

Title	Asthma Policy
Policy Category	Childrens Programs
Policy Type	Mandatory
NQF Standard	NQS: Quality Area 2
Related Legislation	See legislation map

Background and Context

This policy will outline the procedures to:

- ensure educators, staff and parents/guardians are aware of their obligations and the best practice management of asthma at Glen Education
- ensure that all necessary information for the effective management of children with asthma enrolled at Glen Education is collected and recorded so that these children receive appropriate attention when required
- respond to the needs of children who have not been diagnosed with asthma and who experience breathing difficulties (suspected asthma attack) at the service.

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

Glen Education is 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.

Asthma is a chronic, treatable health condition that affects approximately one in 10 Australian children and is one of 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. Glen Education 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, ELAA recommends all educators have current approved emergency asthma management training (refer to Definitions).

Scope,

Educators, employees, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Glen Education.

Asthma management should be viewed as a shared responsibility. While Glen Education recognises its 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 medical practitioner.

Definitions

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 Friendly Children's Services Program: A program developed by The Asthma Foundation of Victoria to provide a safer environment for children in kindergarten, childcare, family day care and out-of-school hours care. This program also gives staff the confidence and skills to care for a child with asthma and gives parents/guardians peace of mind. To be recognised as an Asthma Friendly Children's Service, services must address and fulfil five essential criteria, which will be assessed by The Asthma Foundation of Victoria. Upon accreditation, the service will receive a certificate and window sticker.

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. Asthma Action Plan templates can be downloaded from the Glen Education website.

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 4)
- record form
- asthma first aid instruction card.

The Asthma Foundation of Victoria 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.

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.

Duty of care: A common law concept that refers to the responsibilities of organisations to provide people with an adequate level of protection against harm and all reasonable foreseeable risk of injury.

Glen Education Leader: A person who is nominated by Glen Education Management to provide leadership and mentoring (operational and educational) across the organisation, that aligns with the National Early Years Framework and who actively promotes and ensures adherence to all Glen Education practices, policies and procedures

Medication record: Contains details for each child to whom medication is to be administered by the service. This includes the child's name, signed authorisation to administer medication and a record of the medication administered, including time, date, dosage, manner of administration, name and signature of person administering the medication and of the person checking the medication, if required (Regulation 92). A sample medication record is available on the ACECQA website.

Metered dose inhaler (puffer): A common device used to administer reliever medication.

Nominated Supervisor: A person who has been nominated by Glen Education under Part 3 of the Act and who has consented to that nomination in writing can be the Nominated Supervisor. All services must have a Nominated Supervisor(s) with responsibility for the service in accordance with the National Regulations (Section 5 and 161).

Puffer: The common name for a metered dose inhaler.

Reliever medication: This comes in a blue/grey metered dose inhaler containing salbutamol, a chemical 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 or Ventolin.

Risk minimisation and communication plan: Provides information about child-specific asthma triggers and strategies to avoid these in the service. These plans are developed in consultation with the family and the Early Childhood Teacher and provide information about child-specific asthma triggers and strategies to avoid these in the service. A risk minimisation and communication plan template specifically for use in children's services will be provided to families at the time of enrolment.

Spacer device: 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.

Staff record: Must be kept by the service and include details of the Nominated Supervisors, the educational leader, other staff members, volunteers and the Responsible Person. The record must include information about qualifications, training and details of the Working with Children Check (Regulations 146–149). A sample staff record is available on the ACECQA website: www.acecqa.gov.au

Policy

Glen Education is responsible for:

- 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, trauma or illness
- providing the Nominated Supervisor and all staff with a copy of the service's Asthma Policy, and ensuring that they are aware of asthma management strategies upon employment at the service
- providing approved Emergency Asthma Management (EAM) training (refer to Definitions) to staff as required under the National Regulations
- ensuring at least one staff member with current approved Emergency Asthma Management (EAM) training (refer to Definitions) is on duty at all times
- ensuring the details of approved Emergency Asthma Management (EAM) training (refer to Definitions) are included on the staff record (refer to Definitions)
- providing parents/guardians with a copy of the service's Asthma Policy upon enrolment of their child (Regulation 91)
- identifying children with asthma during the enrolment process and informing staff
- providing parents/guardians with an Asthma Action Plan to be completed in consultation with, and signed by, a medical practitioner

