

WHOLE SCHOOL ALLERGY AND ANAPHYLAXIS POLICY

Aims and objectives

This policy outlines how the School community works to reduce the risk of an allergic reaction occurring, and the procedures in place to respond effectively if one does. It also sets out how we support students with allergies to ensure their wellbeing and inclusion, as well as demonstrating our commitment to being an allergy-aware school. This policy applies to all staff, students, parents and visitors to the School and should be read in conjunction with the School's Medical and First Aid Policy.

This policy is based on the Department for Education (DfE) Allergy guidance for schools (2026), Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school (updated 2017), the Department of Health and Social Care's guidance on using emergency adrenaline auto-injectors in schools, and the following legislation:

- The Food Information Regulations 2014
- The Food Information (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2019
- Benedict's Law

What is an allergy?

Allergy occurs when a person reacts to a substance that is usually considered harmless. It is an immune response and instead of ignoring the substance, the body produces histamine which triggers an allergic reaction.

Whilst most allergic reactions are mild, causing minor symptoms, some can be very serious and cause anaphylaxis, which is a life-threatening medical emergency.

People can be allergic to anything, but serious allergic reactions are most commonly caused by food, insect venom (such as a wasp or bee sting), latex and medication.

An allergy is different from an intolerance. Whilst an intolerance may cause uncomfortable symptoms it does not involve the immune system.

Definitions

Anaphylaxis: Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction that can be life-threatening and must be treated as a medical emergency.

Allergen: A normally harmless substance that, for some, triggers an allergic reaction. You can be allergic to anything. The most common allergens are food, medication, animal dander (skin cells shed by animals with fur or feathers) and pollen. Latex and wasp and bee stings are less common allergens.

Most severe allergic reactions to food are caused by just nine foods. These are eggs, milk, peanuts, tree nuts (which includes nuts such as hazelnut, cashew nut, pistachio, almond, walnut, pecan, Brazil nut, macadamia etc), sesame, fish, shellfish, soya and wheat.

There are 14 allergens required by UK law to be highlighted on pre-packed food. These allergens are celery, cereals containing gluten, crustaceans, egg, fish, lupin, milk, molluscs, mustard, peanuts, tree nuts, soya, sulphites (or sulphur dioxide), and sesame.

Adrenaline Auto-Injector: Single-use device which carries a pre-measured dose of adrenaline. Adrenaline auto-injectors are used to treat anaphylaxis by injecting adrenaline directly into the upper, outer thigh muscle. Adrenaline auto-injectors are commonly referred to as AAIs, adrenaline pens or by the brand name EpiPen. There are two brands licensed for use in the UK: EpiPen and Jext Pen.

Allergy Action Plan: This is a document filled out by a healthcare professional, detailing a person's allergy and their treatment plan.

Designated Allergy Lead: The member of staff responsible for overseeing allergy and asthma management across the School and acting as the main point of contact for students, parents and staff. This is referred to as the named senior leader in the statutory guidance.

Emergency Response Plan: A document (also known as a Critical Incident Plan) that outlines a school's procedure for managing an emergency and should be fit for purpose to manage a serious allergic reaction (anaphylaxis).

NEFFY: Neffy (official name in the UK is EURNeffy) is a nasal spray which delivers adrenaline. It is a needle-free alternative to an adrenaline auto-injector.

Individual Healthcare Plan: A detailed document outlining an individual student's medical conditions, history, treatment, risks and action plan. This document should be created by the School in collaboration with parents/guardians and, where appropriate, students. All students with an allergy should have an Individual Healthcare Plan and it should be read in conjunction with their Allergy Action Plan.

Risk Assessment: A detailed document outlining an activity, the risks it poses and any actions taken to mitigate those risks. Allergy should be included on all risk assessments for events on and off the School site.

Spare Adrenaline Pens: Spare adrenaline pens are held as a back-up, in case students' prescribed adrenaline pens are not available. They can also be used to treat a person who experiences anaphylaxis but has not been prescribed their own adrenaline.

Roles and responsibilities

New Hall School takes a whole-School approach to allergy management.

