

Allergen Management Policy



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Reviewed: Head of Operations	
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Allergen Management Policy

Introduction

The health, safety and wellbeing of pupils, staff, visitors and all members of the school community are of paramount importance to **Sybil Andrews**.

This policy outlines the school's approach to managing the risks associated with medically diagnosed allergies and allergic reactions. Allergies may include, but are not limited to, food allergies (including nuts, peanuts, milk, eggs, fish, sesame seeds, celery, cereals (gluten), crustaceans, molluscs, mustard, soya and sulphur dioxide), insect sting allergies, medication allergies and animal allergies.

The school recognises that allergic reactions can range from mild symptoms to life-threatening anaphylaxis. We are committed to providing, as far as is reasonably practicable, a safe and inclusive environment for all members of the school community while supporting pupils to participate fully in school life.

Whilst it is not possible to guarantee an allergen-free environment, the school will take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of exposure to known allergens and ensure that effective procedures are in place to respond to allergic reactions and medical emergencies.

The school encourages age-appropriate self-management and independence for pupils with allergies, whilst recognising the need for appropriate support, supervision and emergency response arrangements.

Principles

The underlying principles of this policy are:

- To establish effective risk management arrangements that minimise exposure to known allergens and identified triggers.
- To provide a safe, inclusive and supportive environment for pupils, staff and visitors with allergies.
- To ensure effective communication between the school, parents/carers, healthcare professionals, staff and pupils regarding allergy management.
- To ensure that Individual Healthcare Plans (IHPs) and risk assessments are developed and reviewed for those with significant allergies or at risk of anaphylaxis.
- To ensure that relevant information relating to allergies is communicated to staff who need to know, whilst maintaining appropriate levels of confidentiality and compliance with data protection requirements.
- To ensure that appropriate emergency medication, including prescribed Adrenaline Auto-Injectors (AAIs), is readily accessible and available when required.
- To ensure staff receive appropriate training in allergy awareness, anaphylaxis recognition and emergency response procedures.
- To promote awareness amongst pupils, staff, parents/carers and visitors of their role in supporting a safe environment for individuals with allergies.
- To ensure that educational visits, extracurricular activities and school events adequately consider and manage allergy risks.
- To ensure that all allergic reactions and near misses are appropriately recorded, investigated and reviewed to identify opportunities for improvement.

Important Note

The school recognises that nut and peanut allergies are among the most common causes of severe allergic reactions in children. However, the school adopts an **allergen-aware approach** rather than claiming to be "nut-free" or "allergen-free",

as it is not possible to eliminate all allergen risks completely. All members of the school community are expected to work together to minimise the risk of accidental exposure to known allergens

Definitions

Allergy

A condition in which the body's immune system reacts abnormally to a substance (allergen) that is typically harmless to most people. Allergic reactions can range from mild symptoms to severe, life-threatening reactions.

Allergen

A substance that can cause an allergic reaction in a susceptible individual. Common allergens include certain foods, medications, insect stings, animal dander, pollen and latex.

Anaphylaxis

A severe, rapid-onset and potentially life-threatening allergic reaction that requires immediate medical treatment. Symptoms may include breathing difficulties, swelling of the airway, collapse and loss of consciousness.

Adrenaline Auto-Injector (AAI)

A prescribed emergency medical device containing adrenaline (epinephrine), designed for immediate administration in the event of anaphylaxis. Common brands include EpiPen®, Jext® and Emerade®.

Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP)

A document developed in partnership with parents/carers and healthcare professionals, which outlines a pupil's medical condition, known allergens, symptoms, medication requirements, emergency procedures and support arrangements.

Procedures and Responsibilities for Allergy Management

The responsibility for allergen safety rests with everyone, from the CEO, Directors, Operations Team throughout to each individual employee. This section sets out the responsibilities under this policy

The school recognises its responsibility to obtain, record, update and appropriately communicate information relating to allergies and medical conditions to ensure the safety and wellbeing of pupils, staff and visitors.

This policy outlines the procedures for collecting, maintaining and sharing allergy-related information whilst ensuring compliance with data protection legislation.

