ESTUARY ACADEMY NORTH
INSPIRE, ASPIRE, EMPOWER

Allergy Policy

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Contents

1. Aims 2
2. Legislation and guidance 2
3. Definitions 2
4. Roles and responsibilities 3
5. Assessing risk 5
6. Managing risk 5
7. Procedures for handling an allergic reaction 7
8. Adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs) 7
9. Training 8
10. Links to other policies 8

Estuary Academy North is committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment for all students, staff, and visitors, including those with allergies. We recognise that allergies can be life-threatening and require a proactive, whole school approach to prevention, identification, and response. We aim to maintain the school as a nut-aware zone and all parents and carers are made aware of this when their child is admitted to the school. The schools' position is not to guarantee a completely allergen free environment as this would be impossible but rather to minimise the risk of exposure, encourage self-responsibility, and plan for an effective response to possible emergencies.

1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Set out our school's approach to allergy management, including reducing the risk of exposure and the procedures in place in case of an 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 guidance on allergies 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
- Benedicts Law (School Allergy Safety Bill) 2025

3. Definitions

WHAT IS AN ALLERGY?

Allergy occurs when a person reacts to a substance that is usually considered harmless. It is an immune response and instead of ignoring the substance, the body produces histamine which triggers an allergic reaction. Whilst most allergic reactions are mild, causing minor symptoms, some can be very serious and cause anaphylaxis, which is a life-

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

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

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

Most severe allergic reactions to food are caused by just 9 foods. These are **eggs, milk, peanuts, tree nuts (which includes nuts such as hazelnut, cashew nut, pistachio, almond, walnut, pecan, Brazil nut, macadamia etc), sesame, fish, shellfish, soya and wheat.**

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

ADRENALINE AUTO-INJECTOR: Single-use device which carries a pre-measured dose of adrenaline. Adrenaline auto-injectors are used to treat anaphylaxis by injecting adrenaline directly into the upper, outer thigh muscle. Adrenaline auto-injectors are commonly referred to as AAIs, adrenaline pens or by the brand name EpiPen. There are two brands licensed for use in the UK: EpiPen and Jext Pen. For the purposes of this Policy we will refer to them as Adrenaline Pens.

4. Roles and responsibilities

We take a whole-school approach to allergy awareness.

4.1 Allergy lead

The nominated allergy lead is Lucy Mullan.

They are responsible for:

- Promoting and maintaining allergy awareness across our school community.
- Ensuring the safety, inclusion and wellbeing of students and staff with an allergy.
- Taking decisions on allergy management across the school.
- Championing and practising allergy awareness across the school.
- Being the overarching point of contact for staff, students and parents with concerns or questions about allergy management.
- Recording and collating allergy and special dietary information for all relevant students (although the allergy lead has ultimate responsibility, the information collection itself may be delegated to the Programme Coordinator.
- Ensuring allergy information is recorded, up-to-date and communicated to all staff.

Ensuring:

- All allergy information is up to date and readily available to relevant members of staff.
- All pupils with allergies have an allergy action plan completed by a medical professional.
- All staff receive an appropriate level of allergy 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.
- Keeping stock of the school's adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs).
- Regularly reviewing and updating the allergy policy.

4.2 Programme Coordinator

The Programme Coordinator is responsible for:

- Co-ordinating the paperwork and information from families.
- Co-ordinating medication with families.
- Checking spare AAIs are in date.
- Any other appropriate tasks delegated by the allergy lead.
- Working with the First Aiders to ensure all information is collated for school staff.

4.3 Teaching and support staff

All teaching and support staff are responsible for:

- Promoting and maintaining allergy awareness among pupils.
- Maintaining awareness of our allergy policy and procedures.
- Being able to recognise the signs of severe allergic reactions and anaphylaxis.
- Attending appropriate allergy training as required.
- Being aware of specific pupils with allergies in their care.
- Carefully considering the use of food or other potential allergens in lesson and activity planning.
- Ensuring the wellbeing and inclusion of pupils with allergies.

4.4 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are responsible for:

- Being aware of our school's allergy 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.
- Carefully considering the food they provide to their child as packed lunches and snacks, and trying to limit the number of allergens included.
- Following the school's guidance on food brought in to be shared.
- Updating the school on any changes to their child's condition.

4.5 Students with allergies

These pupils are responsible for:

- Being aware of their allergens and the risks they pose.
- Understanding how and when to use their adrenaline auto-injector.

- If age-appropriate, carrying their adrenaline auto-injector on their person and only using it for its intended purpose.

4.6 Students without allergies

These student are responsible for:

- Being aware of allergens and the risk they pose to their peers.

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 or has access to now or in the future a therapy dog.

6. Managing risk

6.1 Hygiene procedures

- Students are reminded to wash their hands before and after eating.
- Sharing of food is not allowed.

6.2 Catering

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

- Catering staff receive appropriate training and are able to identify pupils with allergies having been informed of any dietary need following admission.
- School menus are available for parents/carers to view with ingredients clearly labelled.
- Where changes are made to school menus, we will make sure these 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).
- Catering staff follow hygiene and allergy procedures when preparing food to avoid cross-contamination.

6.3 Food restrictions

We acknowledge that it is impractical to enforce an allergen-free school. However, we would like to encourage students and staff to avoid certain high-risk foods to reduce the chances of someone experiencing a reaction. These foods include:

- Packaged nuts.
- Cereal, granola or chocolate bars containing nuts.
- Peanut butter or chocolate spreads containing nuts.

- Peanut-based sauces, such as satay.
- Sesame seeds and foods containing sesame seeds.

If a student brings these foods into school, they may be asked to eat them away from others to minimise the risk, or the food may be confiscated.

