



Blue Coat Church of England Academy

Allergy and Anaphylaxis Policy

Date:		September 2026
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Ratified by the Governing Body on:		1 st October 2026
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Review date:		September 2027

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"Be kind and compassionate to one another." Ephesians 4:32

Introduction

Allergies are an overreaction of the body's immune system to substances that are usually harmless. The reactions can cause minor symptoms such as itching, sneezing or rashes but occasionally these reactions provoke a much more serious reaction called anaphylaxis when the immune system releases an abundance of chemicals such as histamines.

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 on occasion it can be hours later. Triggers can include foods, insect stings, vigorous exercise, latex contact, unknown idiopathic causes and pharmaceutical products.

Most healthcare professionals consider an allergic reaction to be anaphylaxis when it involves breathing difficulties or affects the heart rhythm and 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 Blue Coat Church of England Academy School will support students with allergies, to ensure they are kept safe within the school environment, and are not disadvantaged in any way whilst actively, and wholly taking part in school life.

Roles and responsibilities

The Designated Allergy Lead with strategic oversight of allergy management is Katie Pritchard (SENCO)

The Designated Allergy Lead is responsible for overseeing allergy management across the academy, acting as the main point of contact for students, parents and staff, ensuring records remain up to date, monitoring training compliance, reviewing incidents and leading annual policy review and allergy awareness initiatives.

Parent/Carer Responsibilities

On entry to the school, it is the parent/carers responsibility to inform the SENCO of any student allergies or potential allergies under investigation. This information should include all previous serious allergic reactions, history of anaphylaxis and details of all prescribed medication.

Parents are to supply a copy of their child's Allergy Action Plan to the school. If they do not currently have an Allergy Action Plan this should be developed as soon as possible in collaboration with a healthcare professional such as a GP/School Nurse/Allergy or Immunology Practitioner.

Parents are responsible for ensuring any required medication is supplied, in date and replaced as necessary.

Parents are requested to keep the school up to date with any changes in allergy management. The held Allergy Action Plan will be updated accordingly.

Staff Responsibilities

All staff will complete mandatory anaphylaxis training in line with Benedict's Law (School allergy safety bill). Mandatory training is provided for all staff on a yearly basis during the commencement of the new academic year (September return to school training day) and on an ad-hoc basis for any new members of staff to the school community.

Any member of staff receiving information relating to a student's allergy must ensure it is passed immediately to the designated lead and recorded appropriately.

Staff must be aware of the students in their care (regular or cover classes) who have known allergies as an allergic reaction could arise at any time - not just during mealtimes. Any food-related activities must be supervised with due caution.

Staff leading school trips will ensure they carry all relevant emergency supplies. Trip leaders will check that all students with medical conditions, including allergies, carry their medication. Students unable to produce their required medication will not be able to attend the excursion. Risk assessments will be conducted for students with allergies and these, along with Students Medical conditions and required medication will be stored electronically on the School's trip system (EVOLVE).

SENCO/SEN team will ensure that the up-to-date Allergy Action Plan is kept with the student's medication.

It is the parent/carer's responsibility to ensure all medication is within date, however the SENCO/SEN team will check medication kept at school on a termly basis and send a reminder to parents if medication is approaching expiry.

SENCO/SEN team will keep a register of students who have been prescribed an adrenaline auto-injector (AAI) and a record of use of any AAI(s) and emergency treatment given with be recorded electronically within the individual Students file on the Arbor system.

Student Responsibilities

Students are encouraged to have a good awareness of their symptoms and to alert a staff member as soon as they suspect they are beginning to have an allergic reaction.

Students who are trained and confident to administer their own AAIs will be encouraged to take responsibility for carrying them on their person at all times.

Individual Healthcare Plan and Allergy Action Plans

All students with a diagnosed allergy will have an Individual Healthcare Plan and Allergy Action Plan developed in partnership with parents and, where appropriate, healthcare professionals. This will be reviewed annually or sooner if medical needs change.

Allergy action plans are designed to function as individual healthcare plans for children with food allergies, providing medical and parental consent for schools to administer medicines in the event of an allergic reaction, including consent to administer a spare adrenaline auto-injector.

Blue Coat Church of England Academy School recommends using the British Society of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (BSACI) Allergy Action Plans to ensure continuity. This is a national plan that has been agreed by the BSACI, Anaphylaxis UK and Allergy UK.

It is the parent/carer's responsibility to complete the allergy action plan with help from a healthcare professional (e.g. GP/School Nurse/Allergy Specialist) and provide this to the school.

The Academy will maintain an Allergy Register containing information relating to all students

with diagnosed allergies and associated medical needs.

Emergency Treatment and Management of Anaphylaxis

Identifiable Symptoms:

- Symptoms present with rapid onset; often within minutes of exposure to an allergen.
- Mild to moderate allergic reaction symptoms may include:
- A red raised rash (known as hives/urticaria) anywhere on the body.
- A tingling or itchy feeling in the mouth.
- Swelling of lips, face or eyes.
- Stomach pain or vomiting.

