



The Asthma and
Respiratory Foundation
of New Zealand (Inc.)
Te Taumatua Huango,
Mate Ha o Aotearoa

SUGGESTIONS FOR SCHOOL POLICY ON ASTHMA

Asthma is a respiratory condition resulting in difficulty in breathing, a tight feeling in the chest, a cough, or a wheeze. It is not contagious.

Rationale

- To maintain the wellbeing and safety of all students with asthma, both at school and during extra-curricular activities.

Goals

- To have information systems which identify students with asthma and their asthma medication needs.
- To provide access for children to prescribed asthma medication as required.
- To maintain an up-to-date Asthma Emergency Kit with clear instructions for its use.
- To ensure that teachers and other adults who have contact with students know about asthma and how it is managed.
- To keep parents/caregivers informed about their child's asthma at school.
- To provide a safe and supportive environment for children with asthma.

Guidelines

- Parents/caregivers should be encouraged to provide information about a student's asthma :
 - on enrolment;
 - at annual update of medical records;
 - when newly diagnosed.
- Permission to administer emergency procedures, including administering reliever medication, should be sought from parents/caregivers.
- Children's reliever medication should be easily accessible to the child (e.g. kept in a labelled lunch box in their school bag or desk).
- If reliever medication is used then a designated adult should be informed as soon as possible.
- Records should be updated and be readily accessible.

- An up-to-date Asthma Emergency Kit should be held, and a staff member designated to ensure that it is maintained (for example, that the reliever inhaler is current).
- Asthma education should be provided for staff, so that they know how to recognise asthma symptoms, what to do in the event of an asthma attack or an asthma emergency, and how they can help children with asthma keep well at school.
- The school should have a plan for dealing with asthma on school trips, camps, sports days, or any other extra-curricular activities.
- Parents/caregivers should be informed if their child has an asthma attack at school, or if there are concerns that asthma is having an effect on the child's work or recreation.
- Parents should be informed of this policy, and be involved in any changes to it.
- A 24-hour smokefree school environment should be provided, to reduce the risk of asthma being triggered by second-hand smoke.

Responsibilities

- Parents/Caregivers :** should ensure the school has the necessary information and permissions to help manage the child's asthma at school.
- Students :** should have ready access to their own inhaler at all times.
- Staff :** should know how to recognise asthma symptoms and have a plan for responding to asthma attacks in school and extracurricular activities.
- should ensure parents are informed of asthma attacks and any effect asthma may be having on the child at school.
- designated staff should ensure records and Asthma Emergency Kit are kept up-to-date.