

AYCLIFFE DRIVE PRIMARY SCHOOL



Managing Allergies Policy

(This policy has produced following guidance from the anaphylaxis organisation)

Committee

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1. Introduction

An allergy is a reaction of the body's immune system to substances that are usually harmless. The reaction can cause minor symptoms such as itching, sneezing or rashes but sometimes causes a much more serious reaction called anaphylaxis.

Anaphylaxis is a serious, life-threatening allergic reaction. It is at the extreme end of the allergic spectrum. The whole body is affected often within minutes of exposure to the allergen, but sometimes it can be hours later. Causes can include foods, insect stings, and drugs.

Most healthcare professionals consider an allergic reaction to be anaphylaxis when it involves difficulty breathing or affects the heart rhythm or blood pressure. Anaphylaxis symptoms are often referred to as the ABC symptoms (Airway, Breathing, Circulation). It is possible to be allergic to anything which contains a protein, however most people will react to a fairly small group of potent allergens.

Common UK Allergens include (but are not limited to):- Peanuts, Tree Nuts, Sesame, Milk, Egg, Fish, Latex, Insect venom, Pollen and Animal Dander. This policy sets out how Aycliffe Drive Primary School will support pupils with allergies, to ensure they are safe and are not disadvantaged in any way whilst taking part in school life.

2. Government legislation

Schools have a legal duty to support pupils with medical conditions, including allergy. Schools must adhere to legislation and statutory guidance on caring for pupils with medical conditions, including the administration of allergy medication and adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs).

3. Statement of intent

At Aycliffe Drive Primary School, we are committed to ensuring that all pupils with medical conditions, including allergies, are safe, supported and able to fully participate in all aspects of school life. We recognise that allergies can be life-threatening and that effective management is essential to safeguarding the health and wellbeing of our pupils.

The school acknowledges its legal duty to support pupils with medical conditions and will comply with all relevant legislation and statutory guidance relating to the care of pupils with medical needs. This includes ensuring appropriate arrangements are in place for the storage, accessibility and administration of prescribed medication, including adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs).

We will work closely with parents, carers, healthcare professionals and staff to develop and implement appropriate individual healthcare plans where required. Staff will receive relevant training to identify allergic reactions, respond to emergencies and administer medication safely and effectively.

Aycliffe Drive Primary School is committed to fostering an inclusive environment in which pupils with allergies and other medical conditions can learn, thrive and participate confidently. Through robust policies, effective communication and a proactive approach to risk management, we aim to promote the safety, wellbeing and equal opportunities of all members of our school community.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body

The governing body has a strategic responsibility to ensure that the school fulfils its legal duties in relation to supporting pupils with medical conditions, including allergies. Governors will ensure that appropriate policies and procedures are in place, are regularly reviewed, and comply with current legislation and statutory guidance. They will monitor the effectiveness of the school's allergy management arrangements, including staff training, risk assessments, emergency response procedures, and the provision of appropriate resources. Governors will also seek assurance that pupils with allergies are able to access education safely and inclusively, that incidents are appropriately recorded and reviewed, and that the school works effectively with parents, carers and healthcare professionals to promote the health, safety and wellbeing of all pupils.

The Head Teacher

The head teacher is responsible for putting the governing body's policy into practice and for developing detailed procedures. The head teacher should also make sure that parents are aware of the school's health and safety policy, including arrangements for managing children with allergies and at risk of anaphylaxis.

Teaching and support staff are responsible for:

Teachers' conditions of employment do not include giving first aid, however trained and qualified members of staff will have responsibility first aid through paediatric first aid (identified by the headteacher) and all staff members will perform annual anaphylaxis training and basic first aid via the National College platform. Teachers and other staff in charge of pupils are expected to always use their best endeavours, particularly in emergencies, to secure the welfare of the pupils at the school. In general, the consequences of taking no action are likely to be more serious than those of trying to assist in an emergency. The headteacher will ensure that there are enough trained staff to meet the statutory requirements and assessed needs, allowing for staff on annual/sick leave or off-site.

Parents/carers

Parents and carers play a vital role in the effective management of their child's allergy and are responsible for informing the school of any diagnosed allergy or relevant medical condition. Parents must provide up-to-date medical information, prescribed medication (including in-date adrenaline auto-injectors where required), and any supporting healthcare documentation requested by the school. They are responsible for ensuring that medication is replaced before its expiry date and for promptly notifying the school of any changes to their child's condition, treatment, or emergency procedures. Parents are also expected to work in partnership with the school by following agreed allergy management procedures documented in the healthcare plan, supporting their child to understand and manage their allergy appropriately, and responding to requests for information, reviews, or meetings relating to their child's health and wellbeing.

