

ASTHMA POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the Victorian School of Languages (03) 9474 0500.

PURPOSE

To ensure that the Victorian School of Languages (VSL) appropriately supports students diagnosed with asthma.

OBJECTIVE

To explain to VSL 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	

Asthma management

If a student diagnosed with asthma enrolls at VSL:

1. Parents/carers must provide the school with an [Asthma Care Plan](#) which has been completed by the student's medical practitioner. See Appendix A for writable plan.

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. The VSL keep all Asthma Care Plans at the offices at each VSL Centre (Appendix F)
 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
 5. If a student diagnosed with asthma is going to attend a school camp or excursion, VSL 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 Care Plan.
 7. School staff will work with parents/carers to review Asthma Care Plans (and Student Health Support Plans) at the beginning of the school year or upon (new) enrolment.

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)
- Students will be required to keep their asthma kits with them while at school.

Asthma emergency response 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.

Step	Action
1.	<p>Sit the person upright</p> <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.	<p>Give 4 separate puffs of blue or blue/grey reliever puffer:</p> <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 <p>Remember – Shake, 1 puff, 4 breaths</p>
3.	<p>Wait 4 minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.	<p>If there is still no improvement call Triple Zero “000” and ask for an ambulance.</p> <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 (or 1 dose of Bricanyl or Symbicort every 4 minutes – up to 3 doses of Symbicort)
5.	<p>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>

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

The VSL will also conduct an annual briefing for staff on:

- the procedures outlined in this policy
- the causes, symptoms and treatment of asthma [refer to the introductory information at the start of this policy]
- 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

The VSL will also provide this policy to casual relief staff and volunteers who will be working with students.

Asthma Emergency Kit

The VSL will provide and maintain at least two Asthma Emergency Kits. One kit will be kept on school premises at the office of each VSL Centre (Appendix F) and one will be a mobile kit for activities such as:

- yard duty
- camps and excursions.

The Asthma Emergency Kit will contain:

- at least 1 blue or blue/grey reliever medication 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 (The VSL 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 (Appendix E)

The VSL Centre administration and Supervisory staff 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 place them if they have expired or a low on doses
- replace spacers in the Kits after each use (spacers are single-person use only)
- dispose of any previously used spacers

More than one student may use the blue or blue/grey reliever medication in the Asthma Emergency Kits 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.

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

Epidemic Thunderstorm Asthma

VSL 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.

COMMUNICATION

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

- Available publicly on our school's website www.vsl.vic.edu.au
- Included in staff induction processes and staff training
- Included in staff handbook/manual
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings
- Reminders in our school Area newsletter
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

ATTACHMENTS

- **Asthma Care Plan – Appendix A**
- **Asthma First Aid poster – Appendix B**
- **Asthma Action Plan (for use with puffer and spacer) – Appendix C**
- **Asthma Update Form- for use with School Camp and Excursion – Appendix D**
- **Asthma Emergency Kit log – Appendix E**
- **VSL Centre Office Locations – Appendix F**

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- Asthma Foundation Victoria: [Resources for schools](#)
- School Policy and Advisory Guide:
 - [Asthma](#)
 - [Asthma Attacks: Treatment](#)
 - [Asthma Emergency Kits](#)
- VSL Duty of Care Policy

REVIEW CYCLE AND EVALUATION

Policy last updated	August 2023
Consultation	School Council Meeting: 16/08/2023
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	2024

Appendix A: ASTHMA CARE PLAN FOR EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES

CONFIDENTIAL: Staff are trained in Asthma First Aid (see overleaf) and can provide routine asthma medication as authorised in this care plan by the treating doctor. Please advise staff in writing of any changes to this plan.

PHOTO OF STUDENT (OPTIONAL)

To be completed by the treating doctor and parent/guardian, for supervising staff and emergency medical personnel.

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Student's name: _____ DOB: _____

Plan date
____/____/20____

Review date
____/____/20____

MANAGING AN ASTHMA ATTACK

Staff are trained in Asthma First Aid (see overleaf). Please write down anything different this student might need if they have an asthma attack:

DAILY ASTHMA MANAGEMENT

This student's usual asthma signs:

- Cough
- Wheeze
- Difficulty breathing
- Other (please describe):

Frequency and severity:

- Daily/most days
- Frequently (more than 5 x per year)
- Occasionally (less than 5 x per year)
- Other (please describe):

Known triggers for this student's asthma (e.g. exercise*, colds/flu, smoke) — please detail:

- Does this student usually tell an adult if s/he is having trouble breathing? Yes No
- Does this student need help to take asthma medication? Yes No
- Does this student use a mask with a spacer? Yes No
- *Does this student need a blue/grey reliever puffer medication before exercise? Yes No

MEDICATION PLAN

If this student needs asthma medication, please detail below and make sure the medication and spacer/mask are supplied to staff.