Named Allergy Governor

The Named Allergy Governor is Mrs Pauline Wilson. She works in partnership with the Designated Allergy Lead to ensure allergy safety is overseen at governing body level. She is responsible for:

- ensuring allergy-related risks are included on the School's risk register and actively managed by the governing body;
- providing strategic oversight of the School's Allergy Safety Policy, ensuring it is reviewed at least annually and published on the School's website;

- acting as the governing body's named point of contact for allergy-related matters;
- satisfying herself that the School's allergy management arrangements meet legal and statutory requirements and reflect best practice;
- receiving regular updates from the Designated Allergy Lead and ensuring the governing body is appropriately sighted on allergy compliance; and
- reviewing records of allergic reaction incidents and near-misses and ensuring the School acts on any learnings to reduce the risk of future incidents.

Designated Allergy Lead

The Designated Allergy Lead is the Assistant Principal and Lead DSL, Suzanna Minnis.

She is responsible for:

- leading the publication and implementation of a School-wide Allergy Safety Policy;
- ensuring the safety, inclusion and wellbeing of students, staff and visitors with an allergy;
- taking decisions on allergy management across the School;
- championing and practising allergy and asthma awareness across the School;
- being the overarching point of contact for staff, students and parents with concerns or questions about allergy management;
- ensuring allergy information is recorded, up-to-date and communicated to all staff;
- making sure all staff are appropriately trained, have good allergy awareness and realise their role in allergy management (including what activities need an allergy risk assessment);
- ensuring staff, students and parents have a good awareness of the School's Allergy Safety Policy;
- regularly reviewing and updating the Allergy Safety Policy; and
- ensuring there is an anaphylaxis drill at least once a year and that lessons learned are used to update the allergy safety policy and School procedures as appropriate.

School Nurses

The School Nurses are responsible for:

- collecting and coordinating the paperwork (including Allergy Action Plans and Individual Healthcare Plans) and information from families to ensure that arrangements are in place before a student starts, or within two weeks for a mid-year transfer, liaising with the admissions team as needed;
- disseminating this information to all School staff, including the catering team, occasional staff and those running clubs;
- ensuring the information from families is up-to-date and reviewed annually (at a minimum), coordinating medication with families and ensuring medication is in date;
- with support from the Health & Safety Manager, keeping a record of any allergic reactions or near-misses, reporting these to the governing body and appropriate authority (e.g. Under RIDDOR) where necessary, investigating the incidents and ensuring that the findings of investigations into incidents are used to update relevant policies and procedures;
- keeping an adrenaline device register to include adrenaline devices prescribed to students and the School's stock and location of spare adrenaline devices, including brand, dose and expiry date;
- regularly checking spare adrenaline devices are where they should be, are easily accessible in case of emergency, and that they are in date;
- replacing the spare adrenaline devices when necessary; and
- providing on-site adrenaline device training for staff and students and refresher training as required e.g. before school trips.

Healthcare Assistant

The Healthcare Assistant should work with Admissions, School Nurses and the Designated Allergy Lead to ensure that:

- there is a clear method to capture allergy information or special dietary information at the earliest opportunity;
- there is a clear structure in place to communicate this information to the relevant parties (i.e. School nurses, catering team);
- parents and applicants are informed of catering arrangements during admission events;
- plans are made for emergency medication if the child is to be left without parental supervision;
- there is liaison with the child's previous school, or future school to ensure a smooth transition between settings; and
- there is a regular review of the School's stock of spare adrenaline devices (checking the School has an appropriate number for the setting, that they hold the correct dose, that spare adrenaline devices are stored appropriately) and ensure staff know where they are.

