



Asthma

POLICY

Purpose

To ensure that Ocean Grove Primary School appropriately supports students diagnosed with asthma.

Objective

To explain to Ocean Grove Primary School parents/carers, staff and students the processes and procedures in place to support students diagnosed with asthma.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- all staff, including casual relief staff, contractors and volunteers
- all students who have been diagnosed with asthma or who may require emergency treatment for asthma and their parents/carers.

Policy

Asthma

Asthma is a long term lung condition. People with asthma have sensitive airways in their lungs which react to triggers, causing a 'flare-up'. In a flare-up, the muscles around the airway squeeze tight, the airways swell and become narrow and there is more mucus. This makes it hard to breathe. An asthma flare-up can come on slowly (over hours, days or even weeks) or very quickly (over minutes). A sudden or severe asthma flare-up is sometimes called an asthma attack.

Symptoms

Symptoms of asthma can vary over time and often vary from person to person. The most common asthma symptoms are:

- breathlessness

- wheezing (a whistling noise from the chest)
- tight feeling in the chest
- persistent cough

Symptoms often occur at night, early in the morning or during/just after physical activity. If asthma is well controlled, a person should only have occasional asthma symptoms.

Triggers

A trigger is something that sets off or starts asthma symptoms. Everyone with asthma has different triggers. For most people with asthma, triggers are only a problem when asthma is not well controlled with medication. Common asthma triggers include:

- exercise
- colds/flu
- smoke (cigarette smoke, wood smoke from open fires, burn-offs or bushfires)
- weather changes such as thunderstorms and cold, dry air
- house dust mites
- moulds
- pollens
- animals such as cats and dogs
- chemicals such as household cleaning products
- deodorants (including perfumes, after-shaves, hair spray and aerosol deodorant sprays)
- food chemicals/additives
- certain medications (including aspirin and anti-inflammatories)
- laughter or emotions, such as stress

Asthma management

If a student diagnosed with asthma enrolls at Ocean Grove Primary School:

1. Parents/carers must provide the school with an Asthma Action Plan which has been completed by the student's medical practitioner and be updated annually. The plan must outline:
 - the prescribed medication taken by the student and when it is to be administered, for example as a pre-medication to exercise or on a regular basis

- emergency contact details
 - the contact details of the student's medical practitioner
 - the student's known triggers
 - the emergency procedures to be taken in the event of an asthma flare-up or attack.
2. Parents/carers should also provide a photo of the student to be included as part of the student's Asthma Action Plan.
 3. Ocean Grove Primary School will keep a copy of all Asthma Action Plans in the Administration Office.
 4. Students will have their Ventolin and Asthma Action Plans in their classrooms.
 5. School staff may also work with parents/carers to develop a Student Health Support Plan which will include details on:
 - how the school will provide support for the student
 - identify specific strategies
 - allocate staff to assist the student
 6. If a student diagnosed with asthma is going to attend a school camp or excursion, Ocean Grove Primary School parents/carers are required to provide any updated medical information.
 7. If a student's asthma condition or treatment requirements change, parent/carers must notify the school and provide an updated Asthma Action Plan.

Student asthma kit

All students diagnosed with asthma are required to have a student asthma kit at school which contains:

- their own prescribed reliever medication labelled with the student's name
- their spacer (if they use one)

Student asthma kits will be stored in their classroom.

Students will be required to keep their asthma kits with them while at school, particularly when attending various classrooms such as specialist lessons.

Asthma emergency response plan

If a student is:

- having an asthma attack
- difficulty breathing for an unknown cause, even if they are not known to have asthma

School staff will endeavour to follow the Asthma First Aid procedures outlined in the table below. School staff may contact Triple Zero “000” at any time.

