

ASTHMA

QUALITY AREA 2 | ELAA VERSION 1.3



PURPOSE

This policy will outline the procedures to:

- ensure ECTs/educators, staff and families are aware of their obligations and the best practice management of asthma at Denzil Don Kindergarten
- ensure that all necessary information for the effective management of children enrolled at Denzil Don Kindergarten with asthma is collected and recorded so they receive appropriate attention when required
- respond to the needs of children who have not been diagnosed with asthma and who experience breathing difficulties (suspected asthma attack) at the service
- ensure ECTs/educators, staff and families follow the advice from Emergency Management Victoria associated with thunderstorm asthma event

This policy should be read in conjunction with the *Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy*.



POLICY STATEMENT

VALUES

Denzil Don Kindergarten is committed to:

- providing a safe and healthy environment for all children enrolled at the service.
- providing an environment in which all children with asthma can participate to their full potential.
- providing a clear set of asthma management guidelines and procedures to be followed.
- educating and raising awareness about asthma among educators, staff, families and any other person(s) dealing with children enrolled at the service.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the approved provider, persons with management or control, nominated supervisor, persons in day-to-day charge, early childhood teachers, educators, staff, students, volunteers, families, children, and others attending the programs and activities of Denzil Don Kindergarten, including during offsite excursions and activities.

Asthma management should be viewed as a shared responsibility. While Denzil Don Kindergarten recognises its duty of care towards children with asthma during their time at the service, the responsibility for ongoing asthma management rests with the child's family and medical practitioner.

RESPONSIBILITIES	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teachers, educators and all other staff	Families	Contractors, volunteers and students
R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Providing all staff access to the service's <i>Asthma Policy</i> , and ensuring that they are aware of asthma management strategies (<i>refer to Procedures</i>) upon employment at the service	R	√			
Providing families access to the service's <i>Asthma Policy</i> and <i>Medical Conditions Policy</i> upon enrolment of their child (<i>Regulation 90, 91</i>)	R	√			
Ensuring casual/relief staff induction incorporates information about asthmatic children attending the service, and the location of their medication and action plan	R	R			
Providing approved Emergency Asthma Management (EAM) training (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) to staff as required under the <i>National Regulations 136</i>	R	√			
Ensuring at least one staff member with current approved Emergency Asthma Management (EAM) training (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) is always on duty	R	√			
Ensuring all educators approved first aid qualifications, anaphylaxis management training and Emergency Asthma Management (EAM) training is current, meets the requirements of the <i>National Law (Section 169(4)) and National Regulations (Regulation 137)</i> , and is approved by ACECQA	R	√			
Maintaining current approved Emergency Asthma Management (EAM) (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) qualifications		R	R		√
Ensuring the details of approved Emergency Asthma Management (EAM) training (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) is included on the staff record (<i>refer to Definitions</i>)	R	√			
Organising asthma management information sessions for families of children enrolled at the service, where appropriate	R	√			
Acting on advice and warnings from the Department's Emergency Management Division associated with a potential thunderstorm asthma activity, and implementing a communication strategy to inform families	R	√	√		√
Implementing procedures to avoid exposure, such as staying indoors with windows and doors closed associated with a potential thunderstorm that may trigger asthma	R	√	√		√
Identifying children with asthma during the enrolment process and informing staff	R	√			

