

# Asthma Policy



## Help for non-English speakers.

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the college 5996 3544 or [cranbourne.sc@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:cranbourne.sc@education.vic.gov.au)

## Purpose

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

## Objective

To explain to Cranbourne Secondary College 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:

- exercise
- smoke (cigarette smoke, wood smoke from open fires, burn-offs or bushfires)
- house dust mites
- pollens
- food chemicals/additives
- chemicals such as household cleaning products
- deodorants (including perfumes, after-shaves, hair spray and aerosol deodorant sprays)
- colds/flu
- weather changes such as thunderstorms and cold, dry air
- moulds
- animals such as cats and dogs
- laughter or emotions, such as stress
- certain medications (including aspirin and anti-inflammatories)

# Asthma Policy

## Asthma management

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

1. Parents/carers must provide the college 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. Cranbourne Secondary College will keep all Asthma Action Plans:
  - Individual plans will be kept in First Aid
  - Individual plans will be pinned to Compass
4. College staff may also work with parents/carers to develop a Student Health Support Plan which will include details on:
  - how the college 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 Cranbourne Secondary College's Healthcare Needs Policy.

5. If a student diagnosed with asthma is going to attend a college camp or excursion, Cranbourne Secondary College 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 college and provide an updated Asthma Action Plan.
7. College staff will work with parents/carers to review Asthma Action Plans (and Student Health Support Plans) once a year during term 2.

## Student asthma kit

All students diagnosed with asthma are required to have a student asthma kit at college which contains:

- their own prescribed reliever medication labelled with the student's name
- their spacer (if they use one)

Students will be required to keep their asthma kits with them while at college.

## 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

College staff will endeavour to follow the Asthma First Aid procedures outlined in the table below. College staff may contact Triple Zero "000" at any time.

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Step	Action
1.	Sit the person upright <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be calm and reassuring</li> <li>Do not leave them alone</li> <li>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).</li> <li>If the student's action plan is not immediately available, use the Asthma First Aid as described in Steps 2 to 5.</li> </ul>
2.	Give 4 separate puffs of blue or blue/grey reliever puffer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shake the puffer</li> <li>Use a spacer if you have one</li> <li>Put 1 puff into the spacer</li> <li>Take 4 breaths from the spacer</li> </ul> <b>Remember – Shake, 1 puff, 4 breaths</b>
3.	Wait 4 minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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)</li> </ul>
4.	If there is still no improvement call Triple Zero "000" and ask for an ambulance. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tell the operator the student is having an asthma attack</li> <li>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)</li> </ul>
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

## Training for staff

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

Staff	Completed by	Course	Provider	Cost	Valid for
<b>Group 1 General Staff</b>	College staff with a direct teaching role with students affected by asthma or other college staff directed by the principal after conducting a risk assessment.	Asthma first aid management for education staff (non-accredited) One-hour online training.	Asthma Australia	Free to all schools	3 years
<b>Group 2 Specific Staff</b>	Staff working with high-risk children with a history of severe asthma, or with direct student wellbeing responsibility, (including nurses, PE/sport teachers, first aid and college staff attending camp)	Course in Asthma Awareness 10760NAT OR Course in the management of Asthma Risks and Emergencies in the Workplace 22556VIC (accredited)	Any RTO that has this course in their scope of practice	Paid by Cranbourne Secondary College	3 years

# Asthma Policy

## Asthma Emergency Kit

Cranbourne Secondary College will provide and maintain at least two Asthma Emergency Kits. One kit will be kept on college premises at First Aid, and one will be a mobile kit for activities such as:

- yard duty
- camps and excursions.

Cranbourne Secondary College has additional kits located in each Year Level office.

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 (Cranbourne 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
- A Compass Chronicle will be made to record the details of an asthma first aid incident, such as the number of puffs administered.

The 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 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 Cranbourne 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 can properly support students diagnosed with asthma and respond appropriately if necessary.

## Epidemic Thunderstorm Asthma

Cranbourne 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

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

- Available publicly on college website
- Available on Compass School Documentation
- Included in staff induction processes
- Hard copy available from college administration upon request

# Asthma Policy

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## Further Information and Resources

- Asthma Australia: [Resources for schools](#)
- The Department's Policy and Advisory Library (PAL):
  - [Asthma](#)
  - [Treating an asthma attack](#)
- Cranbourne Secondary College
  - Health Care Needs Policy
  - First Aid Policy

## Policy Review and Approval

<b>Policy last reviewed</b>	Term 2, 2023
<b>Approved by</b>	David Caughey Principal
<b>Next review date</b>	Term 2, 2026