NAME OF MEDICATION AND COLOUR	DOSE/NUMBER OF PUFFS	TIME REQUIRED
www		

DOCTOR

Name of doctor

Address

Phone

PARENT/GUARDIAN

I have read, understood and agreed with this care plan and any attachments listed. I approve the release of this information to

staff and emergency medical personnel. I will notify the staff in writing if there are any changes to these instructions. I understand

Signature

Date

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Contact name

staff will seek emergency medical help as needed and that I am responsible for payment of any emergency medical costs.

Signature

Date

Name

Phone

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For asthma information and support, or to speak with an Asthma Educator, call **1800 ASTHMA** (1800 278 462) or visit asthma.org.au



Appendix B: ASTHMA FIRST AID

Blue/Grey Reliever

Airomir, Asmol, Ventolin or Zempreon and Bricanyl

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



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
- **is known to have anaphylaxis. ALWAYS GIVE ADRENALINE AUTOINJECTOR FIRST, and then Reliever even if there are no skin symptoms**

1



SIT THE PERSON UPRIGHT

- Be calm and reassuring
- Do not leave them alone

2



GIVE 4 SEPARATE PUFFS OF RELIEVER PUFFER

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



If using **Bricanyl**, give 2 separate inhalations (5 years or older)

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



ASTHMA AUSTRALIA

1800 ASTHMA
(1800 278 462)



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ASTHMA ACTION PLAN



Appendix C:

- Child can self-administer if well enough
- Child needs to pre-medicate prior to exercise
- Face mask needed with spacer

PHOTO

VICTORIAN SCHOOLS

Student's name: _____

DOB: _____

Confirmed triggers: _____

ALWAYS give adrenaline autoinjector FIRST, and then asthma reliever puffer if someone with known asthma and allergy to food, insects or medication has SUDDEN BREATHING DIFFICULTY (including wheeze, persistent cough or hoarse voice) even if there are no skin symptoms.

Adrenaline autoinjector prescribed: Y N Type of adrenaline autoinjector: _____

ASTHMA FIRST AID

For Severe or Life-Threatening signs and symptoms, call for emergency assistance immediately on Triple Zero "000"
Mild to moderate symptoms do not always present before severe or life-threatening symptoms

1. Sit the person upright
Stay with the person and be calm and reassuring
2. Give ___ separate puffs of Airomir, Asmol or Ventolin
Shake the puffer before each puff
Puff 1 puff into the spacer at a time
Take 4 breaths from spacer between each puff
3. Wait 4 minutes
If there is no improvement, repeat step 2
4. If there is still no improvement call emergency assistance
Dial Triple Zero "000"
Say 'ambulance' and that someone is having an asthma attack
Keep giving ___ puffs every 4 minutes until emergency assistance arrives

Commence CPR at any time if person is unresponsive and not breathing normally.

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

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

MILD TO MODERATE

- Minor difficulty breathing
- May have a cough
- May have a wheeze
- Other signs to look for:



SEVERE

- Cannot speak a full sentence
- Sitting hunched forward
- Tugging in of skin over chest/throat
- May have a cough or wheeze
- Obvious difficulty breathing
- Lethargic
- Sore tummy (young children)

LIFE-THREATENING

- Unable to speak or 1-2 words
- Collapsed/exhausted
- Gasping for breath
- May no longer have a cough or wheeze
- Drowsy/confused/unconscious
- Skin discolouration (blue lips)

Emergency contact name: _____

Plan prepared by Dr or Nurse Practitioner: _____

Work ph: _____

I hereby authorise medications specified on this plan to be administered according to the plan

Signed: _____

Home ph: _____

Date prepared: _____

Mobile ph: _____

Date of next review: _____



- Assemble spacer.
- Remove cap from puffer.
- Shake puffer well.
- Attach puffer to end of spacer.

- Place mouthpiece of spacer in mouth and ensure lips seal around it.
- Breathe out gently into the spacer.
- Press down on puffer canister once to fire medication into spacer.
- Breathe in and out normally for 4 breaths (keeping your mouth on the spacer).

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SCHOOL CAMP AND EXCURSION

VICTORIAN SCHOOLS - Appendix D:

ASTHMA UPDATE FORM

Student's name:

DOB:

Confirmed triggers:

Has the student been hospitalised due to asthma, had an acute asthma attack or worsening asthma in the last two weeks?

Y N

Has the student's asthma medications changed in the last two weeks?

Y N

Is the student well enough to attend camp/excursion?

