Allergy Policy

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Fairfields School

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Allergy Policy

1. Context

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 severe reaction called anaphylaxis. Anaphylaxis is a serious, life-threatening allergic reaction. The whole body is affected often within minutes of exposure to the allergen, but sometimes it can be hours later. Causes can include food, 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 ABD 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.

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

This policy sets out how Fairfields School will support pupils with allergies, to ensure they are safe and are not disadvantaged in any why whilst taking part in school life.

2. Principles

This policy and any ensuing procedures and practices are based on the following principles:

- All children and young people are entitled to a high quality education
- Disruption to the education of children with allergies should be minimised
- The school will consider what reasonable adjustments need to be made to enable these pupils to participate fully and safely in all aspects of school life.
- The school will comply with all relevant environmental legislation, regulations and requirements
- The school will take proactive steps to keep pupils and staff safe
- The school will work with Kingswood Catering to ensure that there is a robust process and documentation for menu planning, food labelling, storing, avoidance of cross-contamination, stock ordering of food/drink used at the school.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Parents/carers and pupils

Parents hold key information and knowledge and have a crucial role to play. On entry to the school, it is the parent's responsibility to inform the school of their child's known allergies. This must include all previous serious allergic reactions, history of anaphylaxis and details of all prescribed medication. Parents must inform school of any changes to their child's allergies as soon as known, along with providing any other written medical documentation, instructions and medications as directed by a health professional.
Parents of pupils with a known history of anaphylaxis must provide the school with appropriate in date medication (two AAIs) of the correct dosage to be stored in school (one to remain with the child at all times and one to be stored in the medical room). Parents must replace medications after use or upon expiry in a timely manner. Appropriate foods to be consumed by the child may also need to be provided.

All staff have a responsibility to ensure that all pupils at this school have equal access to the opportunities that will enable them to flourish and achieve to the best of their ability. In addition, designated staff have additional responsibilities as well as additional support and training needs.

The **Assistant Headteacher** is responsible for ensuring that pupils with health needs have proper access to education. She will be the person with whom parents/carers will discuss particular arrangements to be made in connection with the medical needs of a pupil. It will be her responsibility to pass on information to the relevant members of staff within the school. The Assistant Headteacher will liaise with other agencies and professionals, as well as parents/carers, to ensure good communication and effective sharing of information. This will enhance pupils' inclusion in the life of the school and enable optimum opportunities for educational progress and achievement.

School staff

It is the responsibility of members of school staff to inform the school about their own known allergies, including all previous serious allergic reactions, history of anaphylaxis and details of all prescribed medication. Staff must also inform school of any changes as soon as possible. For new members of staff, this should be discussed during their Occupational Health assessment prior to their start date.
For members of staff with a known allergy, they must inform their line manager and any other relevant members of staff of what their allergy is and where they keep their AAI. A Health Management Plan should also be completed with the Assistant Headteacher and reviewed regularly. These members of staff are expected to manage their allergies themselves and ensure that they carry their AAI when leaving the school site.

All staff must follow all legal requirements and know and understand the whole school procedures pertaining to allergies within the school context. All staff will complete anaphylaxis training. Training is provided for all staff on a yearly basis and on an ad-hoc basis for any new members of staff.
Staff must be aware of pupils in their care and colleagues they directly work with who have known allergies. They should remain vigilant at all times as an allergic reaction can occur at any time, not just mealtimes. Staff should be aware of emergency care plans, which should be kept in an individual green folder in an identified place in the classroom.

Staff leading the class are responsible for ensuring that the child's AAI is kept in a green emergency bag and remains with them at all times, especially when transitioning around the school environment. Staff leading a school trip will ensure that they carry all relevant emergency supplies. Trip leaders will check that all pupils with medical conditions carry their medication (or a named adult does for them).

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that all staff are aware of this policy and understand their role in its implementation. The Headteacher will provide, as far as is practicable, a safe and healthy environment in which people at risk of allergic reaction and anaphylaxis can participate equally in all aspects of school life. The Headteacher will also make sure that parents and staff are aware of the school's health and safety policy, including arrangements for managing children and staff with allergies and at risk of anaphylaxis.

The Governing body

The Governing body will ensure the arrangements as outlines in this policy are appropriate for the school and are in line with the LEA's health and safety policies and procedures. The governing body will ensure that all staff have received suitable training and are competent and confident in managing an allergic reaction and anaphylaxis. The day-to-day responsibility for the effective delivery of this policy are delegated to the Headteacher.

Specific roles in school

Some members of staff will have specific responsibilities in relation to this policy. They are outlined below:

Assistant Headteacher

- Responsible for ensuring that pupils with allergies have proper access to education.
- Liaise with parents/carers of pupils with allergies
- Liaise with the Specialist School Nursing team to ensure care plans are kept up to date
- Liaise with other agencies and professionals
- Ensure good communication and effective sharing of information
- Liaise Kingswood Catering to ensure records are kept up to date
- Write and review staff Health Management Plans

School Business Manager

- Ordering and storage of emergency set of adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs) 2x EpiPen Junior 150mcg, 2x EpiPen 300mcg
- Ensure the AAIs are stored in a central location and all staff are aware of this
- Monitor expiration dates and replace equipment when needed

Site Supervisor

- Oversee the health and safety procedures in the school
- Maintain the school grounds to ensure that potential allergens are disposed of as soon as possible

School health teams (External)

School health teams are responsible for notifying the school when a child has been identified as having an allergy. Wherever possible, they should do this before the child starts at the school. They may support staff on implementing a child's individual healthcare plan and provide advice and liaison.

