

ASTHMA POLICY



PURPOSE

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

OBJECTIVE

To explain to Frankston Heights 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 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
- smoke (cigarette smoke, wood smoke from open fires, burn-offs or bushfires)
- house dust mites
- pollens
- colds/flu
- deodorants (including perfumes, after-shaves, hair spray and aerosol deodorant sprays)
- moulds
- animals such as cats and dogs

- chemicals such as household cleaning products
- laughter or emotions, such as stress
- food chemicals/additives
- weather changes such as thunderstorms and cold, dry air
- certain medications (including aspirin and anti-inflammatories)

Asthma Management

If a student diagnosed with asthma enrolls at Frankston Heights Primary 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 must provide a photo of the student to be included as part of the student's Asthma Action Plan.
3. Frankston Heights Primary School keeps all Asthma Action Plans in the first aid room.
4. A student with an Asthma Action Plan only requires a Student Health Support Plan if their asthma is not well-controlled, and needs individualised medical or health-related supervision, care or adjustments at school. School staff will 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.
5. If a student diagnosed with asthma is going to attend a school camp or excursion, Frankston Heights Primary School parents/carers are required to provide any updated medical information.
6. If a student's asthma condition or treatment requirements change, parent/carers must notify the school and provide an updated Asthma Action Plan.
7. School staff will review Asthma Action Plans and, if relevant, Student Health Support Plans annually and communicate with the parents/carers to:
 - if available, provide updated medical or health advice
 - review and provide written confirmation that the Asthma Action Plan is still current.

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).

P-Y2 student asthma kits are stored in the first aid room.

Y3-6 students keep their Asthma reliever medication with them while at school.

Asthma Emergency Response Plan

If a student is having an asthma attack or 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 following table. School staff may contact Triple Zero "000" at any time.

Step	Action
1.	Sit the person upright • 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 Action Plan (if available). • If the student's action plan is not immediately available, use Asthma First Aid as described in Steps 2 to 5.
2.	Give 4 separate puffs of blue or blue/grey reliever puffer: • 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 • If there is no improvement, give 4 more separate puffs of blue/grey reliever as above (or give 1 more dose of Bricanyl or Symbicort inhaler).
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 or Symbicort every 4 minutes – up to 3 doses of Symbicort).
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 in edusafe plus or Sentral.

Staff will call Triple Zero "000" immediately if:

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

Staff Training

General School Staff Training

All school staff undertake non-accredited asthma first aid training through [Asthma Australia](#) every three years. Staff complete the [Asthma First Aid for Schools](#) one-hour online education module. Additionally, staff complete a non-accredited asthma update as part of their annual first aid refresher training delivered by a Registered Training Organisation (RTO).

Targeted School Staff Training

The school's First Aid Officers and designated staff who support students at high risk of severe asthma undertake accredited asthma management training through a Registered Training

Organisation (RTO). Designated staff complete the **22702VIC Course in the Management of Asthma Risks and Emergencies in the Workplace** every three years.

Frankston Heights Primary School also conducts 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 kit and the portable first aid kits
 - asthma medication which has been provided by parents for student use.

Asthma Emergency Kits

Frankston Heights Primary School maintains an asthma emergency kit and six portable first aid kits to ensure prompt access to asthma first aid during school activities, including excursions, camps and outdoor programs.

The asthma emergency kit and first aid kits contain:

- at least one blue or blue-grey reliever medication (e.g. Ventolin, Asmol or Airomir)
- at least two single-use spacer devices to assist with the effective administration of reliever medication. Spare spacers are kept at school to replace any that are used. All spacers are stored in clean, dust-proof containers.
- clear written Asthma First Aid instructions, including:
 - how to use the reliever medication and spacer
 - the steps to follow when responding to an asthma attack
- an asthma first aid record sheet to document any asthma first aid provided.

Maintenance of Asthma Emergency Kits

The First Aid Officer is responsible for monitoring and maintaining the asthma emergency kit and first aid kits to ensure they remain ready for use at all times.

The First Aid Officer:

- ensures all contents are maintained and replaced where necessary
- regularly checks the expiry date on the canisters of the blue or blue/grey reliever puffers and replaces them if they have expired or are low on doses
- replaces spacers in the kits and bags after each use (spacers are single person use only)
- disposes of any previously used spaces.

The blue or blue/grey reliever medication in the asthma emergency kit and first aid kits may be used by more than one student as long as a new single-use spacer is used for each person. 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 or first aid bag.

Management of Confidential Medical Information

Confidential medical information provided to Frankston Heights Primary School to support a student diagnosed with asthma is:

- 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.

Epidemic Thunderstorm Asthma

Frankston Heights 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 including:

- act on advice and warnings from the department's Emergency Management Division associated with a potential thunderstorm asthma activity, and implement a communication strategy to inform the school community and parents or carers
- implement procedures to avoid exposure, such as staying indoors with windows and doors closed
- implement emergency response procedures and follow individual Asthma Action Plans as needed.

COMMUNICATION

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

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Staff Induction and training
- Discussed at staff meeting
- School communication platform, Sentral

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- Asthma Australia: [Resources for schools](#)
- Asthma Australia: [Asthma emergency kits](#)
- Policy and Advisory Library:
 - [Asthma](#)
 - [Treating an asthma attack](#)

RELATED SCHOOL POLICIES

- First Aid Policy
- Health Care Needs Policy
- Administration of Medication

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed:	May 2026
Approved by:	Principal
Next scheduled review date:	May 2027