Medical Information

- Parents/carers are required to provide details of any medical condition, allergy or dietary requirement as part of the school's admissions process and before a pupil starts at **Sybil Andrews**.
- Where admission information identifies a significant allergy or medical condition, the designated member of staff (e.g. Student Services Manager, SENCO or Medical Lead) will ensure that an Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP) and, where necessary, a risk assessment is completed in consultation with parents/carers and relevant healthcare professionals.
- For pupils with diagnosed allergies, the school will request supporting medical evidence (Allergy Action Plan) from a healthcare professional, including details of known triggers, symptoms, prescribed medication and emergency treatment arrangements. Schools will need a signed form from the prescriber of any medication held in school used in emergency situations
- Parents/carers must notify the school promptly of any changes to their child's medical condition, allergy status, prescribed medication or emergency contact details.
- The school will review medical information at least annually and whenever there is a significant change in circumstances.
- Staff will have access to appropriate medical information and will be expected to familiarise themselves with Individual Healthcare Plans and allergy management procedures where this is necessary.

- Information relating to pupils with significant allergies, including photographs where appropriate, will be recorded on the school's management information system (Arbor) or equivalent system.
- Relevant allergy and dietary information will be shared with catering staff and other staff members on a need-to-know basis and with parental consent where required.
- Suitable arrangements will be made to ensure allergy information is considered when planning educational visits, residential visits, extracurricular activities and events.
- Risk assessments for visits and activities will identify allergy-related risks and appropriate control measures.
- Pupils may wear medical identification jewellery, such as MedicAlert® bracelets or necklaces, and staff will be made aware of their significance.
- Emergency medication, including Adrenaline Auto-Injectors (AAIs), must be readily accessible at all times and not locked away where access could be delayed in an emergency.
- Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring that prescribed medication is supplied to the school, is within its expiry date, and is replaced as required.
- The school will maintain records of medication expiry dates and, where practicable, remind parents/carers when replacement medication is required.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

- Information relating to a pupil's allergy or medical condition will be treated as confidential and handled in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.
- Information will only be shared with staff and third parties where it is necessary to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of the individual concerned.
- Staff must ensure that medical information is stored securely whilst remaining accessible to those who may need it in an emergency.

Medication

Where a pupil has been prescribed an Adrenaline Auto-Injector (AAI) (e.g. EpiPen®, Jext® or Emerade®) or other emergency medication:

- Parents/carers are responsible for providing the prescribed medication and ensuring that it remains in date and is replaced before its expiry date.
- Emergency medication will be stored in an agreed location identified within the pupil's Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP).
- Medication must be readily accessible at all times and must not be stored in a manner that could delay administration during an emergency.
- Relevant staff will be informed of the location of emergency medication and the procedures for accessing it.
- Where appropriate, pupils may carry and self-administer their medication in accordance with their Individual Healthcare Plan and the school's Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy.
- Spare Adrenaline Auto-Injectors must be held by the school in accordance with current [Department for Education guidance and the Human Medicines \(Amendment\) Regulations 2017](#).

Role of Parents/Carers of Pupils with Allergies

Parents/carers have a key role in supporting the school to manage their child's allergy safely.

Parents/carers are responsible for providing accurate, up-to-date information regarding their child's allergy, including:

- The allergen(s) to which the pupil is allergic.
- The nature and severity of the allergic reaction.
- Known triggers and symptoms.
- Medication prescribed and emergency treatment requirements.
- Measures that can be taken to reduce the risk of exposure to allergens.
- Information regarding any food ingredients, additives or derivatives that must be avoided.

Parents/carers are also responsible for:

- Ensuring that an Individual Healthcare Plan is completed and reviewed where a pupil has a significant allergy or is at risk of anaphylaxis.
- Providing the school with prescribed medication and any associated equipment in its original packaging and clearly labelled with the pupil's name.
- Provide school with an Allergy Action Plan prepared, signed and dated by a medical Professional
- Replacing medication before its expiry date.
- Informing the school immediately of any changes to their child's condition, treatment or emergency contact information.
- Providing up-to-date emergency contact details at all times.
- Ensuring food and snacks provided from home are suitable and safe for their child to consume.

Where information provided relates to suspected allergies or food intolerances that have not been medically confirmed, the school will seek to accommodate the pupil's needs wherever reasonably practicable. However, priority will be given to managing medically diagnosed conditions and allergies that present a significant risk to health, including anaphylaxis.

Where a pupil requires life-saving emergency medication, appropriate arrangements must be in place to ensure the medication is available whenever the pupil is attending school or participating in school activities.