All staff

All School staff, including teaching staff, support staff, occasional staff (for example sports coaches, music teachers and those running breakfast and after School activities are responsible for:

- championing and practising allergy awareness across the School;
- reading, understanding and putting into practice the Allergy and Anaphylaxis Policy and related procedures, and asking for support if needed;
- being aware of students (and staff, when necessary) with allergies and what they are allergic to;
- considering the risk to students with allergies posed by any activities and assessing whether the use of any allergen in activity is necessary and/or appropriate;
- ensuring students always have access to their medication or carry it on their behalf if necessary (depending on the age of the students);
- being able to recognise and respond to an allergic reaction, including anaphylaxis, after appropriate training;
- taking part in training and anaphylaxis drills as required (at least once a year);
- considering the safety, inclusion and wellbeing of students with allergies at all times. Preventing and responding to allergy-related bullying, in line with the School's Anti-Bullying Policy;
- forwarding any communication or information that comes directly to them from parents regarding allergens to the Health & Wellbeing Centre Team; and
- ensuring that students have their medication and their Allergy Action Plan or Individual Health Care Plan with them when leaving School site, for a match or trip.

Parents/guardians

Parents and guardians (whether their child has an allergy or not) should

- be aware of and understand the School's Allergy Safety Policy and consider the safety, inclusion, and wellbeing of students with allergies;
- provide the Health & Wellbeing Centre with information about their child's medical needs, including dietary requirements and allergies, history of their allergy, any previous allergic reactions or anaphylaxis. They should also inform the School of any related conditions, for example asthma, hay fever, rhinitis or eczema;

- consider and adhere to any food restrictions or guidance the School has in place when providing food, for example in packed lunches, as snacks or for fundraising events;
- refrain from telling the School their child has an allergy or intolerance if this is a preference or dietary choice; and
- encourage their child to be allergy aware.

Parents/guardians of children with allergies

In addition to the above, parents/ guardians of children with allergies should:

- work with the School to fill out an Individual Healthcare Plan and provide an accompanying Allergy Action Plan;
- if applicable, provide the School or their child with two labelled adrenaline devices and any other medication, for example antihistamine (with a dispenser, e.g. spoon or syringe), inhalers or creams;
- ensure medication is in-date and replaced at the appropriate time;
- ensure their child has access to their allergy medication, including two adrenaline devices, if prescribed, on the journey to and from School;
- update the School with any changes to their child's condition and ensure the relevant paperwork is updated too; and
- support their child to understand their allergy diagnosis, advocate for themselves, and take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of an allergic reaction occurring e.g. not eating the food to which they are allergic.

All students

All students should:

- be allergy aware;
- understand the risks that allergens might pose to their peers and respect measures to support them; and
- learn how they can support the wellbeing of their peers and be alert to allergy-related bullying.

Students with allergies

In addition to the above, students with allergies, as appropriate to their age and capability, are responsible for:

- knowing what their allergies are and how to mitigate personal risk;
- avoiding their allergen as best as they can;
- understanding the importance of following the School specific processes of lunch and snack provision and how that mitigates risk;
- understanding that they should notify a member of staff if they are not feeling well, or suspect they might be having an allergic reaction;
- carrying two adrenaline auto-injectors with them at all times;
- understanding how and when to use their adrenaline auto-injector and only using them for their intended purpose;
- talking to the Designated Allergy Lead or a member of the Health & Wellbeing Centre if they are concerned by any School processes or systems related to their allergy;
- raising concerns with a member of staff if they experience any inappropriate behaviour in relation to their allergies;
- knowing what to do if they have an allergic reaction off the School site including how to treat themselves and how to raise the alarm to get help; and
- ensuring they have their medication with them on the journey to and from school.

Information and documentation

Register of students with an allergy

The School has a register of students who have a diagnosed allergy. This includes children who have a history of anaphylaxis or have been prescribed adrenaline pens, as well as students with an allergy where no adrenaline pens have been prescribed.