6.4 Insect bites/stings

When outdoors:

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

The site management team / SLT will monitor the school grounds for wasp and bee nests.

6.5 Animals

- Students with a known animal allergy should avoid the animal to which they are allergic to.
- If an animal comes onto the school site as part of an educational activity a risk assessment must be completed prior to the visit. After a visit the areas visited must be cleaned thoroughly.
- Anyone in contact with an animal must wash their hands.
- All pupils will always wash hands after interacting with animals to avoid putting pupils with allergies at risk through later contact.
- School trips that include visits to animals must be carefully risk assessed.

6.6 Hay Fever (allergic rhinitis)

The school recognises that conditions such as hay fever (allergic rhinitis) can affect student's wellbeing, attendance, and ability to learn. In line with current health and safety and supporting students with medical conditions guidance, the school will take reasonable steps to minimise exposure to known allergens (e.g. pollen) where practicable.

Students diagnosed with hay fever may be supported with appropriate medication; antihistamines can be administered by school staff where written parental consent has been provided and in accordance with the school's medicines policy. All medication must be clearly labelled, provided by the parent/carer, and recorded when administered. Staff will remain vigilant to symptoms and ensure students are supported appropriately throughout the school day

6.7 Support for mental health

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

- No child with allergies should be excluded from taking part in a school activity whether on the school premises or a school trip.
- Students with allergies may require additional pastoral support including regular check-ins from a trusted adult.
- Affected students will be given consideration in advance of wider school discussions about allergy and school Allergy Awareness initiatives.
- Bullying related to an allergy will be treated in line with the school's anti-bullying policy.

6.8 Events and school trips

For events, including ones that take place outside of the school, and school trips, students with allergies will not be excluded from taking part.

The school will plan accordingly for all events and school trips and arrange for the staff members involved to be aware of students' allergies and to have received adequate training.

Appropriate measures will be taken in line with the schools AAI protocols for off-site events and school trips (see section 7.5).

7. Procedures for handling an allergic reaction

7.1 Register of pupils with Adrenaline Auto-Injector (AAIs)

The school maintains a register of pupils who have been prescribed AAIs or where a doctor has provided a written plan recommending AAIs to be used in the event of anaphylaxis. The register includes:

- Known allergens and risk factors for anaphylaxis.
- Whether a student has been prescribed AAI(s) (and if so, what type and dose).
- Where a pupil has been prescribed an AAI, whether parental consent has been given for use of the spare AAI, which may be different to the personal AAI prescribed for the student.
- A photograph of each pupil to allow a visual check to be made.

The register is kept in the Business Office and there is a quick note on each student's Arbor record and can be checked quickly by any member of staff as part of initiating an emergency response.

7.2 Allergic reaction procedures

As part of the whole-school awareness approach to allergies, all staff are trained in the school's allergic reaction procedure, and to recognise the signs of anaphylaxis and respond appropriately.

Staff are trained in the administration of AAIs to minimise delays in students receiving adrenaline in an emergency.

If a student has an allergic reaction, the staff member will initiate the school's emergency response plan, following the student's allergy action plan.

- If an AAI needs to be administered, a member of staff will use the student's own AAI, or if it is not available, a school one.

If the student has no allergy action plan, staff will follow the school's procedures on responding to an allergy and, if needed, the school's normal emergency procedures.

A school AAI device will be used instead of the pupil's own AAI device if:

- Medical authorisation and written parental consent have been provided, or
- The student's own prescribed AAI(s) are not immediately available (for example, because they are broken, out-of-date, have misfired or been wrongly administered)

If a student needs to be taken to hospital, staff will stay with the student until the parent/carer arrives, or accompany the student to hospital by ambulance.

If the allergic reaction is mild (e.g. skin rash, itching or sneezing), the student will be monitored and the parents/carers informed.

8. Adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs)

8.1 Purchasing of spare AAIs

The allergy lead is responsible for coordinating with the Business Manager for buying AAIs and ensuring they are stored according to the guidance.

8.2 Storage (of both spare and prescribed AAIs)

The allergy lead / Business Manager will make sure all AAIs are:

Stored at room temperature (in line with manufacturer's guidelines), protected from direct sunlight and extremes of temperature.

Kept in a safe and suitably central location to which all staff have access at all times, but is out of the reach and sight of children.

Not locked away, but accessible and available for use at all times.

Not located more than 5 minutes away from where they may be needed (separate buildings and provisions will need their own supply of AAIs).

Spare AAIs will be kept separate from any Student's own prescribed AAI, and clearly labelled to avoid confusion.

Spare AAIs are located in the following locations:

Main site reception

8.3 Maintenance (of spare AAIs)

Allergy Lead and Business Manager are responsible for checking monthly that:

- The AAIs are present and in date.
- Replacement AAIs are obtained when the expiry date is near.

8.4 Disposal

AAIs can only be used once. Once an AAI has been used, it will be disposed of in line with the manufacturer's instructions.

8.5 Use of AAIs off school premises

Students at risk of anaphylaxis who are able to administer their own AAIs should carry their own AAI with them on school trips and off-site events

All school staff leading Outdoor Education and trips need to ensure they have 2 spare AAIs with them as part of their first aid kit.

9. Training

The school is committed to training all staff in allergy response. This includes:

- How to reduce and prevent the risk of allergic reactions.
- How to spot the signs of allergic reactions (including anaphylaxis).
- The importance of acting quickly in the case of anaphylaxis.
- Where AAIs are kept on the school site, and how to access them.
- How to administer AAIs.
- The wellbeing and inclusion implications of allergies.

10. Links to other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Health and safety policy Health and Safety Policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy Supporting Pupils in School with Medical Conditions Policy