SPS ASTHMA MANAGEMENT POLICY

RATIONALE

Asthma is a chronic health condition affecting approximately 10% of Australian children and teenagers. Asthma is one of the most common reasons for child admissions to hospital and missed days of school. Asthma exacerbations can commonly occur while attending schools, particularly in February and May.

In order to meet the duty of care obligations specified by the School Policy and Advisory Guide (SPAG) and to ensure the health and wellbeing of all students attending, Sherbourne Primary School recognises the importance of staff education and the implementation of an asthma policy. The school recognises the importance of involvement and engagement with parents and carers of students and the ability of students to self-manage their asthma where appropriate.

AIMS:

- To ensure the whole school community (principals, staff, volunteers, parents and carers and students) are aware of their obligations and the best practice management of asthma in the school setting
- To provide the necessary information to effectively manage students with asthma attending the school

IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PRINCIPAL/SENIOR MANAGEMENT TO:

- Provide staff with a copy of the school’s asthma management policy and ensure staff are aware of asthma management strategies upon employment at the school
- Ensure that key staff (e.g., School Nurses, First Aid Officers, P.E. and Sport Teachers) undertake Emergency Asthma Management training and that all other staff with a duty of care for students attend a free asthma education session provided by The Asthma Foundation of Victoria
- Provide parents and carers with a copy of the school’s asthma policy upon enrolment of their child
- Identify students with asthma during the enrolment process and provide parents and carers with an Asthma Action/Care Plan completed and signed by the child’s medical practitioner
- Where possible, ensure that all students with asthma have a current Asthma Action/Care Plan (must be updated at least annually)
- Ensure a School Camp and Excursion Medical Update Form is completed by parents/carers for off-site activities
- Where possible, ensure the parents and carers of all students with asthma provide reliever medication and a spacer (and a face mask if required) at all times that their child attends the school
- Implement an asthma first aid procedure consistent with current national recommendations
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the asthma first aid procedure
- Ensure adequate provision and maintenance of asthma emergency kits for the school
- Ensure that each asthma emergency kit contains reliever medication (a blue/grey metered dose inhaler containing salbutamol), two spacer devices, instructions outlining the first aid procedure and a record form
- Ensure that reliever medications within the asthma emergency kits are replaced regularly and have not expired, and that spacers are replaced after each use
- Facilitate communication between management, staff, parents and carers and students regarding the school’s asthma management policy and strategies
- Promptly communicate to parents and carers any concerns regarding asthma and students attending the school
- Identify and minimise, where possible, triggers of asthma symptoms for students attending the school
- Ensure that students with asthma are not discriminated against in any way
- Ensure that students with asthma can participate in the school’s activities safely and to their fullest abilities

IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF STAFF TO:

- Ensure they are aware of the school’s asthma management policy
- Ensure they are aware of the asthma first aid procedure
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- Ensure that they are aware of students with asthma and where their medication and personal spacers are stored
- Ensure they attend asthma education and training sessions when required
- Ensure they are aware of where to access Asthma Action/Care Plans, School Camp and Excursion Medical Update Forms and asthma emergency kits
- Identify and minimise, where possible, triggers of asthma symptoms for students attending the school
- Ensure that students with asthma are not discriminated against in any way
- Ensure that students with asthma can participate in the school’s activities safely and to their fullest abilities
- Promptly communicate to the principal, parents and carers any concerns regarding asthma and students enrolled in the school

IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTS/CARE GIVERS TO:

- Inform the school if their child has asthma upon enrolment
- Read the school's asthma management policy
- Provide a signed Asthma Action/Care Plan to the school, and ensure that the plan is updated at least yearly
- Provide a School Camp or Excursion Medical Update form as required or when requested by the school
- Provide the school with their child’s reliever medication along with a spacer (required for ‘puffer’ medication) for all times the child is attending the school, unless the child is carrying the medication and spacer for self-management purposes
- Ensure that if their child is self-managing their asthma correctly the child carries their reliever medication and spacer at all times
- Promptly communicate all medical and health information relevant to their child, to the principal and staff of the school
- Communicate any changes to their child’s asthma or any concerns about the current health of their child

IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STUDENTS TO:

- Immediately inform staff if they experience asthma symptoms
- Inform staff if they have self-administered any asthma medication
- Have their asthma medication and spacer with them at all times if they are self-managing asthma symptoms

ASTHMA EMERGENCY KITS An Asthma First Aid Kit should contain:

- Reliever medication
- Two spacer devices
- Record form
- Asthma First Aid instructions
- It is recommended that spacers are single-person use only. It is essential to have at least two spacers on hand for each first aid kit and that spacers are replaced each time they are used.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Current DET and Asthma Foundation resources are available at http://www.asthma.org.au/Resources/SchoolsandChildrensServices.aspx

These include

a) School Asthma Action Plan
b) Camp and Excursion Medical Update form
c) Asthma First Aid procedure
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ASTHMA FIRST AID PROCEDURE

- Follow the written first aid instructions on the individual’s Asthma Action/Care Plan, if available and signed by a medical practitioner. If no specific and signed instructions are available, the instructions are unclear, or the person does not have an Asthma Action/Care Plan, begin the first aid procedure as prescribed by Asthma Foundation Victoria.
- Reliever medication is safe to administer to students, even if they do not have asthma, however if there is no Asthma Action/Care Plan you must also call emergency assistance to attend (000) and notify the parent/carer of the student as soon as possible.

**Asthma First Aid**

1. **Sit the person upright**
   - Be calm and reassuring
   - Do not leave them alone

2. **Give 4 puffs of blue reliever puffer medication**
   - Use a spacer if there is one
   - **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**

3. **Wait 4 minutes**
   - If there is no improvement, give 4 more puffs as above

4. **If there is still no improvement call emergency assistance (DIAL 000)**
   - Say ‘ambulance’ and that someone is having an asthma attack
   - Keep giving 4 puffs every 4 minutes until emergency assistance arrives
   
   *If calling Triple Zero (000) does not work on your mobile phone, try 112

**Call emergency assistance immediately (DIAL 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 puffer is not available
- If you are not sure if it’s asthma

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