Ensuring families provide a copy of their child's Asthma Care Plan (<i>refer to Definitions and Attachment 2</i>), in consultation (if possible) with their registered medical practitioner, following enrolment and before the child commences at the service (<i>Regulation 90</i>). The Asthma Care Plan should be reviewed and updated at least annually	R	√		√	
Developing a Risk Minimisation Plan (<i>refer to Definitions and Attachment 4</i>) for every child with asthma, in consultation with families	R	√	√	√	
Ensuring all details on their child's enrolment form and medication record (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) are completed before commencement at the service				√	
Ensuring that all children with asthma have an Asthma Care Plan and Risk Minimisation Plan filed with their enrolment record	R	√		√	
Notifying staff, in writing, of any changes to the information on the Asthma Care Plan, enrolment form or medication record				√	
Always ensuring the provision of an adequate supply of asthma medication and equipment for their child, and ensuring it is labelled with the child's name				√	
Consulting with the families of children with asthma in relation to the health and safety of their child, and the supervised management of the child's asthma	R	√		√	
Communicating any concerns to families if a child's asthma is limiting their ability to participate fully in all activities	√	√	√		
Compiling a list of children with asthma and placing it in a secure, but readily accessible, location known to all staff. This should include the Asthma Care Plan for each child	√	√	√		
Ensuring that educators can identify children displaying the symptoms of an asthma attack and locate their medication, Asthma Care Plans and the asthma first aid kit	R	√	√		
Ensuring medication is administered in accordance with the child's Asthma Care Plan and the <i>Administration of Medication Policy</i>	R	R	R		
Ensuring a medication record is kept for each child that is administered medication by the service (<i>Regulation 92</i>)	R	√	√		
Ensuring families of all children with asthma provide reliever medication and a spacer (including a child's face mask, if required) at all times their child is attending the service	R	√		R	
Implementing an asthma first aid procedure (<i>refer to Procedures</i>) consistent with current national recommendations	R	R	R		
Ensuring that all staff are aware of the asthma first aid procedure	R	√			
Ensuring adequate provision and maintenance of asthma first aid kits (<i>refer to Definitions</i>)	R	√			
Ensuring the expiry date of reliever medication is checked regularly and replaced when required, and that spacers and face masks from the services first aid kits are washed with warm soapy water after every use	R	√	√		

Facilitating communication between management, ECT, educators, staff and families regarding the service's <i>Asthma Policy</i> and strategies	R	√			
Identifying and minimising asthma triggers (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) for children attending the service as outlined in the child's Asthma Care Plan, where possible	R	√	√		
Ensuring that children with asthma are not discriminated against	√	√	√		√
Ensuring programmed activities and experiences take into consideration the individual needs of all children, including any children with asthma	√	√	√		√
Ensuring that children with asthma can participate in all activities safely and to their full potential	√	√	√		√
Immediately communicating any concerns with families regarding the management of children with asthma at the service	R	√	√		
Displaying Asthma Australia's Asthma First Aid poster (<i>refer to Sources and Attachment 3</i>) in key locations at the service	R	√			
Ensuring that medication is administered in accordance with the <i>Administration of Medication Policy</i>	R	R	R		
Ensuring that when medication has been administered to a child in an asthma emergency without authorisation from the parent/carer or authorised nominee, medical practitioner or emergency services the parent/carer of the child and emergency services are notified as soon as is practicable (<i>Regulation 94</i>)	R	R	R		
Following appropriate reporting procedures set out in the <i>Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy</i> if a child is ill, or is involved in a medical emergency or an incident at the service that results in injury or trauma	R	R	R		√
Ensuring an asthma first aid kit (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) is taken on all excursions and other offsite activities (<i>refer to Excursions and Service Events Policy</i>)	R	R	√		



PROCEDURES

Asthma Australia's Asthma First Aid 2022: http://asthma.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/AAFA-First-Aid-2022-A4_CMYK_v7_MASTER.pdf



BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

BACKGROUND

Asthma is a chronic, treatable health condition that affects approximately one in nine Australian children and is one of the most common reasons for childhood admission to hospital. With good asthma management, people with asthma need not restrict their daily activities. Community education assists in generating a better understanding of asthma within the community and minimising its impact.

Symptoms of asthma include wheezing, coughing (particularly at night), chest tightness, difficulty in breathing and shortness of breath, and symptoms may vary between children. It is generally accepted that children under six years of age do not have the skills and ability to recognise and manage their asthma without adult

assistance. With this in mind, a service must recognise the need to educate staff and families about asthma and promote responsible asthma management strategies.

