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ALLERGY SAFETY POLICY

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Reviewed By: Zoe Silvester

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Glossary of terms and acronyms:

- AAI = Adrenaline Auto Injector
- AD = Adrenal devices
- IHP = Individual Healthcare Plan
- EpiPen = The brand of adrenaline auto injector used at Abbey Court School

1. 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
- To support our overall approach to supporting pupils with medical needs in school

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
- Benedict's Law 2026

3. 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. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The Governing body

The governing board is responsible for ensuring:

- Risks relating to pupils with an allergy/allergies are included in the school's risk assessment processes and are 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 (This is the Deputy Head responsible for overseeing health and safety).

4.2 Allergy safety lead (this is the school's health and safety lead)

They're 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 (support by NHS school nursing team)
- 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
 - All pupils with a known food or insect sting allergy have up-to-date allergy plans issued by a medical professional
 - All pupils who require support with allergies have an up-to-date individual healthcare plan
 - 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 additional 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 health care plan

4.3 Headteacher

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 a healthcare plan is required to specify arrangements that reflect the pupil's circumstances

4.4 Health Care Assistants

The school's health care assistants are responsible for:

- Checking spare adrenaline auto injectors (AAIs) are present and in date on a regular basis
- Making sure that replacement AAIs are obtained when expiry dates approach
- Updating and maintaining the school allergy log

4.5 Teaching and support staff

All teaching and support staff are responsible for:

- Promoting and maintaining allergy awareness
- Maintaining awareness of our allergy safety policy and procedures
- 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
- Ensuring the wellbeing and inclusion of pupils with allergies
- Reporting any allergic reaction or case of anaphylaxis immediately to school medical team and a member of the leadership team
- Ensuring the safe storage of all allergy medication to support the safety of all pupils
- Maintaining allergy information displayed in the dining halls and within classrooms

4.6 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are responsible for:

- Being aware of our school's allergy safety policy
- 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
- Following the school's guidance on food brought in to be shared with other pupils
- Updating the school on any changes to their child's condition

5 Identifying risk

5.1 Identifying pupils at risk

The school gathers information on pupils and their known allergies during the admission process. Parents and carers are asked that they update the school immediately if their child develops any new allergies after the initial admission process. Additionally, the school collects an allergy update for all pupils annually, through a specific data collection form. This follows the same process that is used to identify pupils with other medical conditions, as set out in our policy for supporting pupils with medical conditions.

To ensure this process is effectively managed we will:

- For new starters, send a form to all parent/carers of pupils after their place at the school has been confirmed, to confirm any allergy the pupil has and whether they carry medication. This will also be discussed at the home visit prior to admission.
- Send a reminder to parents/carers at the end of term 6 in preparation for the start of each year asking them to update their child's allergy information as necessary

We ask that parents/carers proactively inform us immediately if their child's medical needs change during the school year.

5.2 Identifying staff and visitors at risk

All visitors are welcomed to the school by a member of the school administration team and are asked if they have any special requirements whilst on site. They are also provided with a visitor leaflet which gives guidance on how to seek support regarding any health and safety matter.

Prior to appointment, all staff undergo occupational health assessment and are asked to declare any existing health conditions. New staff are given an induction by a member of the senior team which includes medication storage arrangements and checking on any specific requirements.

Staff are regularly reminded of their responsibility to inform the leadership team of any changes to medical conditions that impacts their working day.

Appropriate risk assessments are undertaken if any of these processes identified a staff with an allergy that presented them with risk whilst on site.

5.3 Individual healthcare plans

Pupils should have a healthcare plan 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

The individual healthcare plan (IHP) will be written by the Special School Nursing team and will set out the additional and/or different arrangements that will be in place for supporting the pupil.

The school will consider the following principles:

IHPs 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 healthcare plan will be shared as part of the transition.

5.4 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 inform the pupil's healthcare plan. Whenever the allergy action plan is updated, the pupil's healthcare plan should be reviewed to incorporate it.

5.5 Register of pupils with known allergies

➤ The school maintains a register of pupils who have a known allergy. The register includes:

- Known allergens
- Whether a pupil has been prescribed emergency medication for the allergic reactions
- When the information was received/last updated by parent/carer

The register is kept in the medical office and shared with the school kitchen and can be checked quickly by any member of staff as part of initiating an emergency response.

