

ASTHMA POLICY

PURPOSE

To ensure that Rubicon Outdoor School appropriately supports students diagnosed with asthma at its campuses.

OBJECTIVE

To explain to Rubicon Outdoor School staff, visiting schools' staff, parents/carers, and students, the processes and procedures Rubicon Outdoor School will follow to support students diagnosed with asthma.

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

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

POLICY

As a school setting delivering outdoor educational experiences to students from visiting government schools, Rubicon Outdoor School works with each visiting school to ensure the asthma policy is implemented in accordance with Department's Asthma Policy.

Rubicon Outdoor School will provide a medical and consent form template to each visiting school.

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:

- A Rubicon Outdoor School medical and consent form
- Student Health Support Plan (if required)
- Asthma Action Plans (if required)
- Anaphylaxis Management Plans (if required)

Copies of these forms must be provided to Rubicon Outdoor School four weeks 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 or adult or independent students.

All medical information is entered into Rubicon's Student Management System (SMS) and hardcopies of the documents, are stored in a secure location (Thornton Campus or Nayook Campus first aid room) as per the Department's records management policy. Access to the first aid room is limited to DET employees who have a duty of care and responsibility for students whilst at the school. If required, Rubicon Outdoor School will seek further clarification of student needs with the visiting **school prior to commencement**.

Information on all students' medical needs will be available via the school's SMS. A summary of the medical forms is to be taken with each class group and provided to visiting school staff. A hardcopy

will also be placed on the Red Alert board in the administration building of each campus, for other staff to access as required.

It is the responsibility of the visiting school to manage the administration of medication to students, in consultation with the Principal and staff of Rubicon Outdoor School. Prior to each visiting school arriving, the visiting school must nominate a member of staff to manage the administration of medication for the period of the visit. This protocol will be reinforced at the briefing of visiting staff when they arrive at the school, 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 excursions guidelines](#).

- Between 7am to 9:30pm Rubicon Outdoor School Staff who have been trained in first aid will administer first aid in accordance with their training. In an emergency situation, other staff may assist in the administration of first aid within their level of competence.
- Between 9:30pm and 7am **nominated visiting school staff** who have been trained in first aid will administer first aid in accordance with their training. In an emergency situation, other staff may assist in the administration of first aid within their level of competence.
- When and if required a handover will be provided between Rubicon Outdoor School Staff and nominated visiting school staff.

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
- colds/flu
- weather changes such as thunderstorms and cold, dry air
- moulds

- pollens
- chemicals such as household cleaning products
- food chemicals/additives
- laughter or emotions, such as stress
- 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 attends Rubicon Outdoor School:

1. Parents/carers must provide **the visiting 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
 - 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. Copies of the Asthma Action Plan must be provided by the visiting school to Rubicon Outdoor School four weeks in advance of commencement, Rubicon Outdoor School will keep all Asthma Action Plan on the action plan boards at each campus.
4. **Visiting school staff** may also work with parents/carers to update / develop a Student Health Support Plan which will include details on:
 - how the school will provide support for the student
 - identify specific strategies (including Asthma management in the school camp, overnight and outdoor activities environment) allocate staff to assist the student

Any Student Health Support Plan will be developed in accordance with Rubicon Outdoor School's Health Care Needs Policy. If a student diagnosed with asthma is going to attend Rubicon Outdoor School parents/carers are required to provide any updated medical information.

5. If a student's asthma condition or treatment requirements change, parent/carers must notify the school and provide an updated Asthma Action Plan.
6. **Visiting school staff** may work with parents/carers to review the Asthma Action Plan (and Student Health Support Plans) where required.

Student asthma kit

All students diagnosed with asthma are required to bring their asthma medication and spacer if they use one. Students will be required to keep their asthma kits with them while at Rubicon Outdoor 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

Responding 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 Care 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 • Take 4 breaths from the spacer Remember – Shake, 1 puff, 4 breaths
3.	Wait 4 minutes <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.	If there is still no improvement call Triple Zero “000” and ask for an ambulance. <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.	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

Responding 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

Rubicon Outdoor School will arrange the following asthma management training for staff:

Staff	Completed by	Course	Provider	Cost	Valid for
Group 1 General Staff	School staff with a direct teaching role with students affected by asthma or other school staff directed by the principal after conducting a risk assessment.	Asthma first aid management for education staff (non-accredited) One hour face-to-face or online training.	The Asthma Foundation of Victoria	Free to all schools	3 years
Group 2 Specific Staff	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 school staff attending camp)	Course in Asthma Awareness 10760NAT (accredited) Or equivalent	Any RTO that has this course in their scope of practice	Paid by Rubicon Outdoor School	3 years

Rubicon Outdoor School will also conduct an annual briefing for staff on:

- the procedures outlined in this policy
- the causes, symptoms and treatment of asthma
- process for receiving information from visiting schools regarding the identities of the students diagnosed with 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.

Rubicon Outdoor School will also provide this policy to casual relief staff and volunteers who will be working with students and may also provide a briefing if the principal decides it is necessary depending on the nature of the work being performed.

Asthma Emergency Kit

Rubicon Outdoor School will provide and maintain at least one Asthma Emergency Kit per campus. This kit will be kept on school premises in the first aid rooms at each campus.

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 (Rubicon Outdoor School 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 Rubicon Outdoor School Resources Manager 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.

All Rubicon Outdoor School Group teaching staff will carry as part of their First Aid kit:

- at least 1 blue or blue/grey reliever medication such as Airomir, Admol or Ventolin
- at least 1 spacer devices (for single person use only) to assist with effective inhalation of the blue or blue/grey reliever medication (Rubicon Outdoor School will ensure spare spacers are available as replacements). Spacers will be stored in a dust proof container.

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 Rubicon Outdoor School to support a student diagnosed with asthma will be:

- recorded on the student's file

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

Epidemic Thunderstorm Asthma

Rubicon Outdoor School 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.

COMMUNICATION

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

- Available publicly on our school’s website
- Rubicon Outdoor School and visiting school staff induction processes
- Included in visiting school registration packs
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- Asthma Foundation Victoria: [Resources for schools](#)
- Policy and Advisory Library:
 - [Asthma](#)
 - [Treating an asthma attack](#)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed May 2021	Andrew Monson, Principal
Approved by	
Next scheduled review date	May 2022