Individual Healthcare Plans

Each student with an allergy has an Individual Healthcare Plan. The information on this plan includes:

- known allergens and risk factors for allergic reactions
- a history of their allergic reactions
- details of the medication the student has been prescribed including dose, this should include adrenaline pens, antihistamine etc.
- a copy of parental consent to administer medication, including the use of spare adrenaline pens in case of suspected anaphylaxis
- a photograph of each student
- a copy of their Allergy Action Plan

Assessing risk

Allergens can crop up in unexpected places. Staff (including visiting staff) will consider allergies in all activity planning and include it in risk assessments. Some examples include:

- classroom activities, for example craft using food packaging, science experiments where allergens are present, food lessons or cooking
- animals at the School, for example a dog, horses, or hatching chick eggs can pose a risk
- activities or clubs where snacks or food “treats” are available. Staff (including visiting staff) will ensure safe food is provided or consider an alternative non-food treat for all students
- planning special events, such as cultural days and celebrations

Inclusion of students with allergies must be considered alongside safety and they should not be excluded. If necessary, adapt the activity. The School will comply with the Equality Act 2010.

Food, including mealtimes & snacks

Catering

The catering team is committed to providing a safe meal for all students, staff and visitors, including those with food allergies.

- due diligence is carried out with regard to allergen management when appointing a catering team
- the catering team receive relevant and appropriate allergen awareness training
- when preparing food for those with allergies, the catering team will follow good hygiene practices, food safety and allergen management procedures
- the catering team will endeavour to get to know the students with allergies and what their allergies are, supported by School staff
- the catering team will endeavour to provide varied meal options to students and staff with allergies

- the School has robust procedures in place to identify students with food allergies and prepares a dietary memorandum for the catering team with photographs of students with allergies. This information is also stored centrally on the student's medical file. There is also a visual check from a member of staff familiar with the students who have allergies
- pre-packaged food will comply with PPDS legislation (Natasha's Law) requiring the allergen information to be displayed on the packaging
- where changes are made to the ingredients which involve the introduction of a known allergen this will be communicated to students with dietary needs by the catering team

Food bans or restrictions

Reminding everyone to be allergy aware and to remain vigilant is vital.

- this School is an Allergen Aware School. We have students with a wide range of allergies to different foods, so we encourage a considered approach to bringing in food
- we try to restrict all nuts as much as possible on the site and check foods coming into the kitchen

Food hygiene for students

the School encourages students to wash their hands before and after eating

- parents/guardians and students are advised that water bottles and packed lunches should be clearly labelled and food should not be shared or swapped
- throwing food is not allowed

Educational Visits and Sports Fixtures

- staff leading a trip will have a register of students with allergies and details of their medication
- allergies will be considered on the risk assessment and catering provision put in place
- parents, and students where appropriate, may be consulted if considered necessary, or if the trip requires an overnight stay
- staff (and some students, if appropriate) accompanying the trip will be trained to recognise and respond to an allergic reaction
- allergens will be clearly labelled on catered packed lunches
- if attending match teas at another school, details of dietary requirements will be sent ahead
- *See Adrenaline Pens section for School Trips and Sports Fixtures.*

Insect stings

The School will monitor the grounds for wasp or bee nests. Students (with or without allergies) should notify a member of staff if they find a wasp or bee nest in the School grounds and avoid them.

Those with a known insect venom allergy should:

- *avoid walking around in bare feet or sandals when outside and when possible keep arms and legs covered;*
- *avoid wearing strong perfumes or cosmetics; and*
- *keep food and drink covered.*

If a student is stung by an insect, they should attend the Health & Wellbeing Centre for assessment and treatment.

Animals

It is normally the dander (flakes of skin), saliva or urine that causes a person with an animal allergy to react.

Precautions to limit the risk of an allergic reaction include:

- *a student with a known animal allergy should avoid the animal to which they are allergic;*
- *if an animal comes on site a risk assessment will be done prior to the visit;*
- *areas visited by animals will be cleaned thoroughly;*
- *anyone in contact with an animal will wash their hands after contact;*
- *if an animal lives on site, for example on the farm or in a Boarding House, students, parents and staff will be made aware and consideration and adaptations will be made; and*
- *School trips that include visits to animals will be carefully risk assessed.*

Inclusion and mental health

Allergies can have a significant impact on mental health and wellbeing. Students may experience anxiety and depression and are more susceptible to bullying.

