RATIONALE:

Asthma affects up to one in four primary aged children, one in seven teenagers and one in ten adults. It is important therefore for all staff members, as part of their duty of care, to be aware of asthma, its symptoms and triggers, and the management of asthma in a school environment.

AIMS:

- To manage asthma and those who have asthma as effectively as possible at school.
- To maintain open communication between the school and the student’s parents/guardians.
- To ensure that all school staff are aware of the importance of daily asthma management and know how to assess and manage an asthma emergency.

IMPLEMENTATION:

- Professional learning will be provided annually for all staff on the nature, prevention and treatment of asthma attacks. Such information will also be displayed on the staffroom wall and in the Sick Bay.
- All staff are to be aware of the students who have asthma who are in their care and know the location of the student’s medication and the disposable spacers.
- All students with asthma must have an up to date (annual) written Asthma Management Plan. This plan is to be consistent with Asthma Victoria’s requirements and completed and signed off by their doctor.
- Asthma plans will be attached to the student’s records for reference. These are accessed from a filing cabinet in the Office.
- If any student’s medication is kept at the Office it is to presented in a snap lock plastic bag with the student’s name, clearly visible, and with instructions for its administration.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring their children have an adequate supply of appropriate asthma medication and a spacer with them at school at all times.
- The school will provide reliever puffers (blue canister) and a spare / disposable spacer devices in all first-aid kits, including kits on excursions and camps. Clear written instructions on how to use these medications and devices will be included in each first-aid kit, along with steps to be taken to treat severe asthma attacks. Kits will contain 70% alcohol swabs to clean devices after use.
- Trained staff that administers reliever puffers via a spacer must record this appropriately in the School Medications book.
- The Principal will be responsible for checking reliever puffer expiry dates and the purchasing of replacements.
Care must be provided immediately for any student who develops signs of an asthma attack.

Children suffering asthma attacks should be treated in accordance with their Asthma Plan.

If no plan is available staff are to follow the Asthma First Aid Plan – see below.

### ASTHMA FIRST AID PLAN

**Step 1.** Sit the person upright, be calm and reassuring.
   Do not leave them alone.

**Step 2.** Give 4 separate puffs of a blue reliever.
   The medication is best given one puff at a time via a spacer device. Ask the person to take 4 breaths from the spacer after each puff of medication. If a spacer is not available, use the blue reliever puffer on its own.

**Step 3.** Wait 4 minutes.

**Step 4.** If there is little or no improvement repeat steps 2 and 3.
   If there is still little or no improvement call an ambulance immediately (DIAL 000).

Continue to repeat steps 2 and 3 while waiting for the ambulance.

*** If there are severe breathing problems call an ambulance immediately stating, “Severe asthma attack”.

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**Guidelines for the use of Spacers**

- If a reliever medication ‘puffer’ is used with a spacer, it is not coming in contact with the mouth and therefore the spacer CAN be reused. However, if a reliever medication ‘puffer’ is not used with a spacer, then it must also be considered single-person use and cannot be used by another person.
- Used spacers should be disposed of. If the spacer has never been used, it may be given to the first student that uses it, and the spacer should then be replaced as soon as possible.
- After the spacer has been used for first aid, it can either be given to the person who used it (they may keep it as their personal spacer), or dispose of it. When disposing of a spacer, check the manufacturer’s instruction to determine whether it should be placed in the recycling bin or garbage.
- An Asthma Emergency Kit should be stocked with two spacers (and two masks children’s services).


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**EVALUATION**

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school’s review cycle.

*Growing together, in faith, for the future*