management and families, if they are concerned about the child's asthma limiting his/her ability to participate fully in all activities.
- Encourage children to carry their reliever medication and use their medication as soon as symptoms develop.
- Use their discretion to limit outside play when there is poor air quality due to smoke.

Families will:

- Inform the school, either upon enrolment or on initial diagnosis, that their child has a history of asthma.
- Provide all relevant information regarding the child's asthma via the Asthma Action Plan as provided by the child's doctor.
- Notify the staff, in writing, of any changes to the Asthma Action Plan during the year.

- Ensure that their child has an adequate supply of appropriate medication (reliever) and spacer device clearly labeled with the child's name including expiry dates.
- Communicate all relevant information and concerns with staff as the need arises e.g. if asthma symptoms were present during the night.

Strategies

School/ Community Health Education Curriculum

- Asthma awareness sessions during assemblies.
- Parent Information via Newsletter
- Students with asthma are encouraged to take part in normal sporting activities.

School Indoor Environment

- Pods with carpet will be vacuumed weekly and professionally cleaned annually using non-toxic products.
- Ceiling fans and heating/cooling vents will be cleaned regularly.
- Low allergy / irritant cleaning agents will be used for cleaning.
- No smoking is allowed within the school grounds.

School Outdoor Environment

- Any insect sprays or weed sprays will be used on weekends or school holidays.

Excursions:

For every school sporting day, excursion or camp:

- A minimum of one staff member capable of managing an acute asthma flare up will be present.
- Parents/ carers will be notified of their responsibility to ensure that their child has an adequate supply of appropriate medication.
- Students will be encouraged to continue taking usual medications and to always carry their blue reliever puffer. (Airomir, Bricanyl or Ventolin)
- An Asthma Emergency Kit will be carried in the school First Aid Kit

Reflective Materials

- St. Patrick's Vision Statement
- St. Patrick's School Pastoral Care and Student Management Policy
- The Asthma Friendly Children's Services Guidelines
- The Asthma Foundation of NSW's Policies
- Occupational Health and Safety Act
- Asthma Australia Website

This policy was last ratified by St. Patrick's School Board in...
Revised in...

September, 2006
March, 2011
November, 2015
August, 2021