The Assistant Headteacher will work with the Specialist School Nursing team to provide allergy and anaphylaxis training at the start of each academic year. They will also ensure that the most up-to-date emergency care plan is shared with relevant members of staff, and a copy is kept with the medication.

Other healthcare professionals

GPs and Paediatricians should notify the school nurse when a child has been identified as having an allergy that may cause anaphylaxis. They may provide advice on developing healthcare plans.

4. Staff training and support

In carrying out their role to support pupils with medical conditions, school staff will receive appropriate training and support. All teachers, support staff, lunchtime supervisors and admin staff receive annual awareness training for Epilepsy, Asthma and Anaphylaxis. Training will include a basic understanding of allergic disease and its risks, which include:

- Knowing the common allergens and triggers or allergy
- Spotting the signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction and anaphylaxis. Early recognition of symptoms is key, including knowing when to call for emergency services
- Administering emergency treatment (including AAIs) in the event of anaphylaxis. This includes knowing how and when to administer the medication/device. The school has two trainer AAIs that are available for staff to practice with.
- Measures to reduce the risk of a child having an allergic reaction e.g. allergen avoidance.
- Knowing who is responsible for what
- Associated conditions e.g. asthma
- Managing care plans and ensuring these are up to date.

For children with known allergies that require an AAI, further bespoke training will be given to teams to ensure confidence and competence in administering the medication should the need arise.

Following the training, it is the responsibility of all staff to administer AAI in the event of anaphylaxis, not just designated first aiders or medical professionals.

This policy will be publicised to all staff to raise awareness at a whole school level of the importance of supporting pupils and staff with allergies, and to make all staff aware of their role in implementing this policy. Information on how this school supports children and staff with allergies is included in our induction procedure for all new staff.

5. Procedures

Notification

Pupils

Information about allergies and medical needs is requested on admission to the school for pupils. Parents and carers are asked to keep the school informed of any changes to their child's condition or treatment. Whenever possible, meetings with the parents/carers and other professionals are held before the pupil attends school to ensure a smooth transition into the class. When pupils enter the school, parents/carers are offered the opportunity of attending a personal interview with the school nurse. At this meeting parents can seek advice on the health of their child.

Staff

Information about allergies and medical needs is requested during the onboarding process for staff. Staff are requested to inform the Assistant Headteacher of any changes to their condition or treatment. This information will be used to create an Employee Health Management Plan which is reviewed regularly.

Individual Healthcare Plans

All children that have a known allergy and require an AAI will have an individual healthcare plan. A copy is kept in the class grab file, in an individual folder to be kept with the AAI and is accessible by the Specialist School Nurse. The care plan will be updated as soon as possible following any changes to the child's condition or medication.

The individual healthcare plan sets out clearly the steps to take in an emergency, including when to administer emergency medication.

Supply, storage and Care of Medication

All pupils and members of staff with a known allergy that may cause anaphylaxis should have **two** AAIs in school at all times.

Due to the needs of the pupils at Fairfields, they may be unable to take responsibility of their own AAI. For children that are not ready or unable to take responsibility of their own medication, there should be an anaphylaxis kit which is kept within **5 minutes** of them, not locked away and **accessible to all staff**. These children will have a **green medical bag** that is to travel with them at all times, containing two AAIs and their emergency care plan.

Some pupils will be able to take some level of responsibility for their own AAIs. This will be assessed by class staff on a regular basis.

It is the responsibility of the parents and carers to ensure that the anaphylaxis kit is up-to-date and clearly labelled, however the Healthcare assistants will check the medication kept at school on a termly basis and send a reminder to parents if medication is approaching expiry.

Members of staff with an allergy must make their class team aware of where their AAIs are to be kept. This will also be written on their Individual Health Management Plan, which is shared with key members of staff.

Storage

AAIs should be stored at room temperature, protected from direct sunlight and temperature extremes.

Disposal

AAIs are single use only and must be disposed of as sharps. Used AAIs can be given to ambulance paramedics on arrival or can be disposed of in a pre-ordered sharps bin.

6. 'Spare' adrenaline auto-injectors in school

In February 2026, the Government formally passed Benedict's Law to introduce mandatory, statutory guidance for schools in England through the Department for Education. Fairfields School has purchased spare AAIs for emergency use by children and adults who are at risk of anaphylaxis, but their own devices are not available or not working (e.g. because they are out of date) or are experiencing anaphylaxis for the first time.

