



St. Martin de Porres School

Avondale Heights

ASTHMA POLICY

RATIONALE

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 harder 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.

A number of students experience bouts of Asthma at school times. It is the school's duty of care to support these students through these events.

GOAL

To ensure St. Martin de Porres school supports students diagnosed with asthma.

IMPLEMENTATION

St. Martin de Porres school :

- ◆ has a whole school policy to manage asthma that addresses staff asthma awareness training, Asthma Emergency Kit content and maintenance, medication storage and management of confidential medical information;
- ◆ ensures all staff with a duty of care for students are trained to assess and manage an asthma emergency and complete the free one-hour Asthma Education session at least every three years;
- ◆ ensure those staff with a direct student wellbeing responsibility such as nurses, PE/sport teachers, first aid and school staff attending camp have completed an accredited Emergency Asthma Management (EAM) course at least every three years;
- ◆ will act on advice and warnings from the CEM Emergency Management Division associated with a potential thunderstorm asthma activity;
- ◆ provide equipment to manage an asthma emergency in the form of an Asthma Emergency Kit;
- ◆ staff are trained to identify the symptoms of asthma – breathlessness, wheezing, tight chest and a persistent cough and the next steps in dealing with this.
- ◆ staff are trained to also identify common asthma triggers such as exercise, colds/flu, smoke, weather changes, house dust mites, moulds, pollens, animal hair, chemicals, deodorants, food chemicals or additives or emotions such as stress and laughter;
- ◆ expects parents to provide the school with a School Asthma Action Plan completed by the student's medical practitioner. The plan must outline the student's known triggers and the emergency procedures to be taken in the event of an asthma flare-up or attack. This must be completed in the first weeks of the school year and then on an annual basis;
- ◆ will conduct an annual Asthma Briefing at the beginning of the school year on the school's asthma management policy, causes, symptoms and treatment of asthma, the identities of students diagnosed with asthma and where their medication is located, how to use a puffer and spacer, the school's general first aid and emergency response procedures and the location of, and access to, reliever medication that has been provided by parents or the Asthma Emergency Kits;

- ◆ will reduce asthma triggers by mowing school grounds out of hours, planting a low allergen gardens, limiting dust by having the carpets and curtains cleaned regularly and out of hours, examining the cleaning products used in the school and their potential impact on students with asthma, conducting maintenance that may require the use of chemicals, such as painting, during school holidays, turning on fans, air conditioning and heaters out of hours when being used for the first time after a long period of non-use;
- ◆ where there is no School Asthma Action Plan for a particular child, will follow the guidelines recommended by Asthma Victoria. That is, to administer 4 puffs - by 4 breaths - by 4 minutes and call an ambulance if there is no improvement.
- ◆ will ensure any enrolled child is required to bring their own prescribed reliever medication to school each day. This should be stored in their asthma kit, with a copy of their Asthma Action Plan and their spacer.
- ◆ will ensure parents provide enough medication (including preventer medication) for the student if they are going away overnight, enough Asthma Emergency Kits are available for the camp or excursion needs, that parents/guardians complete the Asthma Foundation's School Camp and Excursion Medical Update Forms;
- ◆ will regularly communicate with the student's parents about the student's successes, development, changes and any health and education concerns. In particular, the frequency and severity of the student's asthma symptoms and use of medication at school.

ASSESSMENT & REPORTING

The staff member responsible for the set up of Kits will evaluate the effectiveness of the school's Asthma strategy with the School Principal or Deputy Principal on an annual basis and present this evaluation to staff.

EVALUATION

Policy developed in 2014, reviewed annually