Rationale:
- Asthma affects up to one in four primary aged children, one in seven teenagers and one in ten adults. Asthma attacks involve the narrowing of airways making it difficult to breathe. Symptoms commonly include difficulty breathing, wheezy breathing, dry and irritating cough, tightness in the chest and difficulty speaking. Sufferers may require frequent or infrequent medication.
- It is important therefore for all staff members to be aware of asthma, its symptoms and triggers, and the management of asthma in a school environment.

Aims:
- To manage asthma and asthma sufferers as effectively and efficiently as possible at school.
- To ensure that each staff member has sufficient knowledge of allergies, asthma and asthma medications such that they are able to administer first aid in a competent and timely manner.
- To ensure that all staff members undertake 3 yearly Asthma updates provided by the Asthma Foundation.
- To involve parents/carers of students diagnosed with asthma developing risk minimisation and action plans for each student.
- To provide supplies and facilities to cater for the administering of first aid (see First Aid Policy).

Implementation:
- Professional development will be provided for all staff on the nature, prevention and treatment of asthma attacks. Such information will also be displayed in the First Aid room.
- All students with asthma must have an up to date (annual) written asthma management plan consistent with Asthma Victoria’s requirements completed by their doctor or paediatrician. Appropriate asthma plan pro formas are available at www.asthma.org.au
- Asthma plans will be attached to the student’s records for reference.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring their children have an adequate supply of appropriate asthma medication (including a spacer) with them at school at all times.
- The school will provide Asthma First Aid kits which will include reliever puffers (blue canister) such as Ventolin, Airomir, Asmol or Bricanyl, spacer devices in all first-aid kits and instructions on how to administer the medication. The Asthma First Aid kits will be available in the First Aid room and in first aid kits on excursions and camps. Kits will contain 70% alcohol swabs to clean devices after use if required.
- The first aid staff member will be responsible for checking reliever puffer expiry dates.
- A nebuliser pump will not be used by the school staff unless a student’s asthma management plan and the parent will be responsible for supplying the nebuliser.
- All devices used for the delivery of asthma medication should be disposed of after use. If a non disposable spacer is used it will be cleaned appropriately after each use. See 4.5.7.4 SOTF Reference Guide – Cleaning of Delivery Devices.
- 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 asthma plan is available an asthma attack is suspected the child will be treated according to the DEECD policy plan: children are to be seated, reassured, remain under supervision, administered 4 puffs of a shaken reliever puffer (blue canister) delivered via a spacer – inhaling 4 deep breaths per puff, wait 4 minutes, if necessary administer 4 more puffs and...
repeat the cycle. An ambulance must be called if there is no improvement after the second 4
minute wait period, or if it is the child’s first known attack.

- If the Asthma treatment is successful after administering medication. Contact the student’s
  emergency contact and record the incident.

- Parents must be informed whenever their child suffers an asthma attack and 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.

- The school will take care to minimise asthma triggers by ensuring grass is mown outside
  school hours, planting low pollen plants, maintaining regular cleaning and limiting
  maintenance such as painting or cleaning which requires chemicals to outside school hours.

**Evaluation:**

- All will be for 3 year review unless otherwise stated.

**References:**

DEECD Asthma Kits Policy

DEECD Asthma Policy

DEECD Asthma Attacks Policy