The Academy recognises the increased risk presented by poorly controlled asthma in students with allergies. The Allergy Policy should therefore be read alongside the Asthma Policy and Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy.

Serious symptoms are often categorised as ABC symptoms and can include:

- **AIRWAY** - swelling in the throat, tongue or upper airways (tightening of the throat, hoarse voice, difficulty swallowing).
- **BREATHING** - sudden onset wheezing, breathing difficulty, noisy breathing.
- **CIRCULATION** - dizziness, feeling faint, sudden drowsiness, tiredness, confusion, pale clammy skin, loss of consciousness.

The term for this more serious reaction is anaphylaxis. In extreme cases the reaction could present with a dramatic fall in blood pressure. The person may become weak/floppy and may have a sense of something terrible happening (sense of impending doom). This may lead to collapse and unconsciousness and, on rare occasions, fatality.

If the student has been exposed to something they are known to be allergic to, then it is more likely to be an anaphylactic reaction.

Anaphylaxis can develop very rapidly, so treatment is required that works rapidly. **Adrenaline** is the fundamental mainstay of treatment; its therapeutic benefits begin to action within seconds. Adrenaline works by three main methods of action:

- Opening up the airways.
- Ceases swelling.
- Raises blood pressure.

As soon as anaphylaxis is suspected, adrenaline must be administered without delay.

Action:

- Keep the student where they are, call for help and do not leave them unattended.
- **LIE Student FLAT WITH LEGS RAISED** – they can be propped up if struggling to breathe but this should be for as short a time as possible.
- **USE ADRENALINE AUTO-INJECTOR WITHOUT DELAY** and note the time given. AAls should be given into the muscle in the outer thigh. Specific instructions vary by brand – always follow the instructions on the device.
- **CALL 999** and state **ANAPHYLAXIS (ana-fil-axis)**.
- If no improvement after 5 minutes, administer second AAI.
- If no signs of life commence CPR protocol.

- Call parent/carer as soon as possible.

Whilst awaiting an ambulance, keep the student where they are. Do not stand them up, or sit them in a chair, even if they are feeling better. This could lower their blood pressure drastically, causing their heart to stop.

All students must go to hospital for observation after an anaphylaxis event even if they appear to have recovered as a reaction can recur after treatment.

Insect Sting, Animal and Hay Fever

Insect Stings

Grounds monitored for nests.

Students educated on avoiding wasps and bees.

Animals

Risk assessments before animals enter school.

Enhanced cleaning and handwashing procedures in place.

Seasonal Allergies

Support arrangements for students affected by hay fever or pollen allergies.

Incident and Near Miss Reporting

All allergic reactions, anaphylaxis incidents and allergy-related near misses will be recorded and reviewed by the SENCO. Lessons learned will be communicated to appropriate staff and procedures amended where required.

Supply, storage and care of medication

Depending on their level of understanding and competence, students will be encouraged to take responsibility for and to carry their own **two** AAls on them at all times (in a suitably labelled bag/container).

For younger students or those not ready to take responsibility for their own medication, there should be an anaphylaxis kit which is kept safely, not locked away and **accessible to all staff**.

Medication should be stored in a suitable container and clearly labelled with the student's name. The student's medication storage container should contain:

- Two AAls i.e. EpiPen® or Jext® or Emerade®
- An up-to-date allergy action plan
- Antihistamine as tablets or syrup (if included on allergy action plan)
- Spoon if required
- Asthma inhaler (if included on allergy action plan).

It is the responsibility of the child's parents/carers to ensure that the anaphylaxis kit is up-to-date and clearly labelled, however the **SENCO/SEN team** will check medication kept at school on a termly basis and send a reminder to parents/carers if medication is approaching

expiry.

It is possible for parents/carers to subscribe to expiry alerts for the relevant AAI's their child is prescribed, to make sure they can get replacement devices in good time.

Older children and medication

Older children and teenagers should, whenever possible, assume responsibility for their emergency kit under the guidance of their parents/carers. However, symptoms of anaphylaxis can present with rapid onset, so school staff need to be prepared to administer medication if the student is incapacitated.

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 AAI's can be given to ambulance paramedics on arrival or can be disposed of in sharps bin. Sharps bins to be obtained from and disposed of by a clinical waste contractor. The sharps bin is kept in the school Medical room.

'Spare' adrenaline auto-injectors in school

Blue Coat Church of England Academy School has purchased spare **AAIs for emergency use in children who are at risk of anaphylaxis**, but their own devices are not available or not working (for example expiry date passed/closest location to AAI's).

The AAI's are stored in a colour pack/container, clearly labelled 'Emergency Anaphylaxis Adrenaline Pen', kept safely, not locked away and **accessible and known to all staff**.

Blue Coat Church of England Academy School holds spare pens which are kept in the following locations: -

- **Reception**
- **Site office Grove (along with Defib)**
- **In first aid kit that gets taken to field for P.E. lessons which needs to be transported to/from field in first aid kit for each session of PE at the field.**
- **School canteen**

The **Health & Safety Coordinator** is responsible for checking spare medication is in date on a monthly basis and to replace as needed.

