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# Asthma Policy

<b>Reviewed Date</b> <b>June 2026</b>
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## **Rationale:**

To ensure schools support students diagnosed with asthma.

## **Definition:**

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 harder 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• a 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)
- emotions such as stress and laughter.

A detailed description of triggers can be found on the Asthma Foundation of Victoria website, see: [Other resources](#).

## **Strategies:**

Strategy	Description/Action
School Asthma Policy	A school based policy describing the school's support for students with asthma.
Communication Plan	Information disseminated to all school staff, students and parents about asthma and the School's Asthma Policy. (The Asthma Foundation of Victoria also has Asthma First Aid posters available to schools for free which should be displayed in the staff room, sick room and areas where asthma attacks are likely to occur or be treated.)
Emergency Response Plan	Procedures for an emergency response to a severe / life-threatening asthma attack for all in-school and out-of-school activities. In all life-threatening situations an ambulance will be called and the parents/emergency contact notified.
Individual Asthma Action Plans (for each student diagnosed with asthma)	<p>Parents must provide the school with an Asthma Action Plan completed by the student's medical practitioner. The plan must outline the students known triggers and the emergency procedures to be taken in the event of an asthma flare-up or attack.</p> <p>The Asthma Action Plan for Victorian schools should be completed/reviewed annually for each student with asthma and contain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ the prescribed medication taken and when it is to be administered e.g.: - on a regular basis - as premedication to exercise - if the student is experiencing symptoms</li><li>▪ emergency contact details</li><li>▪ contact details of the student's medical/health practitioner</li><li>▪ details about deteriorating asthma including:- signs to recognise worsening symptoms - what to do during an attack - medication to be used.</li></ul> <p>(For the Asthma Action Plans for Victorian Schools, see Asthma Foundation of Victoria in Other resources.)</p>
Student Health Support Plan	An individual plan for each student diagnosed with asthma, developed in consultation with the student's parents. These plans include the Individual Asthma Action Plan.
Asthma Training for school staff	<p>All school staff with a direct duty of care responsibility for students will be trained in being able to manage an asthma emergency appropriately.</p> <p>Training should be conducted at least every three years. This can be face-to-face or online. More formal, accredited training should be completed by staff in a direct role of health and wellbeing support.</p>
Annual Asthma Briefing for all staff	<p>Glenrowan/Winton Primary School will conduct an annual Asthma Briefing at the beginning of the school year on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ the school's asthma management policy</li></ul>

Strategy	Description/Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ causes, symptoms and treatment of asthma</li> <li>▪ the identities of students diagnosed with asthma and where their medication is located</li> <li>▪ how to use a puffer and spacer</li> <li>▪ the school's general first aid and emergency response procedures</li> <li>▪ the location of, and access to, reliever medication that has been provided by parents or the Asthma Emergency Kits.</li> </ul>
Reducing asthma triggers	<p>To reduce asthma triggers Glenrowan/Winton Primary School will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ mow school grounds out of hours</li> <li>▪ plant a low allergen garden - for a brochure see Asthma Foundation of Victoria, see Other resources</li> <li>▪ limit dust, for example having the carpets and curtains cleaned regularly and out of hours</li> <li>▪ examine the cleaning products used in the school and their potential impact on students with asthma</li> <li>▪ conduct maintenance that may require the use of chemicals, such as painting, during school holidays</li> <li>▪ turn on fans, air conditioning and heaters out of hours when being used for the first time after a long period of non-use.</li> </ul>
Student Asthma Kit	<p>When a student diagnosed with asthma is enrolled, the child is required to bring their own prescribed reliever medication. This should be stored in their asthma kit, with a copy of their Asthma Action Plan and their spacer.</p> <p>The student's personal spacer should be washed monthly or as required, to wash the spacer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ wash the spacer in warm soapy water</li> <li>▪ do not rinse the spacer</li> <li>▪ leave it to air dry</li> <li>▪ wipe the mouthpiece before use.</li> </ul> <p>The students' spacer should be replaced if contaminated with blood or vomit.</p>
Asthma Emergency Kits	<p>Anyone with asthma can have a severe attack, even those with mild asthma. Glenrowan/Winton Primary School will have at least two Asthma Emergency Kits.</p>
Encourage participation in camps and special events	<p>Glenrowan/Winton Primary School staff will ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ parents provide enough medication (including preventer medication) for the student if they are going away overnight</li> <li>▪ enough Asthma Emergency Kits are available for the camp or excursion needs</li> <li>▪ that parents/guardians complete the School Camp and Excursion Medical Update Form and the Department's <i>Confidential Medical Information for School Council Approved School Excursions</i> form.</li> </ul>

Strategy	Description/Action
Managing Exercise Induced Bronchoconstriction (EIB)	<p>If a student has EIB, staff should ensure that they allow adequate time for the following procedures: before, during and after exercise.</p> <p>Before:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ blue or blue/grey reliever medication to be taken by student 15 minutes before exercise or activity (if indicated on the students' Asthma Action Plan)</li> <li>▪ student to undertake adequate warm up activity</li> </ul> <p>During:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ if symptoms occur, student to stop activity, take blue or blue/grey reliever medication, only return to activity if symptom free</li> <li>▪ if symptoms reoccur, student to take blue or blue/grey reliever medication and cease activity for the rest of the day. This is known as 'two strikes and out'.</li> </ul> <p>After:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ensure cool down activity is undertaken</li> <li>▪ be alert for symptoms</li> </ul> <p>If a student has an asthma attack during or after exercise or activity, follow their Asthma Action Plan if easily accessible, or commence Asthma First Aid. <b>Always notify parent of any incidents or medication usage.</b></p>
Communicating with parents	<p>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.</p>

### **Related Policies:**

- [Asthma Attacks: Treatment](#)
- [Asthma Emergency Kits](#)
- [Excursions - Student Medical Information](#)
- [Student welfare](#)

### **Other resources:**

- [Asthma Australia](#) - see Asthma Foundation Victoria resources for Victorian schools
- [Asthma, Chronic Illness Alliance](#)

<p>This policy was last approved by the School Council in June 2023  The scheduled date for this policy to be reviewed is June 2026</p>
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