Bulleen Heights School

ASTHMA POLICY

Help for non-English speakers
If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the school on 9850 7122

PURPOSE
To ensure that Bulleen Heights School appropriately supports students diagnosed with asthma.

OBJECTIVE
To explain to Bulleen Heights 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)
- house dust mites
- pollens
- chemicals such as household cleaning products
- food chemicals/additives
- laughter or emotions, such as stress
- weather changes such as thunderstorms and cold, dry air
- moulds
- animals such as cats and dogs
- deodorants (including perfumes, after-shaves, hair spray and aerosol deodorant sprays)
- certain medications (including aspirin and anti-inflammatories)

Asthma management

If a student diagnosed with asthma enrols at Bulleen Heights School:

1. Parents/carers must provide the school with an Asthma Action 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.
2. Parents/carers should also provide a photo of the student to be included as part of the student's Asthma Action Plan.
3. Bulleen Heights School will keep all Asthma Action Plans:
    - front office, classroom, first aid room and medical details folder in the office and sick bay at each campus.
4. A Student Health Support Plan is only required where the student's asthma is not well-controlled, as identified by a health practitioner in the Asthma Action Plan, and the student needs individualised medical or health-related supervision, care or adjustments at school.
    - Where required, school staff will work with parents/carers and, where applicable, the student, guided by advice from the student's treating health team, to develop a Student Health Support Plan.
    - The Student Health Support Plan will document the support and adjustments the school will provide, specific strategies, and the staff responsible for individual student supervision and care.
    - A Student Health Support Plan is not required for a student with well-controlled asthma who does not need individualised supervision, care or adjustments beyond their Asthma Action Plan and this policy.

    Any Student Health Support Plan will be developed and reviewed in accordance with Bulleen Heights School's Health Care Needs Policy and the Department's Health Care Needs policy.

5. 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 enough medication, including preventer medication where required, for the activity.

6. If a student's asthma condition or treatment requirements change, parents/carers must notify the school and provide an updated Asthma Action Plan or other current medical or health advice as appropriate.
7. School staff will review an Asthma Action Plan when updated information is received from the student's medical or health practitioner, when the student's needs or level of support changes, or when the school, student or parents/carers have concerns about the support being provided. Otherwise, the school will recommend at least an annual review and seek confirmation from parents/carers that the Asthma Action Plan remains current. Where a Student Health Support Plan is required, it will also be reviewed in accordance with the Department's Health Care Needs policy.

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) and a copy of their current Asthma Action Plan

Student asthma kits will be stored in the front office at each campus, unless an alternative readily accessible location is documented for an individual student.

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 follow the Asthma First Aid procedures outlined in the table below. If the student has an Asthma Action Plan that is immediately available, staff should follow that plan. School staff may call Triple Zero "000" at any time.

For a student experiencing difficulty breathing who has not previously been diagnosed with asthma, staff will commence asthma first aid and call Triple Zero "000" after the first 4 puffs of reliever medication.

Step	Action
1.	Sit the person upright • Be calm and reassuring • Do not leave them alone • Seek assistance to locate the student's Asthma Action Plan, reliever medication and an Asthma Emergency Kit if required. • If the Asthma Action Plan is not immediately available, use asthma first aid as described below.
2.	Give 4 separate puffs of blue or blue-grey reliever puffer: • Shake the puffer. • Use a spacer if available. • Put 1 puff into the spacer and have the student draw in the medication. • Repeat until 4 puffs have been given. • If using a Bricanyl inhaler instead, give 2 doses.
3.	Wait 4 minutes. • If there is no improvement, give 4 more separate puffs of blue or blue-grey reliever as in Step 2 and wait 4 minutes. • If using a Bricanyl inhaler, give 1 more dose.

4.	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 inhaler every 4 minutes.
5.	If asthma is relieved after administering asthma first aid, stop treatment and observe the student. • Notify the student's emergency contact person. • Record the incident in eduSafe Plus in accordance with the Department's Managing and Reporting School Incidents (Including Emergencies) policy. • If an Asthma Emergency Kit was used, record the details in the kit record or log, including the number of puffs administered.

