St. Andrew's C of E (VA) Primary School

Allergy safety policy

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Introduction

Food allergies are increasing in both developed and developing countries, especially in children and the severity and complexity of food allergy is also increasing. Food allergy can be fatal and an appropriate diagnosis is essential in parallel with the need for clear food labelling worldwide.

Around 5-8% of children in the UK live with a food allergy and most school classrooms will have at least one pupil with allergies. These young people are at risk of anaphylaxis, a potentially life-threatening reaction which requires an immediate emergency response. 20% of severe allergic reactions to food happen whilst a child is at school, and these reactions can occur in children with no prior history of food allergy. It is essential that staff recognise the signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction and are able to manage it safely and effectively.

Schools have a legal duty to support pupils with medical conditions, including allergy

Aims

This policy aims to:

- Set out our school's approach to allergy safety, including reducing the risk of exposure and the procedures in place in case of allergic reaction
- Make clear how our school supports pupils with allergies to ensure their wellbeing and inclusion
- Promote and maintain allergy awareness among the school community

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education (DfE)'s statutory guidance on allergy safety in schools and supporting pupils with medical conditions at school, 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

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for ensuring:

- Risks relating to pupils with allergy are included in the risk register and actively managed
- The school has an allergy safety policy which sets out:
    - Arrangements to reduce the risk of individuals coming into contact with their known allergens
    - Emergency response plans for cases of anaphylaxis

The governing board delegates the day-to-day implementation of this policy to the allergy safety lead.

3.2 Allergy safety lead

The nominated allergy safety lead is Carys Lewis, Headteacher.

They are responsible for:

- Implementing this allergy safety policy

- Reviewing the allergy safety policy at least annually, updating it when needed, and making sure it is published
- Promoting and maintaining allergy awareness across our school community
- Developing and reviewing arrangements for the safe storage and disposal of adrenaline devices (AD)
- Ensuring:
    - All allergy information is up to date and readily available to relevant members of staff
    - Deciding (in discussion with the parents/carers and any relevant healthcare professionals) whether a pupil's allergy can be managed through the adjustments made under the school's medical conditions policy or whether an IHCP is required to specify arrangements that reflect the pupil's circumstances
    - All pupils who require support with allergies have an up-do-date individual healthcare plan (IHCP)
    - All pupils with a known food or insect sting allergy have up-to-date allergy action plans issued by a medical professional
    - All staff receive regular allergy awareness training
    - All staff are aware of the school's policy and procedures regarding allergies
    - Relevant staff are aware of what activities need an allergy risk assessment
    - Serious incidents and 'near misses' relating to allergy safety are recorded and reported as appropriate, and to consider and share with staff:
        - What lessons there are to learn
        - Any potential changes to the medical conditions and/or allergy safety policies and/or to any pupil's IHCP
    - Facilitating termly meetings with key staff responsible for allergy management

3.3 Key staff

Carrie Beech and Gail Phillips are responsible for:

- Checking spare AAIs are present and in date on a monthly basis
- Making sure that replacement AAIs are obtained when expiry dates approach

3.4 Teaching and support staff

All teaching and support staff are responsible for:

- Maintaining awareness of our allergy safety policy and procedures
- Raising awareness about allergies and anaphylaxis amongst their pupils/students in the classroom and around school, especially in dining areas.
- Being able to recognise the signs of severe allergic reactions and anaphylaxis
- Being aware of specific pupils with allergies in their care
- Reducing the risk to pupils with known allergies coming into contact with known allergens
- Encouraging self-responsibility and learned avoidance strategies amongst pupils/students living with allergies
- Ensuring the wellbeing and inclusion of pupils with allergies
- Helping all pupils/students understand which foods are safe for those with allergies and how they can support other pupils/students with specific dietary needs to stay safe

- Reporting any allergic reaction or case of anaphylaxis to the allergy safety lead

3.6 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are responsible for:

- Being aware of our school's allergy safety policy
- Following the school's guidance on food brought in to be shared
- Providing the school with up-to-date details of their child's medical needs, dietary requirements, and any history of allergies, reactions and anaphylaxis
- If required, providing their child with 2 in-date adrenaline auto-injectors and any other medication, including inhalers, antihistamine etc., and making sure these are replaced in a timely manner
- Updating the school on any changes to their child's condition

3.7 Pupils with allergies

If age-appropriate, these pupils are responsible for:

- Being aware of their allergens and the risks they pose
- Avoid eating anything with unknown ingredients
- As soon as they suspect they are experiencing signs of allergic reaction, tell an adult.
- Ensuring their AD is not taken home or left in a bag and is kept in the designated space.
- Understanding how and when to use their AD

