



Teesdale Primary School Policy

ASTHMA POLICY

(updated May 2024)

Purpose

To ensure that Teesdale Primary School appropriately supports students diagnosed with asthma.

Objective

To explain to Teesdale Primary 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)	● weather changes such as thunderstorms and cold, dry air
● house dust mites	● moulds
● 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	



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Asthma management

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

1. 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.
2. Parents/carers should also provide a photo of the student to be included as part of the student's Asthma Care Plan.
3. Teesdale Primary School will keep all Asthma Care Plans:
 - At the front office, the classroom, sick bay and in student excursion folders for all classroom teachers.
4. School staff may also work with parents/carers to develop a Student Health Support Plan which will include details on:
 - how the school will provide support for the student
 - identify specific strategies
 - allocate staff to assist the student

Any Student Health Support Plan will be developed in accordance with Teesdale Primary School's Healthcare Needs Policy.

5. If a student diagnosed with asthma is going to attend a school camp or excursion, Teesdale Primary School parents/carers are required to provide any updated medical information. See attachment.
6. If a student's asthma condition or treatment requirements change, parent/carers must notify the school and provide an updated Asthma Care Plan.
7. School staff will work with parents/carers to review Asthma Care Plans (and Student Health Support Plans) once a year [this can be more specific if your school has specific review periods that it follows, e.g. at the beginning of the school year].

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 sick bay or for senior students, if noted in their plan that they can self administer, their kit can be kept with them during school hours. If asthma kits are kept with a senior student it is their parent/carer's responsibility to ensure the medication is replaced when it has expired.

Asthma emergency response plan (For students without an Asthma Care 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 endeavour to follow the Asthma First Aid procedures outlined in the table below. School staff may contact Triple Zero "000" at any time.



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Step	Action
1.	Sit the person upright <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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.
2.	Give 4 separate puffs of blue or blue/grey reliever puffer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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
3.	Wait 4 minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If there is no improvement, give 4 more separate puffs of blue/grey reliever as above
4.	If there is still no improvement call Triple Zero "000" and ask for an ambulance. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tell the operator the student is having an asthma attack ● Keep giving 4 separate puffs every 4 minutes until emergency assistance arrives
5.	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

Teesdale Primary School will arrange the following asthma management training for staff:

Staff	Completed by	Course	Provider	Cost	Valid for
Group 1 General Staff	School staff with a direct teaching role with students affected by asthma or other school staff directed by the principal after conducting a risk assessment.	Asthma first aid management for education staff (non-accredited) One hour face-to-face or online training.	The Asthma Foundation of Victoria	Free to all schools	3 years



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Group 2 Specific Staff	Staff working with high risk children with a history of severe asthma, or with direct student wellbeing responsibility, (including nurses, PE/sport teachers, first aid and school staff attending camp)	<i>Course in Management of Asthma Risks and Emergencies in the Workplace</i> 22282VIC (accredited)	Any RTO that has this course in their scope of practice	Paid by Teesdale Primary School	3 years
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Teesdale Primary School will also conduct an annual briefing for staff 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.

Teesdale Primary 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

Teesdale Primary School will provide and maintain at least two Asthma Emergency Kits. One kit will be kept on school premises at sick bay and one will be a mobile kit for activities such as:

- mobile first aid station
- camps and excursions.

The Asthma Emergency Kit will contain:

- at least 1 blue or blue/grey reliever medication (Salbutamol) 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 (Teesdale Primary 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:
 - how to use the medication and spacer devices
 - steps to be taken in treating an asthma attack
- A record sheet/log for recording the details of an asthma first aid incident, such as the number of puffs administered.

Deb Smith, the 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 replace them if they have expired or are low on doses
- replace spacers in the Kits after each use (spacers are single-person use only)
- dispose of any previously used spaces.

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.



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

Epidemic Thunderstorm Asthma

Teesdale Primary School will be prepared to act on the warnings and advice from the Department of Education and Training when the risk of epidemic thunderstorm asthma is forecast as high.

Further information and resources

- Asthma Foundation Victoria: [Resources for schools](#)
- School Policy and Advisory Guide:
 - [Asthma](#)
 - [Asthma Attacks: Treatment](#)
 - [Asthma Emergency Kits](#)
- First Aid Policy, Health Care Needs Policy, Administration of Medication Policy, Camps and Excursions Policy.

