

ASTHMA

Purpose:

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. 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.

Aims:

That Wilandra Rise Primary School manages asthma and asthma sufferers as effectively and efficiently as possible at school. Children and adults with mild asthma rarely require medication, however severe asthma sufferers may require daily or additional medication (particularly after exercise).

Implementation:

- Professional development is provided for all Wilandra Rise Primary School staff on the nature, prevention and treatment of asthma attacks. Such information is also displayed in sickbay, and in the sports room.
- All students with asthma must have an up to date (annual) written asthma management plan consistent with Asthma Victoria's requirements completed by parents in consultation with their doctor or paediatrician. Appropriate asthma plan proformas are available from school reception.
- Asthma plans will be monitored by first aid staff members with copies provided for class teachers and the first aid room. All exercise induced asthma students have copies of their asthma plans provided for the sports teachers. The student information sheet will also reflect the student's asthma plan and be kept in the student's file. Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring their children have an adequate supply of appropriate and current asthma medication (including a spacer) with them at school at all times.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for updating the school of any changes in the treatment and/or management of their child's asthma condition throughout the year.
- The school will provide, and have staff trained in the administering of, reliever puffers (blue canister) such as Ventolin, Airomir, Asmol or Bricanyl and disposable spacer devices in all first-aid kits, including kits on excursions and camps. First aid staff members are responsible for checking school supplied reliever puffer expiry dates.
- All student asthma medication is held in sick bay and stored in clearly marked, easily accessed individual files kept in filing cabinets.
- School Inhalers are located strategically across the school in ten different learning communities. Maps of these locations are displayed throughout the school
- 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/guardians must be contacted whenever their child suffers an asthma attack.**

Evaluation:

- Minor review conducted annually.
- Major review on a cyclic basis as deemed necessary by Principal and School Council.