

	Prace College Asthma Management Policy and Procedure	Approval Date: 27/06/2024
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Authorised by:	Board	Version Date: 02/07/2024
Responsible Person:	Principal	
Staff Involved:	Prace College Staff, Prace & Prace College First Aiders	

Purpose

Asthma is a chronic health condition affecting approximately 10% of Australian children and teenagers. Asthma is one of the most common reasons for child admissions to hospital and missed days of school. Asthma exacerbations can commonly occur while attending schools, particularly in February and May.

The purpose of this Policy and Procedure is:

- To ensure Prace College supports students diagnosed with asthma.
- To ensure the whole Prace College community (principals, staff, volunteers, parents and carers and students) are aware of their obligations and best practice management of asthma in the school setting
- To provide the necessary information to effectively manage episodes of asthma within the College

Scope

This Policy and Procedure applies to students enrolled in the Prace College program only.

It does not apply to any other students enrolled with Prace.

For Asthma first aid refer to Prace's *First Aid Policy and Procedure*.

Definitions

Asthma is a disease of the airways, the small tubes which carry air in and out of the lungs. When you have asthma symptoms the muscles in the airways tighten and the lining of the airways swells and produces sticky mucus. These changes cause the airways to become narrow, so that there is less space for the air to flow into and out of your lungs (National Asthma Council 2011).

Board means the board of the incorporated association Prace Inc, and the Prace College governing authority.

Department: means the Victorian Department of Education, or its successor.

Asthma Action Plan is a plan developed for each student diagnosed with asthma. It is completed and signed by the student's medical practitioner and is designed to assist staff members to identify the student's asthma signs and symptoms including their severity and what action needs to be taken in regards to administering the student's asthma reliever medication.

Asthma Action Plan templates can be found on the Asthma Australia website <https://asthma.org.au/>.

Medical Practitioner: This is a registered medical practitioner within the meaning of the *Health Professions Registration Act 2005*, but excludes a person registered as a non-practicing health practitioner.

Parent/guardian/carer/informal carer (parent): In relation to a child means any person who has parental responsibility for 'major long-term issues' as defined in the *Family Law Act 1975* (Cth) or has been granted 'guardianship' for the child pursuant to the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* (Vic) or other state welfare legislation.

An Informal Carer is a person who has responsibility for the day-to-day care of the student and with whom the student is residing. Where a student is not living with a parent/guardian but is living in an informal care arrangement with a relative or other person, Prace may accept enrolment and other permission forms signed by the informal carer if the carer provides a signed Informal Carer's Statutory Declaration to Prace. This is a written declaration by the carer that sets out the care arrangements for the child — refer to: Informal Carer Statutory Declaration template. Generally, an informal carer who has provided Prace with a completed Informal Carer Statutory Declaration may make education-based decisions for the child and may access education and participation information ordinarily provided to a Carer.

Prace: means the incorporated association (A0032713Z) which includes the Registered Training Organisation (4036) & Prace College (2110).

Prace College: means the section of Prace that operates as an independent school from both the Merrilands and Mernda campuses under registration number 2110.

Prace College Staff: means the Principal, Assistant Principal, and any person employed or engaged as a part of Prace College (both Merrilands and Mernda campuses), including:

- to teach Prace College students, or
- in an educational support role for the Prace College program, including teacher's aides / education support workers, youth workers, psychologists, or
- administration staff, or
- whom the Principal determines as part of the annual risk assessment process should comply with the school's asthma policy.

A **puffer** is a pressurised metered dose inhaler (pMDI). The medicine contained in the inhaler is in a fine mist. When you press the canister, this mist is released, and you breathe in to deliver the medicine to your airways.

School Leadership Team: consists of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Prace, Principal and Assistant Principals of Prace College and other member/s of the Prace Senior Management Team.

Significant child safety incident means an incident, disclosure or allegation of child abuse.

A **spacer** is a holding chamber device that makes it easier to take asthma medication from the puffer. A spacer can also make it easier to coordinate breathing in and pressing the puffer.