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	May 2024
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	May 2025

ASTHMA ACTION PLAN

Take me when you visit your doctor

Name: _____

Plan date: _____ Review date: _____

Doctor details: _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Relationship: _____

WELL CONTROLLED is all of these...

- needing reliever medicine no more than 2 days/week
- no asthma at night
- no asthma when I wake up
- can do all my activities

Peak flow reading (if used) above _____

TAKE preventer

morning _____ night _____ puffs/inhalations _____

• Use my preventer, even when well controlled • Use my spacer with my puffer

TAKE reliever

puffs/inhalations as needed puffs/inhalations 15 minutes before exercise

• Always carry my reliever medicine

TAKE preventer

morning _____ night _____ puffs/inhalations for _____ days then back to well controlled dose

TAKE reliever

_____ puffs/inhalations as needed

START other medicine

MAKE appointment to see my doctor same day or as soon as possible

FLARE-UP Asthma symptoms getting worse such as any of these...

- needing reliever medicine more than usual OR more than 2 days/week
- woke up overnight with asthma
- had asthma when I woke up
- can't do all my activities

Peak flow reading (if used) between _____ and _____

My triggers and symptoms _____

TAKE preventer

morning _____ night _____ puffs/inhalations for _____ days then back to well controlled dose

TAKE reliever

_____ puffs/inhalations as needed

START other medicine

MAKE appointment to see my doctor same day or as soon as possible

TAKE preventer

morning _____ night _____ puffs/inhalations for _____ days then back to well controlled dose

TAKE reliever

_____ puffs/inhalations as needed

START other medicine

MAKE appointment to see my doctor TODAY

• If unable to see my doctor, visit a hospital

OTHER INSTRUCTIONS

Other medicines, treatments, doses, duration, etc _____

EMERGENCY is any of these...

- reliever medicine not working at all
- can't speak a full sentence
- extreme difficulty breathing
- feel asthma is out of control
- lips turning blue

Peak flow reading (if used) below _____

TAKE preventer

morning _____ night _____ puffs/inhalations for _____ days then back to well controlled dose

TAKE reliever

_____ puffs/inhalations as needed

START other medicine

MAKE appointment to see my doctor TODAY

• If unable to see my doctor, visit a hospital

OTHER INSTRUCTIONS

Other medicines, treatments, doses, duration, etc _____

1 000 CALL AMBULANCE NOW

Dial Triple Zero (000)

2 START ASTHMA FIRST AID

Turn page for Asthma First Aid

If you are using a dual purpose reliever, your doctor will discuss the correct plan for you. v19 Updated 13 October 2023

ASTHMA FIRST AID

Blue/Grey Reliever

Aiomir, Asmol, Ventolin or Zempreon and Bricanyl

Blue/grey reliever medication is unlikely to harm, even if the person does not have asthma

1 **DIAL TRIPLE ZERO (000) FOR AN AMBULANCE IMMEDIATELY IF THE PERSON:**

- is not breathing
- suddenly becomes worse or is not improving
- is having an asthma attack and a reliever is not available
- is unsure if it is asthma
- has a known allergy to food, insects or medication and has **SUDDEN BREATHING DIFFICULTY, GIVE ADRENALINE AUTOINJECTOR FIRST (if available)**

2 **SIT THE PERSON UPRIGHT**

- Be **calm** and reassuring
- Do **not** leave them alone

3 **GIVE 4 SEPARATE PUFFS OF RELIEVER PUFFER**

- Shake puffer
- Put **1 puff** into spacer
- Take **4 breaths** from spacer
 - Repeat until **4 separate puffs** have been taken

If using Bricanyl (5 years or older)

- Do not shake. Open, twist around and back, and take a deep breath in
- Repeat until **2 separate inhalations** have been taken

If you don't have a spacer handy in an emergency, take **1 puff** as you take **1 slow, deep breath** and hold breath for as long as comfortable. Repeat until all puffs are given

3 **WAIT 4 MINUTES**

- If breathing does not return to normal, give **4 more separate puffs** of reliever as above

Bricanyl: Give 1 more inhalation

IF BREATHING DOES NOT RETURN TO NORMAL

4 **DIAL TRIPLE ZERO (000)**

- Say 'ambulance' and that someone is having an asthma attack
- Keep giving **4 separate puffs every 4 minutes** until emergency assistance arrives

Bricanyl: Give 1 more inhalation **every 4 minutes** until emergency assistance arrives