Role of Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Familiarising themselves with this policy and related medical needs procedures (all staff to sign to say they have read and understood this policy)
- Taking appropriate steps to safeguard pupils with allergies.
- Following Individual Healthcare Plans and risk assessments where applicable.
- Promoting good hygiene practices, including handwashing before and after eating.
- Reporting concerns regarding allergy management to the designated member of staff.
- Attend appropriate training

Responsibilities of the Designated Lead

Upon notification that a pupil has a severe allergy, the designated member of staff will:

- Ensure that an Individual Healthcare Plan and an Allergy Action Plan and, where necessary, a risk assessment is completed in partnership with parents/carers and relevant healthcare professionals.
- Arrange appropriate briefings for **ALL** staff who have responsibility for the pupil.
- Ensure relevant staff and contractors are aware of the pupil's allergy, required emergency treatment and the location of medication.
- Ensure allergy and dietary information is communicated to catering staff where appropriate.
- Ensure allergy alerts and medical information are accurately recorded on Arbor (or the school's management information system).
- Arrange appropriate allergy awareness and Adrenaline Auto-Injector training for **ALL** staff.
- Ensure emergency medication remains accessible at all times.
- Ensure suitable risk assessments are completed for educational visits, residential visits, practical activities and other higher-risk events.

Responsibilities of Teaching and Support Staff

Staff must:

- Familiarise themselves with the allergies and medical needs of pupils in their care.
- Follow the guidance and actions set out within Individual Healthcare Plans.
- Consider allergy risks when planning lessons, activities, celebrations, food tasting sessions and educational visits.

- Complete risk assessments for off-site visits and higher-risk activities.
- Ensure emergency medication accompanies pupils on educational visits and off-site activities.
- Liaise with parents/carers where food-related activities are planned.
- Ensure that pupils with allergies are appropriately included in all aspects of school life, wherever reasonably practicable.

Responsibilities of the Catering Department:

- Effectively communicate the Allergen Policy and procedures to all catering staff.
- Ensure all menu cycles are supported with accurate recipes and allergen information.
- Ensure all recipes have the relevant allergen information.
- Ensure that suppliers provide accurate allergen information for products on the Company Approved Product List (APL).
- Ensure that any changes to products and recipes are communicated to all relevant Managers.
- Manage the labelling systems to ensure compliance with Natasha's Law
- Provide allergen safe menus for primary schools
- Support with the completion of menus for students with more complex dietary requirement

Staff Health Information

All new employees will be required to complete an occupational health questionnaire before commencing employment. Any allergy, medical condition or disability should be disclosed so that appropriate support and reasonable adjustments can be considered where necessary.

Training

All Staff to complete annual online allergen awareness training.

All staff to complete Allergen Awareness training every year

Emergency Procedures

If a pupil is suspected of experiencing an allergic reaction:

1. Remain calm and reassure the pupil.
2. Assess the severity of the symptoms.
3. Follow the pupil's Individual Healthcare Plan and Allergy Action Plan.
4. Administer prescribed medication immediately where required and where staff are trained to do so.
5. Send for a qualified first aider and/or additional assistance.
6. Contact the pupil's parent/carer as soon as possible.

Suspected Anaphylaxis

If anaphylaxis is suspected:

- Administer the prescribed Adrenaline Auto-Injector without delay.
- Call **999 immediately** and state that anaphylaxis is suspected.
- If symptoms do not improve and a second prescribed Adrenaline Auto-Injector is available, administer it in accordance with the healthcare plan and current training guidance.

- Monitor the pupil continuously until emergency services arrive.
- Do not allow the pupil to stand or walk if they feel unwell.
- A member of staff should accompany the pupil to hospital if a parent/carer is not present.

Any use of an Adrenaline Auto-Injector must be treated as a medical emergency requiring ambulance attendance.

Following the incident:

- The incident must be recorded in accordance with the school's accident and incident reporting procedures.
- The Individual Healthcare Plan and risk assessment should be reviewed where appropriate.
- Any near misses also need to be recorded and reported

Data Protection

The school will collect, store, use and share personal and special category data relating to medical conditions and allergies in accordance with:

- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR);
- Data Protection Act 2018; and
- The school's Data Protection and Records Management Policies.

Medical information will only be shared with staff and third parties on a need-to-know basis in order to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of pupils, staff and visitors.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed every year by the Headteacher, or sooner if:

- There are changes to relevant legislation, statutory guidance or best practice.
- A significant medical incident occurs.
- Changes within the school require a review of existing arrangements.

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that the policy remains effective and reflects current legal and operational requirements.

Related Policies

- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Individual Healthcare Plan Procedures
- Administration of Medicines Procedures