



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact one of our Assistant Principals for assistance with scheduling a Language Loop meeting, ph: 03 9280 1955.

Purpose

To ensure that *Mildura Senior College and Mildura English Language Centre (College)* appropriately supports students diagnosed with asthma.

Objective

To explain to the College’s 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:

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| • 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) |

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- food chemicals/additives
- laughter or emotions, such as stress
- certain medications (including aspirin and anti-inflammatories)

Asthma management

If a student diagnosed with asthma enrolls at *Mildura Senior College and Mildura English Language Centre (College)*:

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 should also provide a photo of the student to be included as part of the student's Asthma Action Plan.
3. Asthma Action Plans:
 - Where necessary, an Individual Asthma Action Plan will be in place as soon as practicable after a student enrolls and where possible, before the student's first day. Plans will be held in a clearly labelled Medical folder in the front office of the College.
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

Any Student Health Support Plan will be developed in accordance with the School's Healthcare Needs Policy.
5. If a student diagnosed with asthma is going to attend a school camp or excursion, 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. A student's Individual Asthma Action Plan will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis in consultation with the student's parents/carers. The plan will also be reviewed and, where necessary, updated in the following circumstances:
 - As soon as practicable after the student has an asthma attack at school;
 - If the student's medical condition, insofar as it relates to allergy and the potential for anaphylactic reaction, 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)

Location of Asthma Kits:

- Mildura English Language Centre: Students' asthma kits will be stored in their classroom in the Teacher's desk drawer and also in the first aid kit located in the Staff Room.
- Mildura Senior College: 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.

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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 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 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 • Take 4 breaths from the spacer Remember – Shake, 1 puff, 4 breaths
3.	Wait 4 minutes: <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.	If there is still no improvement call Triple Zero “000” and ask for an ambulance. <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.	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

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

Staff Training

In an event of an asthma attack, the College’s first aid and emergency response procedures and students Individual Asthma Action plan must be followed.

The principal will ensure that the following school staff are appropriately trained in asthma management:

- Teachers and other school staff who conduct classes which students at risk of asthma attend or give instruction to students at risk of asthma must have up to date training in an asthma management training course.
- All first aid trained staff.

Staff who are required to undertake training must have completed:

- An approved online asthma management training course in the last three years.

Mildura Senior College and Mildura English Language Centre uses the following training course [e.g. [Asthma Australia](#) eTraining course].

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The 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

Mildura Senior College and Mildura English Language Centre will maintain a supply of asthma relievers for general use, as a back-up to those provided by parents and carers for specific students, and also for students who may suffer from a first-time reaction at school.

Asthma relievers for general use are available at:

- Mildura English Language Centre: the first aid kit located in the Staff Room and are labelled “general use”.
- Mildura Senior College: the front office of the College and are labelled “general use”.
- The College also includes asthma relievers and spacers in each first aid kit. These first aid kits are available to take on excursions/camps. Basic first aid supplies are available at a number of first aid stations around the school as located on the school evaluation map.

Each First Aid Kit will contain:

- at least 1 blue or blue/grey reliever medication such as 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 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
- A note pad /record sheet/log for recording the details of an asthma first aid incident, such as the number of puffs administered.

The First Aid Compliance 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 spaces.

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. 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 the College to support a student diagnosed with asthma will be:

- Recorded on the student’s file.

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- 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 College’s website so that parents and other members of the school community can easily access information about the school’s asthma management procedures. The total number of students with asthma will be included in the annual staff briefing, with a full list available at the Reception in the Asthma folder.

Epidemic Thunderstorm Asthma

The College 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 & Compass
- Included in staff induction processes and staff training
- Included in staff handbook/manual
- Discussed at annual staff briefings/meetings
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

Further Information & Resources

- Asthma Australia: [Resources for schools](#)
- Policy and Advisory Library:
 - [Asthma](#)
 - [Treating an asthma attack](#)
- 1.01 Anaphylaxis Policy
- 1.12 Duty of Care Policy
- 1.15 First Aid Policy
- 1.16 Health Care Needs Policy
- 1.17 Medication Policy

Review and Evaluation

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