3.8 Pupils without allergies

These pupils are responsible for:

- Being aware of allergens and the risk they pose to their peers
- Never sharing food with peers

4. Identifying individuals at risk

Allergy is a spectrum of different allergic diseases. Reactions occur when a susceptible person is exposed to something (an "allergen") they are allergic to. Common allergic conditions include:

- Hay fever (allergic rhinitis), triggered by allergens carried in the air, such as pollen, house dust mite, animal fur/feathers, or mould
- Skin allergies (e.g. eczema, contact dermatitis, contact urticaria/hives) caused by contact with allergens including house dust mite, pollen and substances like nickel, latex and some chemicals
- Food allergy, which can cause symptoms ranging from mild itching in the mouth to "whole body" reactions including anaphylaxis
- Asthma which may be triggered by airborne allergens
- Allergy to insect stings and medicines

4.1 Identifying pupils at risk

We will:

- For new starters, send a form to all parent/carers of pupils after their place at the school has been confirmed, but before their first school year starts, to confirm any allergy the pupil has and whether they carry medication. Where a pupil has a new diagnosis and/or has moved to the school mid-term, we will send a form and put arrangements in place within 2 weeks
- Send a reminder to parents/carers at the start of each year asking them to update their child's medical information as necessary

We ask that parents/carers proactively inform us by either phone call to the school, 01752 201660 or an email to admin@st-andrews.plymouth.sch.uk if their child's medical needs change during the school year.

4.2 Identifying staff and visitors at risk

We will:

- Ask new staff and volunteers to provide details of their allergies in advance of their start date
- Ask visitors to provide details of their allergies on arrival at school using the Inventry sign in system

4.3 Individual healthcare plans (IHCP)

Pupils should have an IHCP if they:

- Have an allergy which has a functional impact on them in the school environment
- They are at risk of harm as a result of their allergy; and
- Require arrangements which are additional to or different from those made generally

It is not necessary for a pupil to have a formal diagnosis of allergy for them to have an IHCP. Healthcare professionals may decide that it is more appropriate to accept that the child shows symptoms, rather than proceeding to a formal diagnosis.

The IHCP will set out the additional and/or different arrangements that will be in place for supporting the pupil. The school will make every effort to make sure that arrangements are put in place within 2 weeks, or by the beginning of the relevant term for pupils who are new to our school.

Not all children with an allergy will require an IHCP. Some allergies will have little or no impact on the pupil while they are at school or pose no risk to the pupil. Some allergies will not require arrangements which are additional to or different from those made generally.

The headteacher is responsible for deciding (in discussion with the parents/carers and any relevant healthcare professionals) whether a pupil's allergy can be managed through the adjustments made under the school's medical conditions policy or whether an IHCP is required to specify arrangements that reflect the pupil's circumstances.

The school will consider the following principles:

- If the arrangements or support which a pupil requires would be available to any pupil as part of normal policies, an IHCP may not be required
- If the pupil only needs non-prescription medication and the school's medical conditions policy would permit them to carry and administer it, an IHCP may not be required

IHCPs will be reviewed at least annually and more frequently if the pupil's needs have changed. Where a pupil moves on to a new school or college, their IHCP will be shared as part of the transition.

4.4 Allergy and asthma action plans

All pupils who have a known allergy to a food or insect stings should be issued with an appropriate allergy action plan by their healthcare professional.

All pupils who have asthma should be issued with an asthma action plan by their healthcare professional.

The plans include medical and parental consent for staff to administer emergency medicines, including adrenaline for anaphylaxis or reliever inhaler in the event of an asthma attack.

The allergy action plan and/or asthma action plan should be attached to the pupil's IHCP. Whenever the allergy action plan is updated, the pupil's IHCP should be reviewed to incorporate it.

4.5 Register of pupils with known allergies

- The school maintains a register of pupils who have a known allergy. The register includes:
    - Known allergens and risk factors for anaphylaxis
    - Whether a pupil has been prescribed ADs (and if so, what type and dose)
    - Where a pupil has been prescribed an AD, whether parental consent has been given to administer emergency medication
    - A photograph of each pupil to allow a visual check to be made (this will require parental consent)
- The register is kept in a folder in the staffroom, in the main office and in areas where food is served or handled and can be checked quickly by any member of staff as part of initiating an emergency response
- If a pupil/student notifies school that they are no longer allergic to a food, this information is checked prior to updating records and the IHCP (if applicable)

5. Assessing risk

The school will conduct a risk assessment for any pupil at risk of anaphylaxis taking part in:

- Lessons such as food technology
- Science experiments involving foods
- Crafts using food packaging
- Off-site events and school trips
- Any other activities involving animals or food, such as animal handling experiences or baking

A risk assessment for any pupil at risk of an allergic reaction will also be carried out where a visitor requires a guide dog.