Written parental permission for use of the spare AAI's is included in the student's allergy action plan.

If anaphylaxis is suspected **in an undiagnosed individual** call the emergency services and state you suspect anaphylaxis. Follow advice from them as to whether administration of the spare AAI is appropriate.

Staff Training

All staff will complete online National College allergy and anaphylaxis training at the start of every new academic year. Training is also available on an ad-hoc basis for any new members of staff.

Training includes:

- Knowing the common allergens and triggers of allergy.
- Identifying 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 AAls) in the event of anaphylaxis – knowing how 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 and risk prevention.
- Managing allergy action plans and ensuring these are up to date.

The Academy will conduct an annual anaphylaxis response drill to test procedures, staff awareness and emergency response arrangements.

Inclusion and safeguarding

The Academy is committed to ensuring students with allergies can participate fully in all aspects of school life. Reasonable adjustments will be made where required to support inclusion while maintaining safety. No student will be excluded from activities solely due to an allergy. The Academy will comply with its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

The Academy recognises that managing allergies can impact student's emotional wellbeing. Any form of teasing, intimidation or bullying relating to a medical condition or allergy will be treated seriously and dealt with under the Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies.

Catering

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 menu is available for parents to view in **a three weekly cycle with all ingredients listed and allergens highlighted on the school website** at <https://www.bluecoatacademy.org/school-catering/>

The **SENCO/SEN Team** will inform the Catering Manager of students with known food allergies.

Parents/carers are encouraged to meet with the Catering Manager to discuss their child's needs.

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

- Bottles, other drinks and lunch boxes provided by parents for students 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 Catering manager.
- The student should be taught to also check with catering staff, before purchasing food or 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. For further information, parents/carers are encouraged to liaise with the Catering Manager.
- 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.

School trips

Staff leading school trips will ensure they carry all relevant emergency supplies. Trip leaders will check that all students with medical conditions, including allergies, carry their medication. Students unable to produce their required medication will not be able to attend the excursion.

All the activities on the school trip will be risk assessed to establish if they pose a threat to allergic students and alternative activities planned to ensure inclusion.

Overnight school trips should be possible with careful planning and a meeting for parents with the lead member of staff planning the trip should be arranged. Staff at the venue for an overnight school trip should be briefed early on that an allergic child is attending and will need appropriate food (if provided by the venue).

Risk Assessments, required medication, pre visit checks and communications surrounding allergies shall be recorded within the EVOLVE system.

Sporting Excursions

Allergic children should have every opportunity to attend sports trips to other schools/venues. The school will ensure that the P.E. teacher/s are fully aware of the situation. The school being visited will be notified that a member of the team has an allergy when arranging the fixture. A member of staff trained in administering adrenaline will accompany the team.

Most parents are keen that their children should be included in the full life of the school community where possible, and the school will need their co-operation with any special arrangements required.

Allergy awareness and nut bans

Blue Coat Church of England Academy School supports the advocacy for schools to adopt a culture of allergy awareness and education. A 'whole school approach towards awareness of allergies' is a much better approach to an all-out ban on allergies, as it ensures teachers, students and all other staff are aware of what allergies are, the importance of avoiding students' allergens, the signs & symptoms, how to deal with allergic reactions and to ensure policies and procedures are in place to minimise risk.

Risk Assessment

Blue Coat Church of England Academy will conduct a detailed individual risk assessment for all new joining students with allergies and any newly diagnosed current students, to help identify any gaps within our systems and processes for keeping allergic children safe.

Allergens can crop up in unexpected places. Staff (including visiting staff) will consider allergies in all activity planning and include it in risk assessments. Some examples include:

- Classroom activities, for example craft using food packaging, science experiments where allergens are present, food lessons or cooking;
- Bringing animals into the school, for example a dog or hatching chick eggs can pose a risk;
- Running activities or clubs where they might hand out snacks or food "treats". Ensure safe food is provided or consider an alternative non-food treat for all students; and
- Planning special events, such as cultural days and celebrations.

Inclusion of students with allergies must be considered alongside safety and they should not be excluded. If necessary, adapt the activity. The School will ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010.

Useful Links

Anaphylaxis UK - <https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/>

- Safer Schools Programme - <https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/education/safer-schools-programme/>
- AllergyWise for Schools online training - <https://www.allergywise.org.uk/p/allergywise-for-schools1>

Allergy UK - <https://www.allergyuk.org>

- Resources for managing allergies at school - <https://www.allergyuk.org/living-with-an-allergy/at-school/>

BSACI Allergy Action Plans - <https://www.bsaci.org/professional-resources/resources/paediatric-allergy-action-plans/>

Spare Pens in Schools - <http://www.sparepensinschools.uk>

Department for Education Supporting students at school with medical conditions - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/803956/supporting-students-at-school-with-medical-conditions.pdf

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)

Food allergy quality standards (The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, March 2016) <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs118>

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>

Links to Other policies

1. Health and Safety Policy
2. First Aid Policy
3. Supporting Students at school with medical conditions policy.
4. Asthma Policy