Additionally, all pupils' allergies or food intolerances recorded on their individual education plans and their individual eating plans

6. Assessing risk

The school will risk assess any pupil at risk of anaphylaxis taking part in:

- Lessons such as food technology and other lessons involving food products
- Science experiments involving foods
- Crafts using food packaging

- Off-site events and school trips
- Lessons on the school farm

7. Minimising risk

7.1 Hygiene procedures

- Pupils are reminded (and supported) to wash their hands before and after eating
- Staff will ensure all food preparation areas are cleaned before and after use
- Sharing of food and food containers (from home) is not allowed
- Pupils with food allergies will have their own named water bottle or cup, clearly labelled with the name of the child for whom they are intended
- Where food is not directly provided by the school, parental permission will be sought in advance

7.2 Catering

The school is committed to providing safe food options to meet the dietary needs of pupils with allergies.

- Catering staff receive appropriate training and are able to identify pupils with allergies
- The school will ensure caterers 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 the school is 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. 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

7.3 Insect bites/stings

When outdoors:

- Pupils are encouraged and supported to keep their shoes on
- Food and drink should be covered

7.4 Animals

- All pupils will always wash hands after interacting with animals on the farm and class farm risk assessments include individual considerations for pupils with known allergies/reactions to animals

7.5 Visits and trips

- The school will plan accordingly for all visits and trips, ensuring staff members involved are aware of pupils' allergies and have implemented appropriate control measures
- The visit lead will conduct a risk assessment for any pupil at risk of anaphylaxis (or other allergic reaction) taking part in a school trip
- Emergency medication for all pupils will be taken on any off-site visit (including the farm)
- Staff trained to administer adrenaline in an emergency will be present on the school trip

8. 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 via adrenaline devices (ADs) to minimise delays in an emergency
- Staff will follow a pupil's individual healthcare plan
- A spare school AD device will only be used if:
 - The pupil does not have a prescribed AD
 - The pupil's prescribed AD are not available or misfire

9. Adrenaline devices (ADs)

Following the Department of Health and Social Care's Guidance on using [emergency adrenaline auto-injectors in schools](#), set out your school's procedures for ADs, covering these areas:

9.1 Prescribed ADs

Pupils who are prescribed ADs must always have these in school and with a nominated adult when travelling to or from the school and on school trips. It is recommended that two devices are carried at all times. Pupils with prescribed ADs should take them home with them at the end of each school day, and parents are responsible for ensuring that they are in date.

Due to the level of complex needs, pupils' devices (and any other emergency medication) will be stored in the medical room in a named bag:

- AD devices and asthma inhalers are stored in an unlocked, clearly labelled cupboard within the medical room. This is a central location and is accessible to all staff at all times

9.2 Spare ADs and inhalers

The health and safety lead is responsible for sourcing spare ADs and an emergency asthma reliver inhaler. The School Healthcare assistants are responsible for ensuring they are stored according to the guidance.

- The Cliffe Road site will hold two different doses of ADs due to the age range of pupils. The Rede Court Road site will hold one dose type.
- The school will hold EpiPens as the chosen brand of AD
- The spare ADs will be stored in the same location as individual ADs, but will be clearly marked in a labelled bag reading "Emergency Anaphylaxis kit"
- The school health care assistants are responsible for conducting regular checks to confirm that spare ADs and the emergency asthma reliver inhaler are present and in date

9.3 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.

However, 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.

In this emergency situation, staff would administer the spare adrenaline device only when following clinical advice/instruction e.g. via the ambulance service or special school nursing team.

10. 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.

10.1 Incident recording and reporting

The school will record serious incidents and ‘near misses’ relating to allergy safety as soon as is feasible, following the school’s incident procedures.

Parent/carers will be informed of any incident.

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 – 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.

If an incident of near miss occurs, the leadership team will consider whether the allergy safety arrangements in place were appropriate or if changes are needed or the pupil’s individual risk assessment or healthcare plan. Any learning will be shared appropriately with staff so they can act on them and reduce the chance of an incident reoccurring.

11. Allergy awareness

11.1 Staff training

The school ensures that all staff receive allergy awareness training at least annually. New starters will complete this training as part of their induction. Practical training is also provided to class based staff by the MCH special school nursing team on an annual basis.

External specialist providers are used for all Allergy awareness training to ensure up to date and accurate training is always provided.

11.2 Awareness of allergy safety policy

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.

Pupils will be supported to understand their own allergies. This will be planned on an individual basis as appropriate to their needs.

12. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be monitored by the health and safety lead.

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

13. Links to other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Health and safety policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
- Food policy