6. Minimising risk

6.1 Hygiene procedures

- Pupils are reminded to wash their hands before and after eating
- Sharing of food, food containers, and food utensils is not allowed

- Pupils have their own named water bottles, and lunch boxes of pupils with food allergies will be clearly labelled with the name of the child for whom they are intended
- Where food is not directly provided by the school, parental engagement and permission will be sought in advance
- Staff are educated about how to read labels for food allergens and instructed about measures to prevent cross contamination during the handling, preparation and serving of food, e.g. preparing food for children with food allergies first; careful cleaning (using warm soapy water) of food preparation areas and utensils.

6.2 Catering

The school is committed to providing safe food options to meet the dietary needs of pupils with allergies. This applies at lunch times and when food is provided in before and after-school childcare.

- Catering staff receive appropriate training and are able to identify pupils with allergies
- The school will engage with caterers to understand the controls in place to ensure that food service complies with relevant requirements
- School menus are available for parents/carers and pupils to view with ingredients clearly labelled, and catering staff are available to discuss the provision of allergy safe meals with parents/carers
- Where changes are made to school menus, we will make sure these comply with legislation, and continue to meet any special dietary needs of pupils
- Food allergen information relating to the 'top 14' allergens is displayed on the packaging of all food products, allowing pupils and staff to make safer choices. Allergen information labelling will follow all legal requirements that apply to naming the food and listing ingredients, as outlined by the Food Standards Agency (FSA)
- Where food is provided by the school, staff will understand how to read labels for food allergens
- Catering staff follow hygiene and allergy procedures when preparing food to avoid cross-contamination
- Clear guidance to be given to families where home baked items are brought into school for events such as summer fairs. All ingredients must be clearly listed, and staff monitor any known allergy risks.
- Any food brought in for pupils' birthdays or special occasions must have labels showing a full list of ingredients and allergens. This will be made clear on the newsletter and website.

6.3 Insect bites/stings

When outdoors:

- Shoes should always be worn
- Food and drink should be covered

6.4 Animals

- All pupils will always wash hands after interacting with animals to avoid putting pupils with allergies at risk through later contact
- Pupils with known animal allergies will not interact with animals

6.5 Visits and trips

- No pupils with allergies will be excluded from taking part (however children unable to produce their required medication would not be able to attend the excursion)
- The school will plan accordingly for all visits and trips, and arrange for the staff members involved to be aware of pupils' allergies and to have received appropriate training
- The school will conduct a risk assessment for any pupil at risk of anaphylaxis taking part in a school trip
- Pupils at risk of anaphylaxis should have their own ADs with them
- Staff trained to administer adrenaline in an emergency will be present on the school trip
- Appropriate measures will be taken in line with the school's AD protocols for off-site events and school trips (see section 8.5)

7. Procedures for handling an allergic reaction

- All staff are trained to recognise the signs of both mild and severe allergic reactions (known as anaphylaxis) and respond appropriately
- Staff are trained in the administration of adrenaline to minimise delays in an emergency
- A staff first aider will also be summoned to support the situation
- If the pupil has an allergy action plan, this must be followed
- A spare school AD device will only be used if:
    - The pupil does not have a prescribed AD
    - The pupil's prescribed AD is not available or misfires

8. Adrenaline devices (ADs)

8.1 Prescribed ADs

Pupils with prescribed ADs need rapid access to their devices at all times. Due to the age of our pupils and a need for complete consistency, all ADs will be stored:

- In an unlocked medicine cabinet in the main school office. This is accessible at all times.
- **The school office is no more than** 1 minute away from any area of the school premises where they may be needed
- ADs will be kept at room temperature (in line with manufacturer's guidelines), protected from direct sunlight and extremes of temperature
- On school visits/trips, the lead staff member will outline on the risk assessment who will be responsible for carrying the AD and considering how it can be accessed in an emergency.
- The lead first aider, Carrie Beech, checks all medications stored at school each month to ensure they are in date and stored correctly.

A copy of the pupil's allergy action plan is kept alongside their medication, as it includes instructions on how it should be used in an emergency. A school list of all pupils' medical needs and actions is stored centrally and updated regularly.

8.2 Spare ADs and inhalers

The allergy safety lead is responsible for sourcing spare ADs and an emergency asthma reliever inhaler and ensuring they are stored according to the guidance.

