

ASTHMA POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the Principal, Stewart Milner.

CONTEXT

The Centre for Higher Education Studies (CHES) is a co-educational, specific purpose, senior secondary school where high-achieving and high-ability (HA) students can extend their learning. CHES offers face to face learning at a state-of-the-art facility in South Yarra and hosts a high-quality virtual platform to enable students to access programs at CHES regardless of where they are located.

Students engage with CHES programs in the following ways:

- direct enrolment of students into select VCE subjects onsite and virtually, including access to Student Enrichment Programs - providing mentoring, workshops, and seminars
- direct enrolment of Higher Education Studies (HES) delivered by partner Universities, including access to Student Enrichment Programs - providing mentoring, workshops, and seminars.

Students participating in CHES programs remain enrolled at their chosen secondary school (base school) and are supported to undertake a course at CHES as part of their VCE program. Working in close partnership with students' base schools, students will be enrolled in a CHES course for a fraction of their timetable (generally 20 per cent), with the remainder of their enrolment and timetable reflecting the subjects being completed at their base school.

CHES shares a joint responsibility with students' base schools to ensure students' social and emotional wellbeing, and also partners with Universities and base schools to ensure students' academic needs are met.

Individual student study arrangements are considered and agreed between the student, parent/carer, base school, and CHES upon enrolment and induction. To formalise individual student study arrangements CHES develop an Individualised Achievement Plan (IAP) which will include:

- study arrangements (CHES program and delivery mode - face to face, virtual, or combination)
- timetable requirements
- travel arrangements (if applicable)
- agreed communication methods between base-school and CHES (who, what, when and how)
- agreed communication methods between partner Universities and CHES (who, what, when and how)

- reasonable adjustments (if required)
- student health care needs including asthma management, administration of medication and individual anaphylaxis management.

All CHES policies are designed to reflect its unique operating environment (physical and virtual), its program offerings, its partnerships with Universities and shared responsibility with students' base schools to ensure students' social and emotional wellbeing and academic needs are met.

CHES has a network of foundation schools and allows the member schools to deliver their own VCE classes within the CHES facility where not fully utilised for CHES programs. This policy does not consider CHES foundation school arrangements.

PURPOSE

To ensure that Centre for Higher Education Studies (CHES) appropriately supports students diagnosed with asthma.

OBJECTIVE

To explain to CHES parents/carers, students, base school supervisors, partner university staff and CHES employed staff the processes and procedures in place to support students diagnosed with asthma.

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- all staff, including casual relief staff, university partner staff, contractors and volunteers
- all students who have been diagnosed with asthma or who may require emergency treatment for asthma and their parents/carers whilst on-site at CHES, or whilst participating in an event, excursion or camp, including attendance on a university campus.

Where students are participating in a CHES class or event virtually from their base school, from home or another location, the base school or parent or carer will by default assume any health-related care requirements.

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
- 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 enrolls at CHES:

1. Parents/carers must provide their child's base school with an Asthma Action Plan which has been completed by the student's medical practitioner. The base school provides the plan to CHES as soon as practicable, and usually within 24 hours. 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. At CHES, each student has an IAP and where appropriate their health plans and Asthma Action Plans will be added to this to ensure consistent and clear information for all who need to know.
3. CHES will keep all Asthma Action Plans in the first aid room and the staff lounge.
4. In conjunction with the base school, CHES staff may also work with parents/carers to develop a Student Health Support Plan adapted to their child's involvement in CHES programs online through the CHES virtual environment, on-site at CHES, or at a partner university for Higher Education Studies programs through CHES, which will include details on:
 - how the school will provide support for the student
 - identify specific strategies
 - allocate staff to assist the student

This Student Health Support Plan will consider all scenarios and articulates arrangements for virtual, on-site and off-site programs through CHES.

5. If a student diagnosed with asthma is going to attend a school camp or excursion, CHES 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 base school and provide an updated Asthma Action Plan and the base school must provide this to CHES as soon as practicable, and normally within 24 hours.
7. Base school staff will work with parents/carers to review Asthma Action Plans (and Student Health Support Plans) once per year. As soon as practicable after the reviews, base schools will provide updated plans to CHES. CHES will update plans accordingly. The CHES First Aid Officer is responsible for working with base schools to collect and confirm Asthma plans.

Student asthma kit

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

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

As CHES is a senior secondary setting, students will be required to keep their asthma kits with them while at CHES and while off site, including camps, and excursions at universities for Higher Education Studies programs.

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 • 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

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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

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

CHES 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.	Asthma Australia	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, first aid and school staff attending camp)	<i>Course in Asthma Awareness 10760</i> NAT accredited)	Any RTO that has this course in their scope of practice	Paid by CHES	3 years

CHES will also conduct an annual briefing for staff on:

- the procedures outlined in this policy
- the causes, symptoms and treatment of asthma, including the introductory information at the start of this policy
- 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.

CHES will also provide this policy to university partners for their staff who are visiting on site at CHES as well as 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

At minimum, CHES will provide and maintain at least two Asthma Emergency Kits. One kit will be kept on school premises in the first aid room and one will be a mobile kit for activities such as:

- yard duty
- camps and excursions.

CHES will have an additional kit for every 300 students. These will be located in the first aid room.

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 (CHES 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 (using template record sheet in “additional resources” below).

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 replace 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 CHES to support a student diagnosed with asthma will be:

- recorded on the student’s file
- shared with all relevant staff (including university partners where appropriate), so that they are able to properly support students diagnosed with asthma and respond appropriately if necessary.

Epidemic Thunderstorm Asthma

CHES will be prepared to act on the warnings and advice from the Department of Education and Training (DET) 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:

- included in transition and enrolment packs
- available publicly on our school's website
- included in staff induction processes and staff training
- provided to staff at induction and included in staff handbook/manual
- provided to external providers, including partner universities
- provided to schools that are accessing CHES facilities, including the foundation network of schools
- included as reference in school newsletter each semester
- made available in hard copy from school administration upon request.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Department policies and guidelines:

- [Asthma](#)
- [Treating an asthma attack](#)

The following school policies are also relevant to this policy:

- Administration of Medication Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Health Care Needs Policy
- Medication Administration Log
- Medication Authority Form

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	February 2022
Approved by	Principal, Stewart Milner
Next scheduled review date	February 2023 - to ensure ongoing relevance and continuous improvement, this policy will be reviewed annually.