These spare AAIs are kept in the following location:-

Front office

7. Staff Training

The named staff members responsible for coordinating staff anaphylaxis training and the upkeep of the school's allergy policy are:-

The Headteacher – Lesley Elder
The Assistant Headteacher – Michaela Russell

All staff will complete Whole School awareness training for Asthma, Epilepsy and Anaphylaxis on an annual basis, delivered by the NHS Northamptonshire Healthcare Specialist School Nursing team. New staff starting part way through the year will complete training on an ad-hoc basis during their induction.

Training includes:

- Knowing the common allergens and triggers of allergy
- Spotting the signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction and anaphylaxis. Early recognition of symptoms is key, including knowing when to call for emergency services
- Administering emergency medication (including AAIs) in the event of anaphylaxis – knowing hoe and when to administer the medication/device
- Measures to reduce the risk of a child having an allergic reaction e.g. allergen avoidance, knowing who is responsible for what
- Managing allergy action plans and ensuring these are up to date

Fairfields School ensures that staff undertake a practical session using trainer devices.

8. Inclusion and Safeguarding

Fairfields School is committed to ensuring that all children and staff 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 potential.

Please see the Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs in School policy for more information.

9. Catering and Food

All food businesses, including school caterers, must follow the Food Information Regulations 2014 which states that allergen information relating to the 'Top 14' allergens must be available for all food products.

The school's menu is available for parents to view via the Kingswood Education Catering website and is updated twice a year. All ingredients are listed including allergens on the website.

The Admin team will inform Kingswood Catering of pupils with food allergies. This information is displayed in the kitchen and in the front office. Staff with food allergies should inform their class team and any other key individuals that can support in their care in the event of an emergency.

Where a child's allergies are more complex, parents will be invited to meet with the Assistant Headteacher and School Nurse to discuss this further.

Fairfields 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 Kingswood Catering, parents should check the appropriateness of foods on the website
- The use of food in crafts, messy play and special events needs to be considered and may need to be risk assessed or restricted depending on the allergies of particular children

10.School trips

Staff leading school trips will ensure that all relevant emergency supplies are carried by a named adult. Trip leaders will check that all pupils with medical conditions have their medication on the trip. Children will be unable to attend an excursion if their medication is not available.

All activities on the school trip will be risk assessed to see if they pose a threat to allergic pupils.

Overnight trips can take place with careful planning. A meeting with parents, the lead member of staff for the trip and the School Nurse should be arranged as part of the planning. Staff at the venue for an overnight trip should be briefed early on that a child with an allergy is part of the group, along with any additional requirements the child may need.

11.Allergy Awareness and Nut Bans

Fairfields School is a **nut free** school. No nuts or nut products are to be consumed on the premises.

Along side this, a whole school awareness of allergies ensures that all staff are aware of what allergies are, the importance of avoiding the person's allergens, the signs and symptoms, how to deal with allergic reactions and to ensure policies and procedures are in place to minimise risk.

12.Allergens in Resources, Materials and the School Environment

Fairfields school recognises that allergens may be present in curriculum resources, sensory materials, personal care products, cleaning products used within school. Before introducing new resources or activities, staff should consider the known allergies of pupils and staff and, where appropriate, check ingredients, packaging and relevant safety information. This is particularly important for sensory and messy play activities involving food products or natural materials.

Where an identified allergen presents a risk to a pupil, the activity or resources should be risk assessed and an appropriate alternative, control measure or reasonable adjustment provided.

Labelling and Storage

All products and resources containing known allergens must be clearly identifiable. Original packaging and ingredient information should be retained wherever practicable. Allergen labelling of resources will be clearly visible to all staff when entering the resources room. Unlabelled substances must not be used where their contents cannot be reliably identified.

Staff must check ingredient labels when using food or other allergen-containing products and must not assume that previously used products remain suitable, as ingredients and formulations may change.

Risk Assessments

Risk assessments must recognise that some pupils may be unable to identify, communicate or independently avoid an allergen and may explore resources orally, touch materials and subsequently place their hands in their mouth, or require physical support from adults. Controls must therefore reflect the pupil's individual presentation, level of understanding and method of communication.

Food Provided by Staff

Staff must not provide, purchase or bring food into school for pupils to consume unless this has been specifically authorised as part of an agreed curriculum activity or school-arranged provision. All food provided to pupils must follow the school's allergy procedures and take account of individual dietary requirements, allergies and healthcare plans.

Food brought into school by staff sharing with colleagues must have clear ingredient information available. Commercially purchased food should be in its original packaging with the manufacturer's ingredients and allergen information clearly visible. Where homemade food is brought in for staff to share, the person providing it must supply a written list of all ingredients used.

Homemade food brought in for staff must not be offered or given to pupils.

Staff should also consider the risk of cross-contact, including food residues on hands, surfaces, utensils and shared equipment, particularly where a pupil or member of staff has a known severe allergy. Food brought in for staff consumption should therefore be stored and consumed in designated staff areas where appropriate.

13.Complaints

If parents or pupils are dissatisfied with the support provided, they should discuss their concerns directly with the school in the first instance. If for whatever reason this does not resolve the issue, they may make a formal complaint via the school's complaints procedure.