

2.17 ASTHMA MANAGEMENT

QUALITY AREA 2 | VERSION 1.24

PURPOSE

This policy will outline the procedures to:

- ensure ECT's/educators, staff and families are aware of their obligations and the best practice management of asthma at LEVNT EC Services.
- ensure that all necessary information for the effective management of children with asthma enrolled at LEVNT EC Services is collected and recorded so that these children receive appropriate attention when required.
- gather requirements for medical management plans which are provided by parents/guardians for the child.
- ensure Asthma Action Plans are provided by parents/guardians prior to commencement.
- develop risk minimisation and communication plans with parents/guardians.
- 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 ECT's/educators, staff and families follow the advice from Emergency Management Victoria/NSW Health associated with a thunderstorm asthma event.

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

POLICY STATEMENT

VALUES

LEVNT EC Services are 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 guidelines and procedures to be followed with regard to the management of asthma.
- educating and raising awareness about asthma among educators, staff, parents/guardians 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, student educators, volunteers, families, children and others attending the programs and activities of LEVNT EC Services, including during offsite excursion and activities.

Asthma management should be viewed as a shared responsibility. While LEVNT EC Services recognise their 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 registered medical practitioner.

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 own asthma without adult assistance. With this in mind, a service must recognise the need to educate staff and parents/guardians 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, LEVNT recommends all educators have current approved emergency asthma management training.

DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For regularly used terms refer to the Definitions file of each LEVNT EC policy folder.

Approved Emergency Asthma Management (EAM) training: Training that is approved by the National Authority in accordance with Division 7 of the National Regulations and is 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 Action 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 Action Plan template specifically for use in children's services can be downloaded from Asthma Australia's website: www.asthma.org.au

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

Asthma first aid kit: Kits should contain:

- reliever medication
- 2 small volume spacer devices
- 2 compatible children's face masks (for children under the age of four)
- record form
- asthma first aid instruction card.

Asthma Australia recommends that spacers and face masks are for single use only. It is essential to have at least two spacers and two face masks in each first aid kit, and these should be replaced once used. These used items can be provided to the child/family for ongoing personal 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 common device used to administer reliever medication.

Puffer: The common name for a metered dose inhaler.

Reliever medication: This 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 commonly sold by pharmacies as Airomir, Asmol, Ventolin or Zempreon.

Risk minimisation plan: Provides information about child-specific asthma triggers and strategies to avoid these in the service.

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

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Approved Provider, persons with management and control, nominated supervisor and/or persons in day-to-day charge are responsible for meeting legislated requirements of the ECEC sector which are indicated with **LR**.

	Approved Provider and/or persons with management and control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teachers, educators and all other staff	Parents, guardians and carers	Contractors, volunteers and those on student placement
Providing all staff with access to the service's Asthma Management Policy, and ensuring that they are aware of asthma management strategies (refer to Procedures) upon employment at the service	LR	✓			
Providing families with access of the service's Asthma Management Policy and Medical Conditions Policy upon enrolment of their child (Regulation 90, 91)	LR	✓			
Ensuring that induction procedures for casual and relief staff include information about children attending the service who have been diagnosed with asthma, and the location of their medication and action plans	LR	LR			
Providing approved Emergency Asthma Management (EAM) training (refer to Definitions) to staff as required under the National Regulations 136	LR	✓			
Ensuring at least one staff member with current approved Emergency Asthma Management (EAM) training is on duty at all times	LR	✓			
Ensuring that all educators' approved first aid qualifications, anaphylaxis management training and Emergency Asthma Management (EAM) training are current (within the previous 3 years), meet the requirements of the National Law (Section 169(4)) and National Regulations (Regulation 137), and are approved by ACECQA	LR	✓			
Maintaining current approved Emergency Asthma Management (EAM) qualifications		LR	LR		✓
Ensuring the details of approved Emergency Asthma Management (EAM) training are included on the staff record	LR	✓			
Organising asthma management information sessions for families of children enrolled at the service, where appropriate	LR	✓			
Acting on advice and warnings from the Department's Emergency Management Division associated with a potential thunderstorm asthma activity, and implement a communication strategy to inform parents/guardians	LR	✓	✓		✓
Implementing procedures to avoid exposure, such as staying indoors with windows and doors closed associated with a potential thunderstorm asthma	LR	✓	✓		✓
Identifying children with asthma during the enrolment process and informing staff	LR	✓			
Ensuring families provide a copy of their child's Asthma Action Plan (refer to Definitions and Attachment 2), in consultation (if possible) with their registered medical practitioner, following enrolment and prior to the child commencing at the service (Regulation 90). The Asthma Action Plan should be reviewed and updated at least annually	LR	✓		✓	
Developing a Risk Minimisation Plan for every child with asthma, in consultation with families	LR	✓	✓	✓	

