



Somers School Camp



Asthma Policy

PURPOSE

To ensure Somers School Camp appropriately supports students diagnosed with Asthma.

OBJECTIVE

To explain to Somers School Camp staff, visiting school staff, parents, carers and students the processes and procedures in place to support students diagnosed with asthma when in residence at Somers School Camp.

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- All staff, including casual relief staff and contractors
- All students who have been diagnosed with asthma or who may require emergency treatment for asthma and their parents/carers.

POLICY

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.

It is the responsibility of each visiting school to ensure all confidential medical forms are completed by parents/carers prior to the scheduled visit including:

- Medication Authority Form (includes student profile information)
- Student Health Support Plan (if required)
- Asthma Action Plans (if required)
- Anaphylaxis Management Plans (if required)

Copies of these forms must be provided to Somers School Camp in advance, along with any supplementary documentation completed by the student's treating practitioner, or if the principal of the visiting school has agreed, completed by the parents or carers.

All information is kept in hardcopy and these documents are stored in a secure location (Somers School Camp first aid room) as per the Department's records management policy. Access is limited to DET employees who have a duty of care and responsibility for students whilst at the school. If required, Somers School Camp will seek further clarification of student needs, with the visiting school prior to commencement.

Information on students' medical needs will be available via the hardcopy. A summary of the medical forms is to be taken with each class group. At the Somers campus, a hardcopy of relevant medical forms will also be placed in the Staff Room, Main office, Visiting Teachers' Lounge, First Aid Room, Kitchen, for other staff to access as required.



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If required, Somers School Camp will seek further clarification of student needs, with the visiting school prior to commencement.

A briefing is held for all visiting school staff when they arrive at Somers School Camp, where visiting teachers will be inducted into the processes around storage of medication and the location of emergency first aid equipment.

It is the responsibility of the visiting school to ensure they have appropriately trained staff attend all camps and excursion as per DET [Excursion Guidelines](#).

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
- chemicals such as household cleaning products
- food chemicals/additives
- laughter or emotions, such as stress
- colds/flu
- weather changes such as thunderstorms and cold, dry air
- moulds
- animals such as cats and dogs
- deodorants (including perfumes, after-shaves, hair spray and aerosol deodorant sprays)
- certain medications (including aspirin and anti-inflammatories)

Asthma management

If a student diagnosed with asthma is a resident at Somers School Camp:

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



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- 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. Somers School Camp will keep all Asthma Action Plans:
 - In the Staff Room, Main office, Visiting Teachers’ Lounge, First Aid Room, Kitchen.
 4. The Somers School Camp First Aid/Wellbeing Coordinator 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
 - inform all staff to assist the student if required

Any Student Health Support Plan will be developed in accordance with Somers School Camp’s Health Care Needs Policy.

5. If a student diagnosed with asthma is going to attend Somers School Camp, 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 Somers School Camp and provide an updated Asthma Action Plan.

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)

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

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



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take 4 breaths from the spacer <p>Remember – Shake, 1 puff, 4 breaths</p>
3.	<p>Wait 4 minutes</p> <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.	<p>If there is still no improvement call Triple Zero “000” and ask for an ambulance.</p> <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.	<p>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</p>

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

Somers School Camp will arrange the following asthma management training for staff:

Staff	Completed by	Course	Provider	Cost	Valid for
Group 1 General Staff	All Somers School Camp staff	Asthma first aid management for education staff (non-accredited) One hour face-to-face or online training.	Asthma Australia	Free to all schools	3 years
Group 2 Specific Staff	All Somers School Camp staff	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 Somers School Camp	3 years

Somers School Camp will also conduct an annual update for staff on:

- the procedures outlined in this policy
- the causes, symptoms and treatment of asthma.
- how to use a puffer and spacer
- the location of:
 - the Asthma Emergency Kits
 - asthma medication which has been provided by parents for student use.



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Asthma Emergency Kit

Somers School Camp will provide and maintain Asthma Emergency Kits. One kit will be kept on school premises at the First Aid Room and all Somers School Camp staff backpacks.

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 (Somers School Camp 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 record sheet/log for recording the details of an asthma first aid incident, such as the number of puffs administered.

The Somers School Camp First Aid/Wellbeing Coordinator 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 Somers School Camp to support a student diagnosed with asthma will be:

- shared with all relevant staff so that they are able to properly support students diagnosed with asthma and respond appropriately if necessary.

Communication

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

- Available publicly on our school's website



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- Included in Somers School Camp and visiting school staff induction processes

Epidemic Thunderstorm Asthma

Somers School Camp 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.

Further Information and Resources

- Asthma Australia: [Resources for schools](#)
- Policy and Advisory Library:
 - [Asthma](#)
 - [Treating an asthma attack](#)
- Health Care Needs Policy

Policy Review and Approval

Policy last reviewed	April 2025
Approved by	Mark Warner – Somers School Camp Principal
Next scheduled review date	April 2026