- *no child with allergies should be excluded from taking part in a School activity, whether on the School premises or a School trip*
- *students with allergies may require additional pastoral support including regular check-ins*
- *affected students will be given consideration in advance of wider School discussions about allergy and School Allergy Awareness initiatives*
- *bullying related to allergy will be treated in line with the School's Anti-Bullying Policy*

Adrenaline pens

Also, see the Department of Health Guidance on the use of adrenaline auto-injectors in Schools.

Storage of adrenaline pens

- *students prescribed with adrenaline pens will have easy access to two, in-date pens at all times*
- *students in Senior Divisions should always carry two AAI's on them*
- *students in the Preparatory Divisions will have two named injector pens kept in the Prep Medical room*
- *spot checks will be made to ensure adrenaline pens are where they should be and in date*
- *adrenaline pens must not be kept locked away*
- *adrenaline pens should be stored at moderate temperatures (see manufacturer's guidelines), not in direct sunlight or above a heat source (for example a radiator)*
- *used or out of date pens will be disposed of as sharps*

Spare adrenaline pens

The School has spare adrenaline pens to be used in accordance with government guidance. The locations of spare adrenaline pens are clearly signposted. These are: Prep Medical room, main Reception, Barn, swimming pool, Estate office and Health & Wellbeing Centre (HWBC).

The School Nurses are responsible for:

- *deciding how many spare pens are required*

- what dosage is required, based on the *Resuscitation Council UK's age-based guidance*
- which brand(s) to buy. Schools are recommended to buy a single brand if possible to avoid confusion
- the purchasing of spare adrenaline pens
- distribution of spare adrenaline pens around the site (including clear signage)

Adrenaline pens on off-site activities

- no child with a prescribed adrenaline pen will be able to go on a School trip without two of their own devices. It is the trip leader's responsibility to check they have them
- adrenaline pens will be kept close to the students at all times e.g. not stored in the hold of the coach when travelling or left in changing rooms
- adrenaline pens will be protected from extreme temperatures
- staff accompanying students will be aware of students with allergies and be trained to recognise and respond to an allergic reaction
- consideration will be given in regards to taking spare adrenaline pens to off-site activities and will form part of the risk assessment process

Responding to an allergic reaction/anaphylaxis

See Appendix A on recognising and responding to an allergic reaction.

If a student has an allergic reaction:

- treat the student in accordance with their Allergy Action Plan
- if anaphylaxis is suspected administer adrenaline without delay
- treat the student where they are. Lie them down with their legs raised and bring medication to them
- use the student's own prescribed medication if immediately available
- a student can administer the adrenaline pen themselves or a member of staff can administer
- if the student's own adrenaline pen is not available or misfires, a spare adrenaline pen should be used
- if anaphylaxis is suspected but the student does not have a prescribed adrenaline pen or Allergy Action Plan, lie the student down with their legs raised, call 999 and explain anaphylaxis is suspected. Inform the operator that spare adrenaline pens are available and follow instructions from the operator. The MHRA says that in exceptional circumstances, a spare adrenaline pen can be administered to anyone for the purposes of saving their life.
- if, after 5 minutes, there is no improvement, use a second adrenaline pen and call the emergency services again and inform them that a second dose of adrenaline has been given.
- do not move the student until a medical professional/ paramedic has arrived, even if they are feeling better
- a student who has had suspected anaphylaxis and received adrenaline must go to hospital, even if they appear to have recovered. A member of staff should accompany in an ambulance until a parent or guardian arrives

Training

The School is committed to training all staff annually to give them a good understanding of allergy awareness.

This includes:

- understanding what an allergy is
- how to reduce the risk of an allergic reaction occurring
- how to recognise and treat an allergic reaction, including anaphylaxis
- how the School manages allergy, for example Emergency Response Plan, documentation and communication
- where adrenaline pens are kept (both prescribed pens and spare pens) and how to access them
- the importance of inclusion of students with food allergies, the impact of allergy on mental health and wellbeing and the risk of allergy related bullying
- understanding food labelling
- taking part in an anaphylaxis drill
- the School will carry out an anaphylaxis drill once a year. This includes an exercise simulating an event where a student or member of staff has an allergic reaction and testing the whole School response

Asthma

It is vital that students with allergies keep their asthma well controlled, because asthma can exacerbate allergic reactions. Please refer to the *Medical & First Aid Policy*.