**If an individual who is prescribed nasal adrenaline suffers anaphylaxis, a school's spare AAIs may be used in an emergency.*

An emergency asthma reliever inhaler can only be used if the pupil's prescribed inhaler is not available and where written consent has been obtained.

- The ADs will be purchased from a reputable medical/first aid supplies retailer. In this instance, our ADs have been purchased from Eueka Direct. Their registration number is 03951452.
- We will hold in school 2 x 150mcg auto-injectors and 2 x 300mcg auto-injectors.
- The brand we will hold in school is Epipen.
- Based on Resuscitation Council UK's age-based criteria, the dosages given will be:
  - For children age under 6 years: a dose of 150 microgram (0.15 milligram) of adrenaline will be used.
  - For children age 6-12 years: a dose of 300 microgram (0.3 milligram) of adrenaline will be used.
  - For teenagers age 12+ years: a dose of 300 or 500 microgram will be used.

Spare ADs will be stored:

- In an unlocked medicine cabinet in the main school office. This is accessible at all times.

Spare AAIs will be kept:

- In pairs, in case a second one is necessary
- Separate from any pupils' prescribed ADs and clearly labelled to avoid confusion

Carrie Beech or Gail Phillips are responsible for:

- Checking monthly that spare ADs and the emergency asthma reliever inhaler are present and in date
- Obtaining replacement ADs when the expiry date is near

8.3 Disposal

ADs can only be used once. Used AAIs can be given to ambulance paramedics on arrival or can be disposed of in a pre-ordered sharps bin locked in the First Aid cupboard opposite reception and arranged with the council for collection.

8.4 Using spare ADs in an emergency situation without prior consent

The Human Medicines (Amendment) Regulations 2017 do not require consent to have been obtained for spare adrenaline devices to be used in an emergency.

The school will obtain advance consent from parents/carers or pupils for spare adrenaline devices to be used, so that in an emergency, consent can be assumed to be in place.

Where anaphylaxis is suspected in an undiagnosed individual, call the emergency services and state ANAPHYLAXIS is suspected, then follow their advice as to whether administration of a spare AAI is appropriate.

(In an emergency situation, anyone may take reasonable action to save a life without checking whether prior consent has been given. This avoids potentially fatal delays in treatment.)

8.5 Use of ADs off school premises

- On school visits/trips, the lead staff member will outline on the risk assessment who will be responsible for carrying the ADs and consider how it will be accessed in an emergency. Older children may carry their own AD, but this must be made clear to all staff members.
- Any staff member responsible for carrying an AD must remain in close proximity (within 1 minute) of a child at risk of anaphylaxis.

9. Serious incidents and 'near misses'

A **serious incident** is any event relating directly to a medical condition (including allergy) in which a pupil, member of staff or visitor with a medical condition or allergy is harmed or is placed at an immediate and significant risk of harm, including situations requiring emergency medication, urgent clinical intervention or attendance by emergency services.

A **'near miss'** is an event relating directly to a medical condition (including allergy) that did not result in harm but had the clear potential to do so – for example, where an error, omission, or system failure could reasonably have led to a serious incident had circumstances been only slightly different.

9.1 Incident recording

The school will record serious incidents and 'near misses' relating to allergy safety as soon as is feasible. The incident will be recorded on Cpoms, SheAssure and with the parent/guardian, including the following information:

- Who was affected
- What happened, when and where
- Why the incident occurred (as far as is known)
- How staff and pupils responded and what was done to support the individual
- Whether emergency services were called
- How the incident concluded

The school will approach serious incidents and 'near misses' in a 'no blame' spirit of seeking to learn lessons.

9.2 Incident reporting

The parents/carers of a pupil aged up to 16 should be notified of the incident or 'near miss' as soon as possible.

The school will share the report with the pupil's parents, the pupil or the individual involved.

They will be given the opportunity to discuss what happened and to contribute their views to the consequent lessons learned review. The school will then confirm what we have learnt from the incident and outline any actions we are taking as a result.

In some cases, the impact of exposure to an allergen at school may be delayed and not recognised until the pupil is at home. This means that incident reporting is not limited to staff – the pupil, parents/carers or others (such as healthcare professionals) will need to report to the school if there has been an incident with a delayed reaction.

Staff will always share the incident report with the allergy safety lead, Ian Pope and the Headteacher. The allergy safety lead will consider whether the allergy safety arrangements in place were appropriate or if changes are needed to this policy and/or the pupil's IHCP. Any learning will be shared appropriately with staff so they can act on them and reduce the chance of an incident reoccurring.

