



# ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL, ASCOT VALE ASTHMA POLICY

July 2016

St Mary's School has a strong commitment to child safety as is reflected in our Vision Statement: *"Each child has the right to feel happy, safe and valued"*. We continually strive to ensure that every child is safe from harm including all forms of abuse. We exercise zero tolerance to abuse.

## **RATIONALE:**

Asthma affects up to one in four primary aged children, one in seven teenagers and one in ten adults. 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.

## **AIMS:**

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

## **IMPLEMENTATION:**

- 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.
- Children and adults with mild asthma rarely require medication, however severe asthma sufferers may require daily or additional medication (particularly after exercise).
- Professional development will be provided regularly for all staff on the nature, prevention and treatment of asthma attacks. Such information will also be kept in sick bay .
- All students with asthma must have an up to date (annual) written asthma management plan consistent with Asthma Victoria's requirements completed by their doctor or paediatrician. Appropriate asthma plan proformas are available at [www.asthma.org.au](http://www.asthma.org.au)
- Asthma plans will be kept in the first aid room and a copy should be kept in the child's classroom.
- 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.
- 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. 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 first aid staff member will be responsible for checking reliever puffer expiry dates.
- A nebuliser pump will not be used by the school staff unless a student's asthma management plan recommends the use of such a device, and only then if the plan includes and complies with section 4.5.7.3 of the SOTF Reference Guide – Asthma Medication Delivery Devices.
- All devices used for the delivery of asthma medication will be cleaned appropriately after each use.
- Care must be provided immediately for any student who develops signs of an asthma attack.
- Children suffering asthma attacks should be treated in accordance with their asthma plan.
- If no plan is available children are to be sat down, reassured, 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.

#### **EVALUATION:**

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