Reporting Allergic Reactions

The School Nurses will log allergic reaction incidents on the School's medical system and near-misses on EVOLVE. The Healthcare Assistant provides the Designated Allergy Lead with a termly report of allergic reaction incidents and near-misses.

All incident reports should be shared with:

- the student's parents or guardians, who will be given the opportunity to discuss the incident and contribute their views to the review; and
- the Designated Allergy Lead, so they can consider what lessons to learn and whether policy changes are required.

Any learning from an incident should be shared appropriately with staff so they can act on it. Following any incident or near miss, the Designated Allergy Lead will meet with the student and their parents/guardians.

The School recognises the impact of an incident or near miss not just on the individual and their family, but also on staff who responded and children who witnessed it and will offer appropriate support.

Managing Allergic Reactions

Allergic reactions vary

Allergic reactions are unpredictable and can be affected by factors such as illness or hormonal fluctuations. You cannot assume someone will react the same way twice, even to the same allergen. Reactions are not always linear. They do not always progress from mild to moderate to more serious; sometimes they are life-threatening within minutes.

Mild to moderate allergic reactions

Symptoms include:

- swollen lips, face or eyes
- itchy or tingling mouth
- hives or itchy rash on skin
- abdominal pain
- vomiting
- change in behaviour

Response:

- stay with student
- call for help
- locate adrenaline pens
- give antihistamine (if any signs of anaphylaxis are present, give adrenaline without delay)
- make a note of the time
- phone parent or guardian
- Continue to monitor the student for at least 60 minutes in case the reaction gets worse

Serious Allergic Reactions / Anaphylaxis

The most serious type of reaction is called **anaphylaxis**. Anaphylaxis is uncommon, and children experiencing it almost always fully recover. **In rare cases, anaphylaxis can be fatal. It should always be treated as a time-critical medical emergency.**

Anaphylaxis usually occurs within 20 minutes of eating a food but can begin 2-3 hours later.

People who have never had an allergic reaction before, or who have only had mild to moderate allergic reactions previously, can experience anaphylaxis.

Appendix A - Recognising and Responding to an Allergic Reaction

Symptoms of Anaphylaxis

A-Airway

Persistent cough
Hoarse voice
Difficulty Swallowing
Swollen Tongue

B-Breathing

Difficult/noisy breathing
Wheeze/cough

C-Circulation

Pale/Floppy
Sleepy
Collapse/unconscious
Persistent dizziness

If you suspect anaphylaxis, give adrenaline first before you do anything else.

Delivering Adrenaline

- Take the medication to the patient, rather than moving them.
- The patient should be lying down with legs raised. If they are having trouble breathing, they can sit with legs outstretched.
- It is not necessary to remove clothing but make sure you're not injecting into thick seams, buttons, zips or even a mobile phone in a pocket.
- Inject adrenaline into the upper outer thigh according to the manufacturer's instructions. A student may be able to do this themselves, but some will require or want adult support. Whilst all members of staff should be trained, in an emergency, anyone can administer adrenaline.
- Make a note of the time you gave the first dose.
- Call 999 (or get someone else to do this while you give adrenaline). Tell them you have given adrenaline for anaphylaxis.
- Stay with the patient and do not let them get up or move, even if they are feeling better (this can cause cardiac arrest).
- Call the student's emergency contact.
- If their condition has not improved or symptoms have got worse, give a second dose of adrenaline after 5 minutes, using a second device. Call 999 again and tell them you have given a second dose and to check that help is on the way.
- Start CPR if necessary.
- Hand over used devices to paramedics and remember to get replacements.
- A student who has had suspected anaphylaxis and received adrenaline must go to hospital, even if they appear to have recovered. A member of staff should accompany them in an ambulance until a parent or guardian arrives.

For more information see the Government's Guidance for the use of adrenaline auto-injectors in schools.