	Approved Provider and/or persons with management and control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teachers, educators and all other staff	Parents, guardians and carers	Contractors, volunteers and those on student placement
Developing and implementing a communication plan (refer to Definitions) ensuring that relevant staff members and volunteers are informed about the child medical conditions policy, the Asthma Action Plan and Risk Minimisation Plan for the child in consultation with families (Regulation 90 (c) (iv)(A)(B)) (refer to Dealing with Medical Conditions)	LR	✓	✓	✓	✓
Maintaining ongoing communication between ECT/educators/staff and families in accordance with the strategies identified in the communication plan (refer to Definitions), to ensure current information is shared about specific medical conditions within the service (refer to Dealing with Medical Conditions)	LR	✓	✓		
Ensuring all details on their child's enrolment form and medication record are completed prior to commencement at the service				✓	
Ensuring a copy of the child's Asthma Action Plan is accessible and known to staff in the service. (Regulations 90 (iii)(D)). Prior to displaying the Asthma Action Plan, the nominated supervisor must explain to families the need to display the plan for the purpose of the child's safety and have obtained their consent	LR	✓		✓	
Ensuring that all children with asthma have an Asthma Action Plan, Risk Minimisation Plan and Communication Plan filed with their enrolment record	LR	✓		✓	
Notifying staff, in writing, of any changes to the information on the Asthma Action Plan, enrolment form or medication record				✓	
Providing an adequate supply of appropriate asthma medication and equipment for their child at all times and ensuring it is appropriately 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	LR	✓		✓	
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 Action Plan for each child	✓	✓	✓		
Ensuring that they can identify children displaying the symptoms of an asthma attack and locate their personal medication, Asthma Action Plans and the asthma first aid kit	LR	✓	✓		
Ensuring that medication is administered in accordance with the child's Asthma Action Plan and the Administration of Medication Policy	LR	LR	LR		
Ensuring a medication record is kept for each child to whom medication is to be administered by the service (Regulation 92)	LR	✓	✓		
Ensuring parents/guardians 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	LR	✓		LR	
Implementing an asthma first aid procedure consistent with current national recommendations	LR	LR	LR		
Ensuring that all staff are aware of the asthma first aid procedure	LR	✓			
Ensuring adequate provision and maintenance of asthma first aid kits	LR	✓			
Ensuring the expiry date of reliever medication is checked regularly and replaced when required, and that spacers and face masks that are from the services first aid kits are replaced after every use	LR	✓	✓		

	Approved Provider and/or persons with management and control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teachers, educators and all other staff	Parents, guardians and carers	Contractors, volunteers and those on student placement
Identifying and minimising asthma triggers for children attending the service as outlined in the child's Asthma Action Plan, where possible	LR	✓	✓		
Ensuring that children with asthma are not discriminated against in any way	✓	✓	✓		✓
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 parents/guardians regarding the management of children with asthma at the service	LR	✓	✓		
Displaying Asthma Australia's Asthma First Aid poster (refer to Sources and Attachment 3) in key locations at the service	LR	✓			
Ensuring that medication is administered in accordance with the Administration of Medication Policy	LR	LR	LR		
Ensuring that when medication has been administered to a child in an asthma emergency without authorisation from the parent/guardian or authorised nominee, medical practitioner or emergency services the parent/guardian of the child and emergency services are notified as soon as is practicable (Regulation 94)	LR	LR	LR		
Following appropriate reporting procedures set out in the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy in the event that a child is ill, or is involved in a medical emergency or an incident at the service that results in injury or trauma	LR	LR	LR		✓
Ensuring an asthma first aid kit is taken on all excursions and other offsite activities (refer to Excursions and Service Events Policy)	LR	LR	✓		

EVALUATION

In order 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
- assess whether a satisfactory resolution has been achieved in relation to issues arising from this policy
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of a policy review cycle, or as required
- notify 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

AUTHORISATION & REVIEW

This policy was adopted by Lutheran Education VIC, NSW, TAS and ACT Ltd as Approved Provider on 21 March 2024.

REVIEW DATE February 2027 or earlier as required.

ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT 1: Additional Attachments:

- Attachment 1: Asthma Action Plan – download from the Asthma Australia website: https://asthma.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/AA2022_Care-Plan-for-Schools-A4_v2_editable.pdf
- Attachment 2: Asthma First Aid poster – download from the Asthma Australia website: https://asthma.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/AAFA-First-Aid-2023-A3_CMYK_v10_Blue-1.pdf
- Attachment 3: Asthma Risk Minimisation Plan – download from the Asthma Australia website: <https://asthma.org.au/support/how-we-can-help/resources/>

REFERENCES

LEGISLATION & STANDARDS

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Health Records Act 2001 (Vic)
- Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW)
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Children’s Health and Safety
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
- Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)
- Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW)
- Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (Vic)
- Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009 (Vic)
- Public Health Act 1997 (NSW)

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

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

New South Wales Legislation - <https://legislation.nsw.gov.au>

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

SOURCES

- Asthma Australia’s Asthma First Aid 2022: https://asthma.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/AAFA-First-Aid-2022-A4_CMYK_v7_Blue-1.pdf
- Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA): www.acecqa.gov.au
- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, ACECQA.

RELATED POLICIES

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