The school will also share the report with other agencies in the following circumstances:

- With the Health and Safety Executive (HSE): incidents which arise directly out of the way the school carried out a work activity which results in death or immediate hospitalization. For example, where a pupil has suffered harm after consuming an allergen due to incorrect preparation of food by a member of staff.
- To the local authority using the Assure system: any allergen-related food safety incidents.
- In the event that the incident or 'near miss' was related to the delivery of a care plan or action plan issued by a healthcare professional, the relevant healthcare professional will be notified.

10. Allergy awareness

For many years, St Andrew's has had a nut ban in place and asks all parents to ensure products containing nuts are not brought in to school. However, there are many allergens that could affect pupils, and no school could guarantee a truly allergen free environment for a child living with food allergy. As such, we also try to adopt a culture of allergy awareness and education. A whole school awareness of allergies ensures teachers, pupils and all other staff are aware of what allergies are, the importance of avoiding the pupils' allergens, the signs & symptoms, how to deal with allergic reactions and to ensure policies and procedures are in place to minimise risk.

10.1 Staff training

The school ensures that all staff expected to be present during times when pupils are scheduled to be on site receive allergy awareness training at least annually. New starters will complete this training as part of their induction.

This includes permanent staff, temporary staff and regular volunteers. It also includes catering staff and others who may oversee pupils at breakfast or after-school clubs. It does not include contractors carrying out work with no pupil-facing roles such as builders, electricians or other ad hoc maintenance personnel.

Where possible, the school will seek assurances of training from agencies providing supply teachers, peripatetic staff or agency workers.

The school has purchased 'training pens' from EpiPen and Jext so staff can practise safely and be familiar with the differences.

The school will conduct an allergy safety drill annually. This is a simulated case of anaphylaxis to test out how staff respond, without risk to any individual. The results of the drill will be recorded and used to inform the ongoing review of this policy.

Allergy awareness training will ensure that all staff:

- Have an awareness of allergy, the risks it poses, how allergic reactions can occur and how to manage it
- Understand that allergy includes multiple conditions (food allergy, asthma, eczema, hay fever, others), which can co-exist
- Understand the difference between food allergy, coeliac disease and food intolerance
- Know where to find information on allergy triggers
- Can identify the range of symptoms of allergic reactions
- Understand and can recognise anaphylaxis
- Know how to respond in an emergency, including:
    - Calling emergency services and informing parents/carers
    - How to locate and administer emergency medication
    - How to use the medication/device in an emergency

- Understand the impact allergy can have on a pupil's wellbeing
- Understand the school's allergy safety policy
- Know how to check whether an individual is on the record of those with known allergies, and how to use an allergy or asthma action plan
- Understand their responsibilities in reducing the risk of individuals with known allergies coming into contact with their known allergens
- Understand how to report an allergic reaction or case of anaphylaxis (whether an incident or a 'near miss')

10.2 Awareness of allergy safety policy and practice

This allergy safety policy will be published on the school's website and shared with parents/carers at the start of the school year.

All staff should be aware of and understand the policy as part of annual allergy awareness training.

We will develop a pupil awareness programme through assemblies, PHSE lessons and other curriculum areas, using resources from Allergy School.

11. Wellbeing

Pupils with allergies may experience bullying and may also suffer from anxiety and depression relating to their allergy. Bullying in any form is not acceptable at St Andrew's. We want all our children to thrive and live life to the full, irrespective of any additional need and expect our pupils to behave with respect, compassion and love for one another.

Pupils with allergies will have additional support through:

- Pastoral care with our school ELSA or other professional
- Regular check-ins with their class teacher or teaching assistant
- Reassurance that steps are being taken to minimise the risks of exposure to allergens and that robust measures are in place in the event of anaphylaxis

The school will respond to any instance of bullying in line with its behaviour policy.

11.1 Wellbeing support following an incident or 'near miss'

The school recognises that an incident or a 'near miss' is a serious event with a potential impact not only on the pupil but their family, those involved in responding and any witnesses. The school will provide support for those involved.

The school will support staff involved in any incident or 'near miss'.

See section 9 of the policy for more details on incidents and 'near misses'.

12. Information sharing

Information about an individual's health is considered special category data under UK GDPR. It will therefore be handled in line with our data protection policy.

13. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be monitored by the allergy safety lead.

It will be reviewed and approved annually by the allergy safety lead, or more frequently if a serious incident or ‘near miss’ identifies an area for improvement.

14. Links to other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Health and safety policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
- Food and healthy eating policy
- Behaviour policy and Anti-bullying policy
- Data protection policy