Staff will call Triple Zero "000" immediately and state that a student is having an asthma attack if:

- the student is not breathing
- the student is having a severe or life-threatening attack, including where reliever medication is not working at all, the student cannot speak a full sentence, has extreme difficulty breathing, feels their asthma is out of control, or their lips are turning blue
- the student is having an asthma attack and a reliever is not available
- at any time the student's condition suddenly worsens or is not improving, or staff are otherwise concerned about the student's health and safety
- the student is known to have anaphylaxis. Follow the student's Anaphylaxis Action Plan first, then give asthma first aid.

Training for staff

Bulleen Heights School will arrange the following asthma management training for staff:

Staff	Completed by	Course	Provider	Cost	Valid for
Group 1 All school staff	All school staff	Asthma First Aid for Schools. Free 1-hour non-accredited asthma education session, completed online or face-to-face.	Asthma Australia	Free to schools	3 years
Group 2 Targeted staff	Staff working with high-risk students with a history of severe asthma; staff with direct student wellbeing responsibility, including nurses, first aid officers and camp organisers; and staff in high-risk teaching areas, including PE/sport and home economics/cooking teachers.	22702VIC Course in the Management of Asthma Risks and Emergencies in the Workplace (accredited, face-to-face).	Registered Training Organisation with the course in its scope of registration	Paid by Bulleen Heights School	3 years

Bulleen Heights School may also conduct an annual asthma briefing for staff, preferably at the beginning of the school year, 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, and access to:
    - the Asthma Emergency Kits
    - asthma medication which has been provided by parents for student use.

Bulleen Heights School will provide this policy to casual relief staff and volunteers who will be working with students and may provide a briefing where appropriate to their role. If a staff member who requires targeted training has not yet completed it, the Principal will put an interim student supervision arrangement in place, documented in any relevant Student Health Support Plan. Required training will be completed as soon as practicable, preferably before a newly enrolled student with asthma begins school.

Asthma Emergency Kit

Bulleen Heights School will provide and maintain at least two Asthma Emergency Kits. Kits will be located so they are readily accessible in an asthma emergency, including at the front office of each campus. Mobile Asthma Emergency Kits will also be available for activities such as:

- yard duty, excursions and sports days
- camps.

The Asthma Emergency Kit will contain:

- at least 1 blue or blue-grey reliever medication such as Airomir, Asmol or Ventolin
- at least 2 spacer devices for single-person use to assist with effective inhalation of blue or blue-grey reliever medication. Spare spacers will be available as replacements and stored in a dustproof container.
- 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
- a record sheet or log for recording use of the kit and supporting kit maintenance, including details such as the number of puffs administered.

A nominated staff member, currently the OHS representative, will monitor and maintain the Asthma Emergency Kits. They will:

- ensure all contents are maintained and replaced where necessary
- regularly check the expiry date and dose level of blue or blue-grey reliever puffers and replace them if expired or low on doses
- replace spacers in the kits after each use. Spacers are single-person use only and, once used, may be given to that student or disposed of
- dispose of 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 Bulleen Heights 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 Bulleen Heights School's website so that parents and other members of the school community can easily access information about Bulleen Heights School's asthma management procedures.

Epidemic Thunderstorm Asthma

Bulleen Heights School will be prepared to act on advice and warnings from the Department of Education associated with a potential epidemic thunderstorm asthma event. When the risk is forecast as high, the school will implement relevant Department advice, communicate with the school community as required, reduce exposure where practicable, and follow emergency response procedures and individual Asthma Action Plans.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Included in staff induction processes and staff training
- Included in staff handbook/manual
- Discussed at annual staff briefings/meetings
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- Asthma Australia: Resources for schools
- Policy and Advisory Library:
  - Asthma; Health Care Needs; Managing and Reporting School Incidents (Including Emergencies)
  - Treating an asthma attack
  - POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	February 2026
Approved by	PCO
Next scheduled review date	February 2027