Pupils

Pupils are encouraged to have a good awareness of their symptoms and to let an adult know as soon as they suspect they are having an allergic reaction. Pupils who are trained and confident to administer their own AAls will be encouraged to take responsibility for carrying them on their person at all times.

5. Emergency Management of Allergies

All pupils at risk of anaphylaxis, will have a Medical Care Plan that describes exactly what to do and who to contact in the event that they have an allergic reaction. The plan includes First Aid procedures for the administering of adrenaline. Identified activities which the child may be at risk - for example food-based and outdoor activities – will be outlined. Symptoms of anaphylaxis include one or more of the below:

Airway:

- Swollen tongue
- Difficulty swallowing/speaking
- Throat tightness
- Change in voice (hoarse or croaky sounds)

Breathing:

- Difficult or noisy breathing
- Chest tightness
- Persistent cough
- Wheeze (whistling noise due to a narrowed airway)

Circulation:

- Feeling dizzy or faint
- Collapse
- Young children may suddenly become floppy and pale
- Loss of consciousness (unresponsive)

Action to be taken

- Position is important -lie the person flat with legs raised (or sit them up if having breathing problems)
- Give adrenaline – WITHOUT DELAY – if an AAI is available
- Bring the AAI to the person having anaphylaxis, and not the other way round. Avoid standing or moving someone having anaphylaxis
- Call an ambulance (999) and tell the operator it is anaphylaxis
- Stay with the person until medical help arrives
- If symptoms do not improve within five minutes of a first dose of adrenaline, give a second dose using another AAI
- A person who has a serious allergic reaction and/ or is given adrenaline should always be taken to hospital for further observation and treatment
- Sometimes anaphylaxis symptoms can recur after the first episode has been treated. This is called a biphasic reaction.

Anaphylaxis can develop very rapidly, so a treatment is needed that works rapidly. Adrenaline is the mainstay of treatment, and it starts to work within seconds. What does adrenaline do?

- It opens up the airways
- It stops swelling
- It raises the blood pressure

6. Use of Spare Adrenaline Auto-Injectors (AAIs) in School

Aycliffe Drive Primary School recognises the importance of having emergency adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs) available to support pupils who may experience anaphylaxis. In accordance with legislation introduced in October 2017, schools are permitted to purchase spare AAIs directly from a pharmaceutical supplier, such as a local pharmacy, without the need for a prescription. The school will maintain an appropriate stock of spare AAIs for emergency use and ensure they are stored securely whilst remaining readily accessible to trained staff.

Spare AAIs are intended for use in emergency situations where a pupil is believed to be experiencing anaphylaxis and their prescribed AAI is not immediately available, is out of date, has been mislaid, or where a second dose is required. The administration of a spare AAI will normally only occur where parental consent has been provided through the pupil's healthcare plan. However, in exceptional and unforeseen circumstances, a spare AAI may be administered to a pupil experiencing a first episode of

suspected anaphylaxis, even if prior parental consent has not been obtained, where it is necessary to preserve life and prevent serious harm.

The school will follow current Department of Health and Social Care guidance regarding the purchase, storage, maintenance and use of spare AAI's. All spare AAI's will be checked regularly to ensure they remain in date, and records will be maintained of their location, expiry dates and any use. Staff authorised to administer AAI's will receive appropriate training in recognising the signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis and in the safe administration of emergency medication.

When purchasing spare AAI's, the Headteacher will provide a signed written request to the supplier stating the name of the school, the purpose for which the AAI's are required, and the quantity requested. The school acknowledges that pharmacies are not obliged to provide AAI's free of charge and will meet the associated purchase costs as required.

Following the administration of any AAI, emergency services will be contacted immediately, parents/carers will be informed as soon as possible, and the incident will be recorded and reviewed in line with the school's medical needs and safeguarding procedures.

7. Pupil Healthcare Plans

Aycliffe Drive Primary School recognises that Individual Healthcare Plans (IHPs) are an important tool in supporting pupils with allergies and other medical conditions. An Individual Healthcare Plan will be developed for pupils whose allergy requires ongoing management or where there is a risk of an allergic reaction, including anaphylaxis. The purpose of the plan is to ensure that clear arrangements are in place to meet the pupil's medical needs, minimise risks, and enable them to participate fully and safely in all aspects of school life.

Healthcare Plans will be developed in partnership with parents/carers, the pupil where appropriate, and relevant healthcare professionals. The plan will include details of the pupil's allergy, signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction, prescribed medication, emergency procedures, and any measures required (if identified) to reduce exposure to known allergens. Where prescribed, the plan will identify the location of adrenaline auto-injectors (AAI's) and any other emergency medication, together with details of staff who have received appropriate training.

