

St. John the Baptist Parish School

ASTHMA POLICY

Background

- Asthma affects up to one in ten Australians. 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. 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.

Purpose

- To manage asthma and asthma sufferers as effectively and efficiently as possible at school.

Implementation

- Professional development will be provided for all staff on the nature, prevention and treatment of asthma attacks. Such information will also be displayed on the staffroom wall and in the First Aid Room.
- All students with asthma must have an up to date (annual) written Asthma action plan, consistent with Asthma Australia's requirements, completed by their doctor or paediatrician.
- Student's current Asthma action plans will be displayed in the First Aid Room.
- 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. These will be stored in the First Aid Room.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for alerting staff to any changes in their child's asthma management.
- Children suffering asthma attacks will be treated in accordance with their asthma plan.
- If no plan is available children are to be sat down, reassured, and if necessary, 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. Parents must be contacted whenever their child suffers an asthma attack.
- The school will provide, and have staff trained in the administering of, reliever puffers (blue canister) such as Ventolin, Airomir, Asmol or Bricanyl and spacer devices in all first-aid kits, including kits on excursions and camps and playground duty bags. Clear written instructions on how to use these medications and devices will be included in each first aid kit, along with steps to be taken to treat severe asthma attacks. The Deputy Principal will be responsible for checking reliever puffer expiry dates.
- Any spacer that is provided by the school is single use only and will be disposed of thoughtfully after use.
- Teachers will be responsible for checking student's medical notes and packing student's Asthma bags when taking students offsite.

Evaluation

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's four-year review cycle.

