



ST.MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, COHUNA

ASTHMA MANAGEMENT POLICY

1. Vision

The vision for Catholic Education Sandhurst Limited (CES Limited) is to provide, in partnership with our families, stimulating, enriching, liberating and nurturing learning environments in each of the Catholic school communities within the Diocese. At the heart of this vision is our commitment to the ongoing duty of care that we have for the safety, wellbeing, and inclusion of all children and young people.

We believe:

- that the values of the Gospel are central to who we are, what we do, and how we act
- in leadership encompassing vision, innovation and empowerment.

2. Introduction

This school is a Sandhurst Catholic School which operates with the consent of the Bishop of Sandhurst and is owned and operated by Catholic Education Sandhurst Limited (CES Limited). This Policy forms part of the Duty of Care Framework which is available at www.smcohuna.catholic.edu.au

CES Limited Board and the schools it governs and operates, strive to be communities of faith, hope and love where the wellbeing and interests of all students is foremost. We have a responsibility to provide a safe, work environment for all members of our school community. We have a particular duty of care for the safety of our students. It is important, therefore to ensure that appropriate first aid procedures and facilities are in place to support students who are diagnosed with asthma.

3. Definitions

Asthma is a chronic health condition affecting approximately ten per cent of Australian children and teenagers. 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 breathing difficult.

An asthma flare-up can come on slowly or very quickly. A sudden or severe asthma flare-up is sometimes called an **asthma attack**.

Triggers are those things that can set off or start asthma symptoms. For most people with asthma, triggers are only a problem when asthma is not well managed with medication.

4. Purpose

Appropriate first aid facilities, training and resources must be in place in each school or workplace to meet the first aid needs of staff, students and others in the workplace or school or involved in school approved activities, including those activities that take place off site or out of school hours. This policy sets out the expectations for schools when a student enrolled is diagnosed with asthma and how schools will work with students and families to effectively manage episodes of asthma.

5. Principles

Sandhurst Catholic Schools will:

- engage with parents, guardians and/or carers of students with asthma in developing and implementing an Asthma Management Plan
- ensure that the management of student health records complies with the Health Records Act and the Privacy policy
- assist students with the administration of prescribed medication or health care procedures where this support cannot reasonably be undertaken by the students themselves
- will ensure that each staff member has adequate knowledge about asthma, the potential triggers for asthma and the policy and procedures in responding to a student's asthma episode.

6. Scope

This policy provides information about asthma and outlines the responsibilities of the school community members (staff, volunteers, parents, guardians and/or carers and students) to support students diagnosed with asthma and to effectively manage asthma episodes.

The policy is to be read and observed in conjunction with other school policies on First Aid, Student Medical Conditions, Anaphylaxis Management and Emergency Management.

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 asthmas
- the student's parents, guardians and/or carers.

7. Policy Statement

7.1 Asthma Management

The Principal or the position in the school nominated by the Principal is responsible for the following to aid the effective management of asthma in the school:

- that asthma first aid procedures in line with current national recommendations are implemented in the school and that all staff are aware of the asthma first aid procedure.
- ensure the adequate provision of asthma emergency kits (containing reliever medication, a spacer device, instructions for the first aid procedure and a record form) are available in the school
- ensure that these kits are maintained regularly, medication has not expired and that the spacers are replaced after each use.
- provide staff with appropriate training about asthma management
- facilitate communication between the school and families about the school's asthma management policy and procedures
- promptly communicate with parents, guardians and/or carers any concerns about the management of a student's asthma

The parents, guardians and/or carers of students enrolled in Sandhurst Catholic schools who are diagnosed with asthma:

- must inform the school upon enrolment if their child is diagnosed with asthma.
- parents, guardians and/or carers are required to provide the school with their child's asthma medication for all times the child is attending school, unless the student is carrying the medication for self-management purposes
- parents, guardians and/ or carers will provide a written Asthma Action Plan signed off by a relevant medical practitioner and provide an update when the student is involved in off-site activities
- parents, guardians and/or carers will communicate any changes or concerns

about their child's asthma or management

The Asthma Action Plan will include:

- The prescribed medication taken by the student and when it is to be administered, for example, prior to exercise on a regular basis
- Emergency contact details
- 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 attack or flare-up
- A recent photograph of the student.