Y N

This form is to be completed by parents/carers of students with asthma prior to an excursion or camp. The form is to be attached to a copy of the student's Asthma Action Plan and brought with students to the camp or excursion. Please provide as much detail as possible.

OTHER MEDICAL CONDITIONS

Has the student had any other illness in the last two weeks?

Y N

If YES, please provide details:

Nature of illness? _____ When? _____

Severity? _____ Has this affected their asthma? Y N

ALLERGIC RHINITIS (HAY FEVER)

Does the student hay fever? Y N Does the student have an action plan for hay fever? Y N

Confirmed Triggers for hay fever Medication Device Dose When

_____ Treatment _____

ADDITIONAL ASTHMA MEDICATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Medication Device Dose When

Instructions for use

2. Medication Device Dose When

Instructions for use

Doctor's Name:

Phone:

Address:

Emergency Contact:

Phone:

The information provided on this plan is true and correct.

Signed:

Date:

Additional information

For asthma information and support or to speak with an Asthma Educator call **1800 ASTHMA** (1800 278 462) or visit asthma.org.au

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11 August 2023



ASTHMA EMERGENCY KIT LOG

**This form is to be used by staff to record use of this Kit.
It is in addition to the first aid log as required by worksite policies.**

This log should be completed whenever the kit is used and kept with the kit until it needs to be replaced.

Completed forms should be stored with the worksite first aid log.
Additional forms can be downloaded at asthma.org.au

Important: Check medication expiry date.



Appendix E:

DATE	TIME	NAME OF PERSON BEING TREATED	DESCRIBE PRESENTATION	ACTION TAKEN	PUFFER COUNT Count down from 200	WORKSITE REPORT COMPLETED (Yes/No)	EMERGENCY CONTACT NOTIFIED	NAME OF PERSON MAKING ENTRY Print name and sign
E.g. 1/1/22	10:30am	A. Zmah	Short of breath, coughing	Given 4 puffs with spacer	196	Yes	Called emergency contact	J. Smith

Appendix F: VSL Centre Office location

Area	Centre Office location	Centre Office location	Centre Office location	Centre Office location
Central	University High Music Wing Room 158	Brunswick A Block Ground floor	Collingwood VSL Office. The first room on the left in the reception foyer	
Country 1	Matthew Flinders Helen Fraser Campus office	North Geelong General Office	Point Cook General Office	Werribee Foyer
Country 2	Bendigo Building B Pod. Between B6 and B7. Lockable storeroom with no student access.	Croydon Building C Staff room – Level 1	Shepparton VSL Store room - Administration Building – FG.07 VSL office Saturday morning – Biyala, Murray (Teal) entrance	Wodonga A Wing Lockable cabinet outside A3
Distance Ed	Thornbury DE Office, Level 2	Seminars Portable First Aid Kit that teachers take to seminars		
East 1	Doncaster VSL office. Located between Room C9 and C10. (In the portable classroom block)	Blackburn VSL office between D7 and D6. (Right behind the Dunlop Building and next to the STEM building)	Box Hill P01 (Right behind the Box Hill High School, Performing Art Centre)	
East 2	Glen Waverley Between Staff Centre & Science/Tech Building.	Carwatha Room at far end of school library.	Mildura School library	
North	Thomastown Admin General Office Building. Next to staff room.	Epping Admin/staff General office room.	Lalor VSL Portable- Staff carpark (Next to general office portable)	Roxburgh Park Admin & Staffroom building-
North West	Keilor Downs VSL Area Office First Aid in Main Reception	Hume Central Year 8 Building VSL Office	Mt. Ridley Willandra building Main reception	Taylors Lakes Main Reception Area
South	Mentone JLC Building First Aid Kit in VSL office	Brentwood Room K9 First Aid Kit in VSL office	Keysborough Junior Building First Aid Kit in VSL office	Traralgon Office Building First Aid Kit in VSL office
South 2	Westall Area office B25 in B block opposite staff room	South Oakleigh Saturday – work out of the Staff room. Area office: storeroom in front of A3	McKinnon VSL office in F01.5 (as it is between F01 and F02).	
South East	Dandenong 'A' building, main administration block	Hampton Park Reception of Hampton Park SC and meeting room opposite reception	Berwick Main staff room behind Berwick College reception	
West 1	Footscray FHS General Office	Altona North Bayside SC General Office	Sunshine Conference Room opposite General Office	Ballarat Rm 102 Admin Building
West 2	Caroline Springs (Creekside College) Area 4 – VSL Admin Office facing entry, VSL Office and storeroom on the right	Melton (Staughton College) Staff Room	Truganina (Truganina P-9 College) Room 93 Area J	