Step	Action
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Student to stay where they are - do not walk them to the sickbay- Sit the person upright- Be calm and reassuring- Do not leave them alone- Seek assistance from another staff member or reliable student to locate the student’s reliever, the Asthma Emergency Kit and the student’s Asthma Action Plan (if available).- If the student’s action plan is not immediately available, use the Asthma First Aid as described in Steps 2 to 5.
2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Give 4 separate puffs of reliever puffer/follow students own plan)- Shake the puffer- Use a spacer if you have one- Put 1 puff into the spacer- Take 4 breaths from the spacer- Remember – Shake, 1 puff, 4 breaths
3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Wait 4 minutes- If there is no improvement, give 4 more separate puffs of reliever as above

4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If there is still no improvement call Triple Zero “000” and ask for an ambulance. - Tell the operator the student is having an asthma attack - Keep giving 4 separate puffs every 4 minutes until emergency assistance arrives
5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If asthma is relieved after administering Asthma First Aid, stop the treatment and observe the student. - Notify the student’s emergency contact person and record the incident

Staff will call Triple Zero “000” immediately 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 reliever is not available
- if they are not sure if it is asthma
- if the person is known to have anaphylaxis

Training for staff

The Principal will ensure that Ocean Grove Primary School has sufficient staff with the appropriate levels of first aid training and up to date CPR to meet the first aid needs of the school community.

Ocean Grove Primary School will also conduct an annual briefing for staff on:

- the procedures outlined in this policy
- the causes, symptoms and treatment of asthma
- identities of the students diagnosed with asthma
- how to use a puffer and spacer
- the location of:
 - the Asthma Emergency Kits
 - asthma medication which has been provided by parents for student use.

Ocean Grove Primary School will also provide this policy to casual relief staff and volunteers who will be working with students, and may also provide a briefing if the Principal decides it is necessary depending on the nature of the work being performed.

Asthma Emergency Kit

Ocean Grove Primary School will provide and maintain at least two Asthma Emergency Kits. One kit will be kept on school premises at first aid room/front office and one will be a mobile kit for activities such as:

- yard duty
- camps and excursions.

The Asthma Emergency Kit will contain:

- at least 1 reliever medication such as Airomir, Admol or Ventolin
- at least 2 spacer devices (for single person use only) to assist with effective inhalation of reliever medication (Ocean Grove Primary School will ensure spare spacers are available as replacements).
- clear written instructions on Asthma First Aid, including:
 - how to use the medication and spacer devices
 - steps to be taken in treating an asthma attack

The recording details of an asthma first aid incident, such as the number of puffs administered will be entered on Sentral

Office administration team will monitor and maintain the Asthma Emergency Kits. They will:

- ensure all contents are maintained and replaced where necessary
- regularly check the expiry date on the canisters of the reliever puffers and replace them if they have expired.
- replace the disposable spacer in the Kits after each use (Disposable spacers are single-person use only)

The reliever medication in the Asthma Emergency Kits may be used by more than one student as long as they are used with a spacer. If the devices come into contact with someone's mouth, they will not be used again and will be replaced.

After each use of a reliever (with a spacer):

- remove the metal canister from the puffer (do not wash the canister)
- wash the plastic casing
- rinse the mouthpiece through the top and bottom under running water for at least 30 seconds
- wash the mouthpiece cover
- air dry then reassemble

- test the puffer to make sure no water remains in it, then return to the Asthma Emergency Kit.

Management of confidential medical information

Confidential medical information provided to Ocean Grove Primary School to support a student diagnosed with asthma will be:

- A copy of the student's Asthma Management Plan will be filed in the Administration office
- recorded on the student's file
- shared with all relevant staff so that they are able to properly support students diagnosed with asthma and respond appropriately if necessary.

Communication plan

This policy will be available on Ocean Grove Primary School's website so that parents and other members of the school community can easily access information about Ocean Grove Primary School's asthma management procedures.

Epidemic Thunderstorm Asthma

Ocean Grove Primary School will be prepared to act on the warnings and advice from the Department of Education and Training when the risk of epidemic thunderstorm asthma is forecast as high.

Further information and resources

- Asthma Australia: [Resources for schools](#)
- Policy and Advisory Library:
 - [Asthma](#)
 - [Treating an asthma attack](#)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	August 2021
Approved by	Principal

Next scheduled review date	August 2022 - this policy has a mandatory review cycle of 1 year
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Extracted from <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/asthma/policy>