Parents/carers are responsible for providing the school with accurate and up-to-date medical information, relevant medical documentation, and in-date medication. They must notify the school promptly of any changes to their child's condition, treatment, or emergency care requirements.

Healthcare Plans will be reviewed at least annually, or sooner if a pupil's medical needs change. All relevant staff will be informed of and given access to the information necessary to support the pupil safely. The school will ensure that Healthcare Plans remain confidential whilst sharing essential information with staff on a need-to-know basis to safeguard the health, safety, and wellbeing of the pupil.

8. Staff training

Aycliffe Drive Primary School recognises the importance of a coordinated and well-informed approach to allergy management. The school will appoint two designated members of staff to oversee and coordinate the management of allergies across the school. Their responsibilities will include the implementation, monitoring and regular review of the school's Allergy Policy, maintaining accurate

healthcare records, coordinating staff training, and acting as key points of contact for parents, carers and healthcare professionals.

Whilst designated staff will lead on allergy management, all members of staff share a responsibility for safeguarding pupils with allergies. As allergic reactions can occur at any time and in any area of the school, all staff must be aware of the signs and symptoms of allergic reactions and understand the procedures to follow in an emergency. Staff may be required to respond to an allergic reaction whilst a pupil is under their supervision (either directly or indirectly) and should therefore be prepared to act promptly and confidently.

The school will ensure that all permanent, temporary and agency staff receive appropriate allergy awareness training. Training will be provided as part of the induction process for new staff and will be refreshed at least annually for all staff. Additional training will be delivered whenever there are significant changes to procedures, guidance or the medical needs of individual pupils.

Training will include, but not be limited to:

- A basic understanding of allergic disease and its risks which include: knowing the common allergens and triggers of allergy
- Recognition of the signs and symptoms of allergic reactions and anaphylaxis. Early recognition of symptoms is key.
- Procedures for responding to allergic emergencies, including knowing when to call for emergency services.
- The location and accessibility of emergency medication.
- The safe administration of adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs).
- The school's allergy management procedures and reporting requirements, including measures to reduce the risk of a child having an allergic reaction e.g. allergen avoidance
- Knowing who is responsible for what
- Strategies for reducing allergen exposure and supporting pupils with allergies and associated conditions e.g. asthma

9. Storages of AAIs

The school is committed to ensuring that emergency medication is available without delay whenever it is required. Pupils prescribed adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs) will be expected to have their prescribed AAIs available for use at all times in accordance with medical advice and their Pupil Healthcare Plan.

Where pupils are assessed as capable, responsible and appropriately trained, they may carry their own AAIs, medication and inhalers. The school will encourage and support pupils in developing independence in managing their medical needs, taking into account their age, maturity and individual circumstances.

For pupils who are unable to carry their own medication, including most primary-aged children, prescribed medication will be stored in a secure but readily accessible location known to relevant staff. Emergency medication must never be locked away or stored in a manner that could delay access during an emergency. All medication will be clearly labelled with the pupil's name and, where appropriate, accompanied by a photograph and a current Healthcare Plan to enable rapid identification.

The school will ensure that pupils are aware of where their medication is stored and understand how to seek assistance in an emergency. Relevant staff will also be informed of the location of all emergency medication and will be trained in its use.

In the event of a suspected anaphylactic reaction, the pupil's AAI must be brought immediately to the pupil for administration. A pupil experiencing an allergic reaction must not be instructed to travel independently to another location within the school to access their medication. Staff must respond promptly, follow the pupil's Healthcare Plan and emergency procedures, and administer medication without unnecessary delay.

Regular checks will be undertaken to ensure that medication remains in date, correctly labelled and stored in accordance with the school's medical needs procedures.

10. Expiry Dates

It is the parents' responsibility to ensure that the child's AAI is within the expiry date, however the school will also schedule regular checks of medication for good practice. If possible, parents and/or schools will register AAI on the manufacturer's websites to receive text alerts for expiry dates. School will return expired medication to parents for safe disposal. Any sharp items such as AAIs will be disposed of safely using a sharps disposal box. When the school is closed for long periods e.g. school holidays, medication will be sent home following collection from the school office by a parent/carer or named responsible adult. It is important to note that the dose of AAI varies according to the child's weight, so as the child grows, the correct dose required may change and parents need to keep up to date with GPs and communicate any changes with the school.

11. Catering at School

Aycliffe Drive Primary School recognises its duty to support pupils with medical conditions, including food allergies, and is committed to providing a safe and inclusive dining environment. The school will work closely with its catering provider, parents/carers and relevant staff to ensure that the dietary needs of pupils with food allergies are appropriately identified and managed.

The school's catering staff will maintain effective procedures to identify pupils with food allergies and ensure that suitable food options are available to meet their dietary requirements. Information regarding pupils' allergies will be shared with catering staff on a need-to-know basis to safeguard pupils whilst maintaining confidentiality.

