

# *Croydon Central Kindergarten Inc.*

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## **Asthma Policy**

### **1. Authorisation**

This policy was adopted by the Croydon Central Kindergarten Inc. Committee of Management, at the Committee meeting on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> August 2009.

### **2. Review Date**

This policy will be reviewed annually, or varied earlier if necessary, and the Committee will within 28 days of making any change, notify the parents/guardians of the children attending, of that change.

### **3. Scope**

This policy applies to children enrolled at the Croydon Central Kindergarten Inc., their parents/guardians, the staff and Committee.

### **4. Background and Relevant Legislation**

Asthma is a chronic health condition affecting 1 in 4 children. It is the most common cause of school absenteeism and is the major cause of childhood admission to hospital. While an average of four people die in Victoria each week from asthma, many of these deaths are deemed preventable. Community education and correct management will assist in minimising the impact of asthma.

It is generally accepted that children under the age of 6 do not have the skills and ability to recognise and manage their own asthma effectively. With this in mind, the Committee recognises the need to educate the staff and parents/guardians about asthma and to promote responsible asthma management strategies.

The Department of Human Services *Children's Services Licensing Operational Guide*, suggests that services:

- "Contact Asthma Victoria for details of Emergency Asthma Management training programs and resources for the management of asthma". [Page 30]
- In relation to the first aid kit:
  - "Consider including a spacer device and mask for administration of asthma medication.
  - Consider including emergency asthma reliever medication in conjunction with accredited training." [Page 31]

#### **Legislation**

- The Children's Services Act 1996
- The Children's Services Regulations 1998
- The Occupational Health & Safety Act 1998
- The Health Act 1958

## 5. Definitions

*Aerosol reliever inhaler:* Common delivery device used to administer reliever medication.

*CCK:* Croydon Central Kindergarten Inc.

*Emergency Asthma Management (EAM) Accreditation:* Successful completion of a course in Emergency Asthma Management.

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

*Asthma Record Card:* A record of information on the child's asthma and how to manage it, including contact details and emergency treatment.

*Asthma triggers:* Things that may induce asthma symptoms eg pollens, colds/viruses, dust mites, smoke, exercise etc. They will vary from child to child.

*Bronchodilator Accreditation Number (BAN):* This can only be acquired after successfully completed an EAM course. This number, belonging to an individual staff member, allows the Croydon Central Kindergarten Inc. to legally purchase a reliever puffer for the First Aid kit.

*Puffer:* Common name for an aerosol inhaler.

*Reliever medication:* This comes in a blue container and is used to relax the muscles around the airways to relieve asthma symptoms. Eg Airomir™, Asmol™, Bricanyl™, Ventolin™.

*Spacer device:* A plastic device used to increase the efficiency of delivery of asthma medication from a puffer. It may be used in conjunction with a face mask.

## 6. Policy Statement

### Values

This Croydon Central Kindergarten Inc. is committed to:

- Raising awareness about asthma among the Committee, staff, parents/guardians of children attending CCK and any others dealing with children at CCK.
- Providing a safe and healthy environment for all children enrolled at CCK.
- Providing an environment in which all children with asthma can participate in order to realise their full potential.
- Providing a clear set of guidelines and expectations to be followed with regard to the management of asthma.

### Purpose

The aim of this policy is:

- For all children enrolled at CCK who have asthma to receive appropriate attention as required.
- To respond to the needs of children who have not been diagnosed with asthma and who have an attack at CCK.

## 7. Procedures

### The Committee

- Where appropriate, organise Emergency Asthma Management training for staff.
- Where appropriate, organise asthma management information sessions for parents/guardians of children enrolled at CCK.
- Encourage open communication between parents/guardians and staff regarding the status and impact of a child's asthma.
- Provide funding for the staff to purchase a spacer device and asthma reliever medication for the first aid kit, as required.

