



# St Francis Xavier Primary School

## Asthma Management Policy

### **Rationale:**

Students with asthma have sensitive airways in their lungs. When exposed to certain triggers their airways narrow, making it hard for them to breathe.

Three main factors cause the airways to become narrow:

- The inside lining of the airways becomes red and swollen (inflammation)
- Extra mucus (sticky fluid) may be produced
- The muscle around the airways tightens (bronchoconstriction)

### **How do you recognise asthma?**

- Shortness of breath
- Wheeze
- Chest tightness
- A dry, irritating, persistent cough, particularly at night/early morning, with exercise or activity

### **Asthma triggers**

Every student's asthma is different. Not all students will have the same triggers, nor will they react to every trigger. Some triggers include:

- Common triggers may include:
- Colds and flu
- Exercise/activity (idiopathic)
- Inhaled allergens (e.g. pollens, moulds, animal dander and dust mites)
- Environmental factors (e.g. dust, pollution, wood smoke and bush fires)
- Changes in temperature and weather
- Chemicals and strong smells (e.g. perfumes, deodorants and cleaners)
- Emotional factors (e.g. laughter, stress)
- Some foods and food preservatives, flavourings and colourings

### **Purpose**

At St Francis Xavier Primary School, we aim to:

- provide a safe and supportive environment for students and staff with asthma;
- identify children with asthma during the enrolment process and ask parents and carers to provide the school with a Asthma Australia written asthma plan form completed in consultation with a medical practitioner;
- ensure staff identify children in their care with asthma and are able to locate where medication and personal spacers (and face masks) are stored;
- maintain current Emergency Asthma Management training and qualifications;
- ensure that children with asthma can participate in all activities safely and to their fullest abilities;
- Asthma First Aid posters are on display and information is available for staff and parents;
- provide and maintain at least two asthma emergency kits

### **Implementation**

Principal or Principal Nominee /First Aid Officer(SFX Office Manager) Responsibility:

- Establish and Update Asthma Management Policy in accordance with *Asthma Australia* Guidelines.
- File the current Asthma Action Plan with the student's enrolment record (ICON) and advise staff of students with these plans
- Display Asthma First Aid Poster in the First Aid Room.
- 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.

- Display individual Asthma Action Plans in the First Aid Room and ensure that they are in close proximity to the reliever medication.
- Ensure that reliever medications within the asthma emergency kits are replaced regularly and have not expired. The SFX Office Manager will check these regularly.
- Provide asthma education and first aid training for staff as required.
- Facilitate communication between leadership, 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.
- Minimise exposure to known triggers.
- Ensure children with asthma can participate in all activities safely and to their full potential.
- Register the school as an Asthma Friendly School.

#### Staff Responsibility:

- Be aware of students with asthma and where their medication and personal spacers are stored.
- Will administer prescribed asthma medication (if necessary) in accordance with the child's Asthma Action Plan.
- Document any asthma attack and advise parents/carers as a matter of priority.
- Be aware of the school's asthma management policy.
- Be aware of the asthma first aid procedure.
- Attend asthma education and training sessions when required.
- Be aware of where to access written asthma plans, School Camp and Excursion Medical Update Forms, and asthma emergency kits.
- Take the asthma first aid kit, children's personal asthma medication and Asthma Action Plans on excursions or other offsite events.
- Identify and minimise, where possible, triggers of asthma symptoms for students.
- Ensure children with asthma can participate in all activities safely and to their full potential.

#### Parents/Guardians Responsibility:

- Provide an Asthma Care Plan, signed by the treating doctor/medical practitioner.
- Provide their child's medication, clearly dated and in the original labelled container with a signed Medication form if requiring other medication, e.g. Zyrtec. A spacer, and mask as required, should also be supplied.
- Alert staff immediately to any changes in their child's asthma management.
- Provide an Asthma Foundation Victoria Camp Plan or Excursion Medical Update form as required.

#### Students Responsibility:

- Are supported to self-manage their asthma and recognise their triggers
- Immediately inform staff if they experience asthma symptoms
- Inform staff if they have self-administered any asthma medication

#### Recognising an Asthma Attack

Mild	Moderate	Severe
TALK IN SENTENCES	SHORTENED SENTENCES	FEW WORDS PER BREATH
Cough	Persistent cough	Persistent cough
Soft wheeze	Loud wheeze	Wheeze may be absent
Minor difficulty breathing	Difficulty breathing	Gasping for breath/distress
	Tightness in chest	Pale, sweaty blue lips
	Young children may complain of a sore tummy	Muscle exertion

## Asthma First Aid


Sit the student upright and give reassurance. Do not leave the student alone.  
Follow the written first aid instructions on the student's Asthma Action/Care Plan.  
(Refer to Asthma First Aid Poster below)

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 immediately (as authorised by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development).


### **Call emergency assistance to attend (000)/(112) if:**

- The person's asthma symptoms are severe.
- The person suddenly stops breathing.
- The person's asthma symptoms continue to get worse.
- There is no asthma action/care plan for the person.
- Blue/grey reliever medication is not available.
- You are unsure what is causing the breathing difficulty.

## **ASTHMA FIRST AID**


**1**  **SIT THE PERSON UPRIGHT**

- Be calm and reassuring
- Do not leave them alone

**2**  **GIVE 4 SEPARATE PUFFS OF BLUE/GREY RELIEVER PUFFER**

- 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


OR give 2 separate doses of a Bricanyl Inhaler (age 6 & over) or a Symbicort Inhaler (over 12)

**3**  **WAIT 4 MINUTES**

- if there is no improvement, give 4 more separate puffs of blue/grey reliever as above

OR give 1 more dose of Bricanyl or Symbicort inhaler

**IF THERE IS STILL NO IMPROVEMENT**

**4**  **DIAL TRIPLE ZERO (000)**

- Say 'ambulance' and that someone is having an asthma attack
- Keep giving 4 separate puffs every 4 minutes until emergency assistance arrives

OR give 1 dose of a Bricanyl or Symbicort every 4 minutes – up to 3 more doses of Symbicort

 Translating and Interpreting Service  
131 450

 **ASTHMA AUSTRALIA**

Contact Asthma Australia  
**1800 ASTHMA**  
(1800 278 462)  
[asthma.org.au](http://asthma.org.au)

### **CALL EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE IMMEDIATELY AND DIAL TRIPLE ZERO (000) IF:**

- the person is not breathing
  - the person's asthma suddenly becomes worse or is not improving
  - the person is having an asthma attack and a reliever is not available
  - you are not sure if it's asthma
  - the person is known to have Anaphylaxis – follow their Anaphylaxis Action Plan, then give Asthma First Aid
- Blue/grey reliever medication is unlikely to harm, even if the person does not have asthma.

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**Evaluation:** This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's review cycle or as required.

We will:

- Seek recommendations by Asthma Australia

This policy was last reviewed and ratified by SFX School Staff - March 2020

Reference: Asthma Australia