In accordance with the Food Information Regulations 2014, allergen information relating to the 14 regulated allergens will be available for all food products provided by the school catering service. This information will enable catering staff, parents/carers and the school to make informed decisions regarding food choices and help reduce the risk of accidental allergen exposure.

School menus will be made available to parents/carers and, wherever possible, will clearly identify ingredients and allergen information. Parents/carers are encouraged to review menus regularly and discuss any concerns regarding food provision with the school. Where necessary, individual arrangements will be agreed to ensure that pupils with allergies can access safe and suitable meals.

The school will promote good food hygiene practices and appropriate allergen control measures within catering and dining areas. Catering staff will receive relevant allergy awareness training to ensure they understand the importance of allergen management, cross-contamination prevention, and the procedures to follow if a pupil experiences an allergic reaction.

All staff involved in food preparation, serving and supervision will work collaboratively to minimise risks and support the health, safety and wellbeing of pupils with food allergies.

The school adheres to the following Department of Health guidance recommendations:

- Bottles, other drinks and lunch boxes provided by parents for pupils with food allergies should be clearly labelled with the name of the child for whom they are intended.
- If food is purchased from the school canteen, parents should check the appropriateness of foods by speaking directly to the school office and catering manager.
- The pupil should be taught to also check with catering staff, before selecting their lunch choice.
- Where food is provided by the school, staff should be 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. Examples include: preparing food for children with food allergies first; careful cleaning (using warm soapy water) of food preparation areas and utensils.
- Food should not be given to primary school age food-allergic children without parental engagement and permission (e.g. birthday parties, food treats).
- Use of food in crafts, cooking classes, science experiments and special events (e.g. fetes, assemblies, cultural events) needs to be considered and may need to be restricted/risk assessed depending on the allergies of particular children and their age.

12. Sports activities

All children with allergies and who have been prescribed AAIs will take their AAIs to the sports ground / hall with them. The teachers leading the sports sessions will be trained on how to manage serious allergy and anaphylaxis, with a paediatric first aid trained member on staff per phase group (on call).

Children with allergies will have every opportunity to take part in out-of-school activities such as sports events hosted by other schools or sport partnership and educational visits. Such activities will be carefully planned and prepared with an individualised risk assessment on request from the Headteacher or member of SLT. A meeting with the child's parents /carers will be necessary to ensure that everyone is happy with the arrangements. If the child is allergic to a food, similar procedures need to be followed to those in operation at school to ensure that the child does not come into contact with the food.

For pupils with prescribed AAIs, the child will be under the supervision of a school staff member. From the child's perspective, it is not advisable for a parent/ carer to accompany them on school trips. This should only happen as a last resort. It is a school's responsibility to have a member of staff present who can support the child.

13. Inclusion

Aycliffe Drive Primary School is committed to ensuring that all children with medical conditions, including allergies, in terms of both physical and mental health, are properly supported in school so that they can play a full and active role in school life, remain healthy and achieve their academic potential.

14. Allergy awareness and nut free school

Aycliffe Drive Primary School supports the approach advocated by Anaphylaxis UK towards nut free schools. They would not necessarily support a blanket ban on any particular allergen in any establishment, including in schools. This is because nuts are only one of many allergens that could

affect pupils, and no school could guarantee a truly allergen free environment for a child living with food allergy. They advocate instead for schools to adopt a culture of allergy awareness and education. A 'whole school awareness of allergies' is a much better approach, as it ensures teachers, pupils and all other staff are aware of what allergies are, the importance of avoiding the 8 pupils' allergens, the signs & symptoms, how to deal with allergic reactions and to ensure policies and procedures are in place to minimise risk.

15. Useful links

1. Useful Links Anaphylaxis UK - <https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/>
2. Safer Schools Programme - <https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/education/safer-schools-programme/>
3. AllergyWise for Schools online training - <https://www.allergywise.org.uk/p/allergywise-for-schools1>
4. Allergy UK - <https://www.allergyuk.org> • Whole school allergy and awareness management - [Allergy UK | National Charity](#)
5. BSACI Allergy Action Plans - <https://www.bsaci.org/professional-resources/resources/paediatric-allergy-action-plans/>
6. Spare Pens in Schools - <http://www.sparepensinschools.uk>
7. Department for Education Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/803956/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions.pdf
8. Department of Health Guidance on the use of adrenaline auto-injectors in schools - [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/645476/Adrenaline auto injectors in schools.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/645476/Adrenaline_auto_injectors_in_schools.pdf)
9. Food allergy quality standards (The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, March 2016) <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs118>
10. Anaphylaxis: assessment and referral after emergency treatment (The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, 2020) <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg134?unlid=22904150420167115834>