

HIGHVIEW COLLEGE
ASTHMA MANAGEMENT POLICY
Person Responsible – Director of Pastoral Care



Rationale

"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 airways 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." (National Asthma Council 2011)

The key to prevention of an asthma attack in schools is knowledge of those students who have been diagnosed at risk, awareness of triggers (allergens), and prevention of exposure to these triggers. Partnerships between the College and parents/carers are important in ensuring that risks will be minimised.

Aims

- To provide as far as practicable, a safe and supportive environment in which students at risk of an asthma emergency can participate in as many aspects of the student's schooling as possible
- To raise awareness about triggers and asthma in the school community
- To engage with parents/carers of students at risk of asthma in assessing risks, developing risk minimisation strategies and management strategies for the student
- To ensure that all staff members have adequate knowledge of triggers, asthma and the College's Asthma Management Policy and procedures in responding to an Asthma emergency
- To ensure that policies and procedures are in place to minimise risks.

Implementation

Individual Asthma Management Plans

- An individual management plan is to be developed by the College's First Aid Officer in consultation with the student's family, for any student who has been diagnosed by a medical practitioner as being at risk of having a severe reaction.
- Each student's Asthma Management Plan will be in place as soon as practicable and before the student commences at the College.

The Asthma Management Plan must include:

- an Asthma Foundation Victoria's School Asthma Action Plan, which is completed by the student's medical/health practitioner in consultation with the parents/carers. This must be updated annually and presented to the school at the start of each year and should include:
 - the prescribed medication taken:
 - 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:
 - signs to recognise worsening symptoms
 - what to do during an attack
 - medication to be used
- an asthma first aid section and should:
 - specify no less than 4 separate puffs of blue reliever medication, with 4 breaths taken per puff every four minutes, using a spacer.

1. **Communication Plan**

- Information will be provided to staff, students and parent/carers about Asthma: the triggers, symptoms and treatment.
- Information in regards to students at risk, individual management plans, storage arrangements for medication and the College's Asthma Management Policy will be presented to staff.
- The college will help raise awareness about allergies and asthma in the school community.

2. **Staff Training**

- All teachers and other College staff who conduct classes in which students with asthma attend, will have up to date training in asthma management. This will include steps to be taken in response to an asthma attack by a student in a classroom, in the College grounds, on College excursions, on College camps and special event days. Qualifications must be renewed every three years.
- A record of staff Asthma Management qualifications will be kept by the Principal.
- Training sessions will be held for staff twice yearly.

Additional Information:

- **APPENDIX 1: Facts**
- **APPENDIX 2: Minimisation Strategies**
- **APPENDIX 3: Roles and Responsibilities**

Developed by Aileen Thomas - 2013

Updated by Marion Martin – 2015

Updated by Marion Martin – 2016

APPENDIX 1 FACTS

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.

APPENDIX 2 MINIMISATION STRATEGIES

To reduce asthma triggers Highview College will:

- mow school grounds out of hours
- plant a low allergen gardens
- 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
- ban aerosol containers.

APPENDIX 3 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Principal/Director of Pastoral Care will be responsible for:

- Providing staff with a copy of the school's Asthma Management Policy and ensure that staff are aware of asthma management strategies
- Providing for asthma education and staff training (qualifications to be renewed every three years and staff training provided each semester)
- Identifying students at risk of asthma
- Identifying and minimising, where possible, triggers of asthma symptoms
- Keeping a register of staff training qualifications
- Keeping a register stating that staff have read, understood and are willing to abide by the school Asthma Management Policy and that they are aware of students at risk and their individual management plans.

The First Aid Officer is responsible for:

- Ensuring that all students at risk have an Asthma Management Plan, which is updated annually
- Ensuring that parent/carers provide up to date, properly labelled reliever medication
- Providing at least two asthma emergency first aid kits
- Displaying emergency management information in classrooms, staffrooms and sick bay
- Communicating regularly with parents/carers about the frequency and severity of asthma symptoms and use of medication at school.

The Staff is responsible for:

- Ensuring they are aware of the College's Asthma Management Policy and first aid procedures
- Being aware of students at risk and their individual management plans
- Having up to date qualifications and making a copy of this available to the Principal's Secretary
- Identifying and minimising, where possible, triggers of asthma symptoms.
- Providing time for prevention strategies to be implemented for students with exercise induced asthma, before, during and after exercise

Before:

- reliever medication to be taken by student 5-20 minutes before activity
- student to undertake adequate warm up activity

During:

- if symptoms occur, student to stop activity, take reliever, only return to activity if symptoms free
- if symptoms reoccur, student to take reliever and cease activity

After:

- ensure cool down activity is undertaken
- be alert for symptoms

Following asthma emergency procedures when needed and notifying the office immediately.

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- Providing a signed Asthma Action Plan annually
- Reading and abiding by the College's Asthma Management Policy
- Providing the College with reliever medication, and if self-regulating, the child carries this medication with them at all times
- Communicating any changes to their child's asthma.

Students are responsible for:

- Immediately informing staff if they experience any asthma symptoms
- Informing staff if they have self-administered any asthma medication
- Having their asthma medication with them at all times.