

Asthma Management Policy

Summary

Table 1 - Document details

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Related policies, procedures, guidelines, standards, frameworks	Common Law duty of care
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Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact 9755 4555

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1. Purpose

To ensure that Rowville Secondary College appropriately supports students diagnosed with asthma.

2. Objective

To explain to Rowville Secondary College parents/guardians/carers, staff, identified volunteers, and students the processes and procedures in place to support students diagnosed with asthma.

For the purpose of this policy, the aims for the management of asthma within the College are:

- Ensure staff, identified volunteers and parents/guardians/carers are aware of their obligations and the best practice management of asthma at Rowville Secondary College
- Ensure that all necessary information for the effective management of children with asthma enrolled at Rowville Secondary College is collected and recorded so that these students receive appropriate attention when required
- Respond to the needs of students who have not been diagnosed with asthma and who experience breathing difficulties (suspected asthma attack) at the School.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- all staff, including casual relief staff and contractors
- all students who have been diagnosed with asthma or who may require emergency treatment for asthma and their parents/guardians/carers
- identified volunteers are those who have supervisory role such as attending camps

3. 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
- chemicals such as household cleaning products
- food chemicals/additives
- laughter or emotions, such as stress
- colds/flu
- weather changes such as thunderstorms and cold, dry air
- moulds
- animals such as cats and dogs
- deodorants (including perfumes, after-shaves, hair spray and aerosol deodorant sprays)
- certain medications (including aspirin and anti-inflammatories)

ASTHMA MANAGEMENT

If a student diagnosed with asthma enrolls at Rowville Secondary College:

1. Parents/guardians/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/guardians/carers should also provide a photo of the student to be included as part of the student's Asthma Action Plan.
3. Rowville Secondary College will keep all Asthma Action Plans:
 - Information from students Asthma Action Plans will be uploaded onto Compass as soon as provided to the College.

- Hard copies will be located in the Health Office.
4. School staff may also work with parents/guardians/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

Any Student Health Support Plan will be developed in accordance with Rowville Secondary College's Healthcare Needs Policy.

5. If a student diagnosed with asthma is going to attend a school camp or excursion, parents/guardians/carers are required to provide any updated medical information.
6. If a student's asthma condition or treatment requirements change, parent/guardians/carers must notify the school and provide an updated Asthma Action Plan as soon as reasonably practicable.
7. School staff will work with parents/guardians/carers to review Asthma Action Plans (and Student Health Support Plans) as required/ when asthma condition changes.

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 are encouraged 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.	Sit the person upright <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 asthma kit (reliever and spacer if used), the school's Asthma Emergency Kit and the student's Asthma Action Plan (if available) and enact the plan. • If the student's action plan is not immediately available, use the Asthma First Aid as described in Steps 2 to 5.
2.	Give 4 separate puffs of blue or blue/grey reliever puffer:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shake the puffer • Use a spacer if you have one • Put 1 puff into the spacer or directly into the student's mouth • Take 4 breaths from the spacer (if being used) <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 <p>(or give 1 more dose of Bricanyl or Symbicort inhaler)</p>
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 <p>(or 1 dose of Bricanyl or Symbicort every 4 minutes – up to 3 doses of Symbicort)</p>
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
- the person's asthma suddenly becomes worse or is not improving
- the person is having an asthma attack and a reliever is not available
- they are not sure if it is asthma
- the person is known to have anaphylaxis

TRAINING FOR STAFF

Rowville Secondary College will arrange the following asthma management training for staff:

Staff	Completed by	Course	Provider	Cost	Valid for
All Staff	School staff with a direct teaching role with students affected by asthma or other school staff directed by the principal after conducting a risk assessment.	HLTAID003 Provide First Aid (offered to all College staff each year)	Revive2Survive (or appropriate equivalent RTO)	College to cover costs	3 years

Staff are also encouraged to complete an online training program, provided by Asthma Australia to all school staff as an additional training method.

Rowville Secondary College will also conduct 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 Kits
 - asthma medication which has been provided by parents for student use.

Rowville Secondary College will also provide this policy to casual relief staff and volunteers who will be working with students, and may also provide a briefing if the Principal decides it is necessary depending on the nature of the work being performed.

ASTHMA EMERGENCY KIT

Rowville Secondary College will provide and maintain at least two Asthma Emergency Kits at each campus. One kit will be kept on school premises at the Health Office and one will be a mobile kit for activities such as:

- Yard duty
- Camps and excursions.

Each First Aid Kit in the College contains an Asthma Emergency Kit. There are multiple First Aid Kits at each campus.

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 (Rowville Secondary College 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

An accident/injury parent notification will be completed to record the details of an asthma first aid incident, such as the number of puffs administered.

College nurse/First aid officer 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.

The blue or blue/grey reliever medication in the Asthma Emergency Kits may be used by more than one student as long as they are used with a spacer and all parts are cleaned with an alcohol wipe. 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 Rowville Secondary College 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.
- Not shared with anyone else

Epidemic Thunderstorm Asthma

Rowville Secondary College will be prepared to act on the warnings and advice from the Department of Education when the risk of epidemic thunderstorm asthma is forecast as high.

Communication plan

This policy will be available on Rowville Secondary College website so that parents/guardians/carers and other members of the school community can easily access information about Rowville Secondary College asthma management procedures.

Communication

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

- Available publicly on our College website
- Available additionally through Compass on our resource page
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request
- Included in staff induction handbook/manual

Further information and resources

- Asthma Australia: [Resources for schools](#)
- Policy and Advisory Library:
 - [Asthma](#)
 - [Treating an asthma attack](#)
- RSC First Aid Policy
- RSC Distribution of Medication Policy
- RSC Health Care Needs Policy

POST INCIDENT SUPPORT

A member of the principal team and/or College Nurse will provide support to staff and students following a serious incident.