Policy Principles

Prace College will provide, as far as practicable, a safe, healthy and supportive environment that takes into consideration the needs of all students, including those at risk of asthma, by:

- Raising awareness about asthma and the Prace College Asthma Management Policy and Procedure in the school community
- Engaging with parents/carers of students at risk of asthma in assessing risks, developing risk minimisation strategies and management strategies for the student
- Ensuring that each staff member has adequate knowledge about asthma and the school's policy and procedures in responding to asthma attack.

Responsibilities

The Principal will ensure:

- Staff are provided with a copy of the Asthma Management Policy and are made aware of asthma management strategies upon employment at the College
- Asthma education and first aid training is provided for staff as required in order to maintain validity. i.e. every three years for first aid and asthma
- Parents are provided with a copy of the College's Asthma Policy upon enrolment of their child
- Students with asthma are identified during the enrolment process and parents are provided with a blank asthma action plan to be completed and signed by the child's medical practitioner and returned to the College
- Health Support Plans are completed for students with asthma
- Where possible, that all students with asthma have a current written asthma action plan (must be updated at least annually)
- The parents and carers of all students with asthma provide reliever medication at all times their child attends the College
- an asthma first aid procedure consistent with current national recommendations and all staff are aware of the asthma first aid procedure
- Adequate provision and maintenance of asthma emergency kits for the College and that each asthma emergency kit contains reliever medication, two spacer devices, instructions outlining the first aid procedure and a record form
- Reliever medications within the asthma emergency kits are replaced regularly and have not expired, and that spacers are replaced after each use
- Communication is facilitated between management, staff, parents and students regarding the College's asthma management policy and strategies
- All Prace College Staff have access to Prace's *First Aid Policy and Procedure*, and *Medical Conditions Management Policy and Procedure*
- Any concerns regarding asthma and students attending the College are promptly communicated to parents
- Triggers of asthma symptoms for students are identified and minimised where possible
- Students with asthma are not discriminated against in any way

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- Students with asthma can participate in all activities safely and to their fullest abilities

Prace College Staff will:

- Be aware of the Asthma Management Policy and Procedure
- Be aware of the asthma first aid procedure
- Be aware of students with asthma and where their medication and personal spacers are stored
- Participate in Health Support Plan completion as required
- Attend asthma education and training sessions when required
- Be aware of where to access written asthma plans and asthma emergency kits
- Identify and minimise, where possible, triggers of asthma symptoms for students
- Ensure that students with asthma are not discriminated against in any way
- Ensure that students with asthma can participate in activities safely and to their fullest abilities
- Promptly communicate to the principal, parents and carers any concerns regarding asthma and students enrolled in the College

Parents will:

- Inform the College if their child has asthma upon enrolment
- Read the Asthma Policy
- Participate and sign student Health Support Plans if required
- Provide a signed written asthma action plan to the College, and ensure that it is updated at least yearly
- Provide the College with their child's reliever medication along with a spacer (required for 'puffer' medication) for all times the child is attending the College, unless the child is carrying the medication and spacer for self-management purposes
- Ensure that if their child is self-managing their asthma the child carries their reliever medication and spacer at all times
- Promptly communicate all medical and health information relevant to their child, to the principal and staff of the College
- Communicate any changes to their child's asthma or any concerns about the health of their child

Students will:

- Immediately inform staff if they experience asthma symptoms
 - Inform staff if they have self-administered any asthma medication
 - Carry asthma medication and a spacer with them at all times (if self-managing their asthma)
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Procedure

Asthma Action Plan

Each student diagnosed with asthma is to have an individual Asthma Action Plan on file with the college.

The Asthma Action Plan should be:

- completed and signed by the student's medical/health practitioner in consultation with the parents/guardians
- provided annually by the:
 - medical/health practitioner to the parents/guardian
 - parents/guardians to the College.

The plan must include:

- the prescribed medication taken:
 - on a regular basis
 - as premedication to exercise
 - if the student is experiencing symptoms.
- emergency contact details
- business and after hours contact details of the student's medical/health practitioner
- details about deteriorating asthma including:
 - signs to recognise worsening symptoms
 - what to do during an attack
 - medication to be used
- an asthma first aid section and should:
 - specify no less than 4 separate puffs of blue reliever medication, with 4 breaths taken per puff every 4 minutes, using a spacer if possible.