### Staff

- Ask all parents/guardians as part of the enrolment procedure, prior to their child's attendance at CCK, whether the child has diagnosed asthma and document this information on the child's enrolment record.
- Provide families whose child has asthma with an Asthma Record Card to complete. On completion, this will be attached to the child's enrolment record.
- Compile a list of children with asthma and place it in an appropriate and readily accessible location, which is known to all staff. This list will also be included in the Relievers Handbook together with the location of the Asthma Record Cards.
- Display an Asthma Victoria poster of the *4 Step Asthma First Aid Plan* in key locations at CCK, for example, in the children's room, bathroom and kitchen.
- Regularly maintain any asthma component of the First Aid Kit, to ensure all medications are current and any asthma equipment is clean and ready for use.
- Ensure the asthma component is included in the First Aid Kit taken on any activities outside the CCK.
- Consult with the parent/guardians of children with asthma, in relation to the health and safety of their child and the supervised management of the child's asthma.
- Identify and, where possible, minimise asthma triggers as defined in the definition section of the policy.
- Promptly communicate any concerns to parents if it is considered that a child's asthma is limiting his/her ability to participate fully in all activities.
- Where necessary, modify activities for the child with asthma in accordance with their current needs.
- Administer all regular prescribed asthma medication in accordance with the Medication Book.
- Discuss with the parent/guardian the requirements of the Medication Book and what is needed for their child.

### Parents/guardians of a child with asthma

- Inform staff, either on enrolment or on initial diagnosis, that their child has a history of asthma.
- Provide all relevant information regarding the child's asthma via the Asthma Record Card.
- Notify the staff, in writing, of any changes to the information they entered on the Asthma Record Card during the year, if this occurs.

- Provide an adequate supply of appropriate asthma medication and equipment (eg reliever/spacer) for their child at all times.
- Enter the required information in the Medication Book at the beginning of each term or when necessary.
- Communicate all relevant information and concerns to staff as the need arises. (Eg if asthma symptoms were present the previous night).
- Consult with the staff, in relation to the health and safety of their child and the supervised management of the child's asthma.

## **Plan of action for a child with diagnosed asthma**

The staff, together with the parents/guardians of a child with asthma, will discuss and agree on a plan of action for the emergency treatment of an asthma attack based on the Asthma Victoria *4 Step Asthma First Aid Plan*. This plan will be included on, or attached to, the child's Asthma Record Card and enrolment record.

This plan should include action to be taken where the parent/guardian has provided asthma medication, and in situations where this may not be available.

As part of developing a particular action plan, it may be appropriate to consider staff receiving Emergency Asthma Management training. Asthma Victoria is advocating that preschools have their staff accredited in Emergency Asthma Management.

### **Action to be taken if a child suddenly collapses or has difficulty breathing with a possible asthma attack**

*Children with a known asthma condition:* Staff will follow the agreed plan of action for the child for the emergency treatment of an asthma attack.

*Children who staff is not aware have pre-existing asthma:* Staff will

- Call an ambulance immediately by dialling 000.
- Provide asthma reliever medication to the child immediately, if this is available and the staff member has Emergency Asthma Management Accreditation.
- Contact the parent/guardian.

## **8. Key Responsibilities and Authorities**

The Committee is responsible for approving any alterations or changes to this policy.

The staff is responsible for implementing this policy on a day-to-day basis and undertaking Emergency Asthma Management training if directed by the Committee.

The parent/guardian is responsible for providing the CCK with information about their child and for keeping the CCK updated on the current status of their child's asthma.

## 9. Resources and Support

### Related documents at the Croydon Central Kindergarten Inc.

- The Croydon Central Kindergarten Inc.'s Illness and Emergency Care Policy.
- Asthma Victoria's "*Guidelines for Childcare Services, Kindergartens & Preschools. Asthma and the Under 5s*". This publication includes a proforma of an Asthma Record Card, a *4 Step Asthma First Aid Plan* and information on managing an asthma attack.
- Department of Human Services *Children's Services Licensing Operational Guide*.

### Phone numbers

- Asthma Victoria on **9326 7088** or **9326 7030**

### Training

Training of staff in Emergency Asthma Management will be provided where this is considered necessary.

All staff will be provided with access to a copy of *Guidelines for Childcare Services, Kindergartens and Preschools. Asthma and the Under 5's* and other information regarding the care and management of a child with asthma.

## 10. Evaluation

In order to assess whether the policy has achieved the values and purposes set out under 6. Policy Statement, the Committee will:

- Obtain feedback from the staff regarding the effectiveness of the policy.
- Assess whether any issues/concerns raised in relation to children with asthma, or the policy, were resolved.
- If appropriate, conduct annual surveys of parents/guardians of children with identified asthma, to gauge their satisfaction with the asthma policy in relation to their child, or include an extra section in the annual general survey.

This policy was written in consultation with Asthma Victoria. Croydon Central Kindergarten Inc. wishes to thank the staff at KPV and Asthma Victoria for their assistance in the development of this policy.