Legislation that governs the operation of approved children's services is based on the health, safety and welfare of children, and requires that children are protected from hazards and harm. The approved provider will ensure that there is at least one educator on duty at all times who has current approved emergency asthma management training in accordance with the [Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 \(Regulation 136\(c\)\)](#). As a demonstration of duty of care and best practice, ELAA recommends all educators have current approved emergency asthma management training (*refer to Definitions*).

LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Health Records Act 2001 (Vic)
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
- Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)
- Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (Vic)
- Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009 (Vic)

The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:

Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today: www.legislation.vic.gov.au

Commonwealth Legislation – Federal Register of Legislation: www.legislation.gov.au



DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For regularly used terms refer to the Definitions file of the kindergarten website.

Approved Emergency Asthma Management (EAM) training: asthma training approved by the National Authority in accordance with Division 7 of the National Regulations and listed on the ACECQA website: <http://www.acecqa.gov.au>. EAM training provides knowledge about the underlying causes of asthma, asthma triggers, and the recognition and treatment of an asthma attack.

Asthma Care Plan: a record of information on an individual child's asthma and its management, including contact details, what to do when the child's asthma worsens and the treatment to be administered in an emergency. An Asthma Care Plan template specifically for use in children's services can be downloaded from Asthma Australia's website: www.asthma.org.au (*refer to Attachment 2*)

Asthma emergency: the onset of unstable or deteriorating asthma symptoms requiring immediate treatment with reliever medication.

Asthma first aid kit: should contain reliever medication, 2 small volume spacer devices, 2 compatible children's face masks (for children under the age of four), record form and asthma first aid instruction card.

It is essential to have at least two spacers and two face masks in each first aid kit. Asthma Australia approved the washing of face masks with warm soapy water after use.

Asthma triggers: things that may induce asthma symptoms, for example, pollens, colds/viruses, dust mites, smoke and exercise. Asthma triggers will vary from child to child.

Metered dose inhaler (puffer): a device used to administer reliever medication.

Puffer: common name for a metered dose inhaler.

Reliever medication: comes in a blue/grey metered dose inhaler containing salbutamol, an ingredient used to relax the muscles around the airways to relieve asthma symptoms. This medication is always used in an asthma emergency. Reliever medication is sold by pharmacies as Airomir, Asmol, Ventolin or Zempreon.

Risk minimisation plan: provides child-specific information regarding asthma triggers and strategies to avoid them in the service (*refer to Attachment 3*).

Spacer: a plastic chamber device used to increase the efficiency of delivery of reliever medication from a puffer. It should always be used with a puffer device and may be used in conjunction with a face mask.

SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES



SOURCES

- Asthma Australia: www.asthma.org.au or phone 1800 278 462 (toll-free)
- Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA): www.cecqa.gov.au
- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, ACECQA.

RELATED POLICIES

- Administration of Medication
- Anaphylaxis and Allergic Reactions
- Dealing with Medical Conditions
- Emergency and Evacuation
- Excursions and Service Events
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness
- Privacy and Confidentiality
- Staffing

EVALUATION



To assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the approved provider will:

- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service’s policy review cycle, or as required
- notifying all stakeholders affected by this policy at least 14 days before making any significant changes to this policy or its procedures, unless a lesser period is necessary due to risk (*Regulation 172 (2)*).

ATTACHMENTS



- Attachment 1: Asthma Action Plan – download from the Asthma Australia website: <https://asthma.org.au/treatment-diagnosis/asthma-action-plan/>
- Attachment 2: Asthma First Aid poster – download from the Asthma Australia website: <http://asthma.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/AAFA-First-Aid-2022-A4-CMYK-v7-MASTER.pdf>
- Attachment 3: Asthma Risk Minimisation Plan – download from the ELAA website: <https://elaa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/asthma-risk-minimisation-plan.docx>



AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the approved provider of Denzil Don Kindergarten on 18/08/2023.

REVIEW DATE: 18 / AUGUST / 2025