Asthma Action Plan templates can be found on the Asthma Australia website <https://asthma.org.au/>

Risk Minimisation Strategies

Symptoms of asthma may include, but are not limited to:

- shortness of breath
- wheezing (a whistling noise from the chest).
- tightness in the chest
- a dry, irritating, persistent cough.

Symptoms vary from person to person.

Triggers

- 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
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- moulds
 - pollens
 - animals such as cats and dogs
 - chemicals such as household cleaning products
 - aerosols (including perfumes, after-shaves, hair spray and aerosols deodorant sprays)
 - food chemicals/additives
 - certain medications (including aspirin and anti-inflammatories)
 - laughter or emotions, such as stress.

Managing Exercise Induced Asthma (EIA)

If a student has diagnosed EIA the school will ensure that there is adequate time for the following procedures, before, during and after exercise.

Before:

- reliever medication to be taken by student 15 minutes before exercise or activity (if indicated on the student's Asthma Action Plan)
- student to undertake adequate warm up activity

During:

- if symptoms occur, student to stop activity, take reliever medication, only return to activity if symptom free
- if symptoms reoccur, student to take reliever medication and cease activity for the rest of the day. This is known as 'two strikes and out'.

After:

- ensure cool down activity is undertaken
- be alert for symptoms

If a student has an asthma attack during, or after exercise or activity, follow their Asthma Action Plan if easily accessible, or commence first aid.

Always notify parent/guardian/s of any incidents.

Excursions and camps

Student specific medicines (i.e. EpiPens, and reliever medication/puffers) and medical action plans (i.e. anaphylaxis and asthma) are taken on all local & non-local excursions and camps.

Refer to *Excursions Policy and Procedure*

Preventing thunderstorm related Asthma

As people with asthma are vulnerable to thunderstorm related asthma attacks, where possible these people should avoid being outside during thunderstorms from October through December – especially in the wind gusts that come before the storm.

To reduce the risk of thunderstorm related asthma attacks, staff are advised to:

- Follow the Prace College Asthma Management Policy and Procedure
- Ensure students remain inside and close all doors and windows
- If air conditioning is on or available, turn it onto 'recirculate' mode

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- Monitor asthmatic students or staff members to identify signs of symptoms of asthma

Students are advised to update their asthma management plans with their local doctor prior to thunderstorm asthma season.

If asthma symptoms arise, follow the *Prace First Aid Policy and Procedure*.

Staff professional development and thunderstorm related asthma

Prace will supply staff with information and opportunities to learn about managing thunderstorm related asthma.

Training and professional development will include but not be limited to:

- First Aid training
- How to undertake a risk assessment in conditions which people may be at risk of experiencing thunderstorm related asthma
- How to help students manage their asthma
- How to identify signs and symptoms of thunderstorm related asthma

Asthma Emergency Kits should contain:

- At least one blue or blue/grey reliever medication such as Airomir, Asmol or Ventolin
- At least two spacer devices (for single person use only) to assist with effective inhalation of the blue or blue/grey reliever medication.
- Clear written instructions on Asthma First aid, including:
 - How to use the medication and spacer devices, and
 - 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.

Spacers and face masks are to be replaced each time they are used.

Blue or blue/grey reliever medication ‘puffers’ may be used by more than 1 person, as long as they are used with a spacer. If the puffer comes into contact with someone’s mouth it cannot be reused and must be replaced.

Review

This Policy and Procedure will be reviewed every two years, and after any significant child safety incident or complaint, or in response to significant emerging risks or further government mandates/requirements. The Prace Board is responsible for reviewing and approving this Policy and Procedure.

Glossary

Relevant Legislation / Standards

Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
Disability Act 2006 (Vic)
Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth)
Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)
Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic)
Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)

Health Records Act 2001 (Vic)
Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)
Asthma Guidelines for Australian Schools (Asthma Australia, 2022)

**Related
Policies and
Procedures**

Excursions Policy and Procedure
First Aid Policy and Procedure
Prace College Medical Conditions Management Policy and Procedure
OHS Policy and Procedure
Risk Management Policy and Procedure
Prace College Student Selection, Enrolment, Induction Policy and Procedure
Prace College Student Welfare and Duty of Care Policy and Procedure

**Related
Documents**

Asthma Action Plan template

Consultation

Principal
Assistant Principals
Education & Business Operations Manager
College Administration Manager
Compliance Manager