An Asthma Management Plan is recommended for each student diagnosed with asthma. The Asthma Management Plan includes details on how the school will provide support, identify specific strategies and allocate staff to assist the student. (Appendix 2)

7.2 Staff Responsibilities

All staff are required:

- to be aware of the school's Asthma Management Policy and Procedures
- to be familiar with the students in their care who have asthma, to know where their medication is located and be able to identify and minimise where possible potential triggers of asthma for students.
- to be familiar with how to access asthma management plans and emergency asthma kits.
- to ensure students with asthma can participate safely and to the fullest of their abilities in class activities.

7.3 Staff training

Staff at the school will as a minimum undertake the following training:

- An accredited course in the management of asthma, either Management of Asthma Risks and Emergencies in workplace (22282VIC) or Emergency Asthma Management (10392NAT) every three years to be undertaken by:
 - staff working with students with a history of severe asthma
 - staff with direct student wellbeing responsibility including school nurses, PE, sport, food technology or staff attending camps.
- One hour, face-to-face, **non-accredited** training program in *Asthma first aid management through Asthma Australia* to be undertaken every three years by:
 - all staff with a direct teaching role with students affected by asthma

- o and other staff, including administrative staff identified by the principal

An annual briefing for school staff will be conducted to outline:

- the procedures in the school's asthma policy
- the causes, symptoms and treatment of asthma
- the identities of students with asthma
- how to use a puffer and spacer
- the location of Asthma Action Plans and first aid equipment to use to treat asthma.

7.4 Asthma Emergency Kit

All students diagnosed with asthma are required to have their own prescribed reliever medication (labelled with their name) and spacer with them at school and school approved activities, including off site activities such as camps and excursions.

Emergency first aid equipment for treating asthma will be available in Sandhurst Catholic Schools. This equipment will also be available for camps and excursions.

7.5 Responding to an Asthma Attack

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. For most people with asthma, triggers are only a problem when asthma is not well managed with medication.

Common triggers include:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise • Smoke (cigarette, wood from open fires, burn-offs or bushfires) • House dust mites • Pollens • Chemicals such as household cleaning products • Food chemicals and additives • Deodorants (including perfumes, after shave, hair spray and aerosol deodorant sprays) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colds/flu • Weather changes such as thunderstorms and cold, dry air • Moulds • Animals such as cats and dogs • Certain medications (including aspirin or anti-inflammatories) • Laughter, emotions, such as stress
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If a student develops signs of what appears to be an asthma attack, appropriate care must be given immediately using the information in the student's Asthma Action Plan.

Emergency Response to Asthma – 4 step plan Asthma First Aid	
1. Sit person upright	Be calm, reassuring Do not leave the person alone Seek assistance from another staff member or a reliable student to locate the student's asthma medication and Asthma Action Plan or the school's emergency Asthma kit. If no Action Plan is available, use the Asthma First Aid in Steps 2 - 5
2. Give four separate puffs of blue/grey reliever puffer	Shake puffer Put 1 puff into spacer Take 4 breaths from spacer Remember: Shake, 1 puff, 4 breaths
3. Wait 4 minutes	If no improvement, give 4 more separate puffs of blue/grey reliever
4. If still no improvement	Call 000 and ask for ambulance Say that someone is having an asthma attack. Keep giving 4 puffs every 4 minutes until emergency assistance arrives

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
<p style="text-align: center;">Call 000 immediately if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The person is not breathing ▪ The person's asthma suddenly worsens or is not improving ▪ No asthma reliever is available and the person is having an asthma attack ▪ You are not sure if it is asthma ▪ The person is known to have anaphylaxis. Follow the Anaphylaxis Action Plan and then give asthma first aid. 	

7.6 Thunderstorm Asthma

Thunderstorm asthma events are believed to be triggered by an uncommon combination of high grass pollen levels and a certain type of thunderstorm, causing pollen grains from grasses to be swept up in the wind and carried long distances. The *Department of Health (DoH)* provides forecasting information for people who may be at risk of thunderstorm asthma caused by a combination of certain weather conditions and high levels of grass pollen at different times of the year.

Sandhurst Catholic Schools will act on advice and warnings when the risk of thunderstorm asthma activity is forecast as high.

7.7 Communication plan

This policy will be available on Sandhurst Catholic school websites so that parents, guardians and/or carers and other members of the community can easily access information about our Asthma Management Procedures. Hard copies of the policy will also be available.

8. Resources/Links

- [Asthma Action Plan \(National Asthma Council Australia\)](#)
- [Asthma Action Plan Template](#)

9. Appendices

Appendix 1:	School Level Asthma Management Procedures
Appendix 2:	Sample Annual Asthma Action Plans for Schools
Appendix 3:	Template Asthma Management Plan