- developing a Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan for every child with asthma, in consultation with parents/guardians
- ensuring that all children with asthma have an Asthma Action Plan and Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan filed with their enrolment record and is in the location where the medication is stored.
- ensuring educators act to maintain a medication record for each child to whom medication is to be administered by the service (Regulation 92)
- implementing an asthma first aid procedure consistent with current national recommendations
- ensuring that all staff are aware of the asthma first aid procedure
- ensuring adequate provision and maintenance of asthma first aid kits (refer to Definitions)
- ensuring educators regularly check the expiry date of reliever medication and replace when required
- facilitating communication between management, educators, staff and parents/guardians regarding the service's Asthma Policy and strategies
- identifying and minimising asthma triggers (refer to Definitions) for children attending the service, where possible
- ensuring that children with asthma are not discriminated against in any way
- 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
- ensuring that the service meets the requirements to be recognised as an Asthma Friendly Children's Service (refer to Definitions) with The Asthma Foundation of Victoria
- displaying Asthma Australia's Asthma First Aid poster in key locations at the service
- ensuring that medication is administered in accordance with the Administration of Medication Policy
- ensuring that when medication has been administered to a child in an asthma emergency without authorisation from the parent/guardian or authorised nominee, the parent/guardian of the child and emergency services are notified as soon as is practicable (Regulation 94).

The Nominated Supervisor/Glen Education Leader is responsible for:

- ensuring that all educators approved first aid qualifications, anaphylaxis management training and Emergency Asthma Management (EAM) training are current, meet the requirements of the National Law (Section 169(4)) and National Regulations (Regulation 137), and are approved by ACECQA
- ensuring that medication is administered in accordance with the Administration of Medication Policy
- ensuring that when medication has been administered to a child in an asthma emergency without authorisation from the parent/guardian or authorised nominee, the parent/guardian of the child and emergency services are notified as soon as is practicable (Regulation 94)
- ensuring an asthma first aid kit (refer to Definitions) is taken on all excursions and other offsite activities (refer to Excursions and Service Events Policy)
- ensuring that a list of children with asthma is compiled by the Glen Education service education team and placing it in a secure, but readily accessible, location known to all staff. This should include the Asthma Action Plan for each child
- organising asthma management information sessions for parents/guardians of children enrolled at the service, where appropriate
- ensuring programmed activities and experiences take into consideration the individual needs of all children, including any children with asthma.

All educators are responsible for:

- ensuring that medication is administered in accordance with the Administration of Medication Policy
- ensuring that when medication has been administered to a child in an asthma emergency without authorisation from the parent/guardian or authorised nominee, the parent/guardian of the child and emergency services are notified as soon as is practicable (Regulation 94)
- 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
- ensuring that they are aware of the service's Asthma Policy and asthma first aid procedure
- ensuring that they can identify children displaying the symptoms of an asthma attack and locate their personal medication, Asthma Action Plans, Risk Minimisation and Communication Plans as well as the asthma first aid kit
- maintaining current approved Emergency Asthma Management (EAM) (refer to Definitions) qualifications
- identifying and, where possible, minimising asthma triggers (refer to Definitions) as outlined in the child's Asthma Action Plan
- taking the asthma first aid kit, children's personal asthma medication and Asthma Action Plans, Risk Minimisation and Communication Plans on excursions or other offsite events
- administering prescribed asthma medication in accordance with the child's Asthma Action Plan and the Administration of Medication Policy of the service
- developing a Risk Minimisation and Communication Plans Risk for every child with asthma in consultation with parents/guardians. Also ensuring all Asthma Action Plans are within date (12 months), that all medication is named and in their original packaging, within expiry date and clearly labelled.
- consulting with the parents/guardians of children with asthma in relation to the health and safety of their child, and the supervised management of the child's asthma
- communicating any concerns to parents/guardians if a child's asthma is limiting his/her ability to participate fully in all activities
- ensuring that children with asthma are not discriminated against in any way
- regularly checking the expiry date of reliever medication and replaced when required
- ensuring that children with asthma can participate in all activities safely and to their full potential.

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- reading the service's Asthma Policy
- informing staff, either on enrolment or on initial diagnosis, that their child has asthma
- providing a coloured copy of their child's Asthma Action Plan to the service and ensuring it has been prepared in consultation with, and signed by, a medical practitioner. The Asthma Action Plan should be reviewed and updated within 6 months of the child commencing kindergarten
- ensuring all details on their child's enrolment form and medication record (refer to Definitions) are completed prior to commencement at the service
- working with staff to develop a Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan for their child
- 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
- providing all medication named in the Asthma Action Plan, including equipment such as spacer or face mask, to be held at the service at all times the child is in attendance. Medication must be in its original packaging, have the child's name clearly stated on the packaging and be within the expiry date. Children cannot attend the service until all medication named on the Asthma Action Plan has been provided as required
- notifying staff, in writing, of any changes to the information on the Asthma Action Plan, enrolment form or medication record

- communicating regularly with educators/staff in relation to the ongoing health and wellbeing of their child, and the management of their child's asthma
- encouraging their child to learn about their asthma, and to communicate with service staff if they are unwell or experiencing asthma symptoms.

Volunteers and students, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.

Approvals and Revision

Date	Version	Author	Revision Description
Q3 2012	1.00	Glen Education Management	New Policy
Q2 2022	6.00	Glen Education Management	Policy updated due to rebranding May 2022
Q1 2024	7.00	Glen Education Management	Annual Review