

Burton Primary School – Asthma Policy - Draft

ASTHMA POLICY PHILOSOPHY

At Burton Primary School we are committed to ensuring that the health needs of students with asthma are appropriately supported.

PURPOSE

To explain to Burton Primary School's 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.

IMPLEMENTATION

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

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- moulds and 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

While it is impossible to avoid all asthma triggers, Burton Primary School is committed to reducing the likelihood of common triggers. We will avoid:

- Strong scents – including air fresheners, candles, as well as strong perfume, aftershaves and aerosol deodorants.
- Aerosol sprays – including cleaning products
- Chemical and cleaning products, other than what is supplied by the school or cleaners
- Animals on site that are common triggers, such as cats and dogs

We will also ensure a good cleaning regime is implemented, including the regular checking of airconditioner filters. All buildings are cleaned on a regular basis. Cleaning products are supplied by the site or cleaning company inline with departmental policies.

Asthma Management

If a student diagnosed with asthma enrolls at Burton Primary School:

Parents/carers must provide the school with an Asthma Care Plan which has been completed by the student's medical practitioner. 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.

The school will also use a photo of the student to be included as part of the student's Asthma Care Plan.

Burton Primary School will keep all Asthma Care Plans in the first aid room.

If a student diagnosed with asthma is going to attend a school camp or excursion, parents/carers are required to provide any updated medical information and related medications.

If a student's asthma condition or treatment requirements change, parent/carers must notify the school and provide an updated Asthma Care 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 the First Aid Room. If families want to provide an additional puffer and spacer for their child to keep on them or in their school bag this is allowed and can be useful to students who need their puffer more regularly.

Asthma Emergency Response Plan

If a student is:

- having an asthma attack
- having 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 1 - Action:

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 Care 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.

Step 2 - Action:

Give 4 separate puffs of blue or blue/grey reliever puffer:

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

Step 3 - Action

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)

Step 4 - Action

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 (or 1 dose of Bricanyl or Symbicort every 4 minutes – up to 3 doses of Symbicort)

Step 5 - Action

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

Burton Primary School recommend the following asthma management training for staff:

- HLTAID004 Provide an emergency first aid response in an education & care setting
- Asthma Australia (free online training) - <https://asthmaonline.org.au/product/asthma-first-aid-for-schools-2021/>

Burton Primary School will also conduct an annual briefing for staff in Week 0 Term 1 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.

The 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

Burton Primary School will provide and maintain at least two Asthma Emergency Kits which will be housed in the first aid room. One kit (large) will be kept on school premises in the First Aid Room and one (bumbag) will be a mobile kit for activities such as:

- yard duty
- camps and excursions.

Each main building will also have its own Asthma Emergency Kit. This kit should be stored in an agreed location, with staff informed of the location in the yearly briefing. If a module has an excursion, they should take the Asthma Emergency kit bumbag from the first aid room and leave their buildings kit in its regular location.

The Asthma Emergency Kit will contain:

- at least 1 blue or blue/grey reliever medication such as Airomir, Admol or Ventolin
- at least 2 spacer devices (for single person use only) to assist with effective inhalation of the blue or blue/grey reliever medication (The school will ensure spare spacers are available as replacements). Spacers will be stored in a dust proof container.
- clear written instructions on Asthma First Aid, including:
 - o how to use the medication and spacer devices
 - o steps to be taken in treating an asthma attack
- flowchart for asthma and anaphylaxis response
- a record sheet/log for recording the details of an asthma first aid incident, such as the number of puffs administered.

The school first aid officer 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 blue or blue/grey reliever puffers and place them if they have expired or a low on doses
- replace spacers in the Kits after each use (spacers are single-person use only)
- dispose of any previously used spacers

The blue or blue/grey 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 blue or blue/grey 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 the school to support a student diagnosed with asthma will be:

- 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 the school website so that parents and other members of the school community can easily access information about our school's asthma management procedures.

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed in line with the school's Evaluation of Policies Timetable.