

Bishop Challoner Catholic College



Next review

May 2026

Review period

Every 2 years

Principal reviewed

May 2024

Current Status

Approved

Staff Owner

K. Peckover

Government/DfE Requirement

Good practice

Bishop Challoner Catholic College Allergy Management Policy

Allergy Management Policy

About this policy.

This policy is intended as guidance for all staff, including support staff and governors.

An allergy is the response of the body's immune system to normally harmless substances, such as foods, insect stings, latex, medicines and pollens. Whilst in most people these substances (allergens) pose no problem, in allergic individuals their immune system identifies them as a 'threat' and produces an inappropriate response. This can be a minor response such as localised itching or a severe response known as anaphylaxis or anaphylactic shock.

Anaphylaxis is potentially life threatening, often explosive in onset with symptoms ranging from mild flushing to upper respiratory obstruction and collapse. It occurs when the allergen enters the bloodstream, causing the release of chemicals throughout the body to protect it from the foreign substance. Anaphylaxis causes approximately 20 deaths per year in the UK.

Bishop Challoner Catholic College is an allergy aware school and takes a serious approach to the risk of anaphylaxis; this policy outlines the responsibilities expected of those within Bishop Challoner Catholic College community.

Bishop Challoner Catholic College has clear guidance on providing care and support and administering medication at school. This policy although specific to Allergies should be read in conjunction with Bishop Challoner Catholic College's "Supporting pupils with medical conditions – including First Aid" policy.

Bishop Challoner Catholic College recognises the importance of minimising the risk of an allergic reaction. Raised awareness, knowledge and information of allergies and anaphylaxis helps normalise and make safe, as far as possible everyone in school; as well as keeping individuals with allergies as safe as possible.

Bishop Challoner is committed to creating a culture whereby those pupils with allergies can participate in school life and not feel excluded or discriminated against.

Whole school awareness

To minimise the risk of allergies and anaphylaxis, Bishop Challoner Catholic College will engender whole school awareness through:

- Raising pupil's awareness of allergies signs and symptoms, prevention and what to do in an emergency through; the curriculum, extra-curricular activities, assemblies and form resources.
- PHSE lessons look at 'risk' in all aspects of life and this includes risks found within the kitchen. Pupils discuss the nature of allergies; how to spot them and how to respond in an emergency. Food handling and cross contamination is explored.
- Food technology use the school medical register to identify pupils with allergies; their names are highlighted on the class seating plan. Pupils are asked about any known allergies for themselves that school may not be aware of. Technician and teachers check food labels and highlight any allergens. Pupils with severe/multiple allergies, for example inhaling an ingredient could cause a reaction, would not be allowed to take part in food lessons. Food handling and sharing; cross contamination, is also explored.
- Wider communication through the school website, induction evenings .
- Whole school policies and procedures through medical/first aid practice and policies, medical questionnaires.
- Catering systems and promotions.
- Professional guidance from school nurse team and medical professionals and Allergy UK.
- Direct communication with parents & pupils.

Staff training

1. Auto-injector location posters are displayed prominently around the school.
2. Training in Allergy Awareness and the administration of an Auto-injector is provided annually for all staff.
3. Staff must be aware of all known allergies of the pupils in their care at all times. This includes during trips, extra-curricular activities and cover lessons. Staff must supervise any food-related activities with due caution.
4. All leaders of school trips must ensure they are competent to act in case of anaphylaxis prior to the trip departure and ensure they carry all relevant emergency supplies. This includes educational visits and 'away' sport fixtures.
5. Bishop Challoner Catholic College has a list of all triggers for pupils with medical conditions. The school has a trigger reduction schedule and is actively working towards reducing/eliminating these triggers.
6. The IHCP details an individual pupil's triggers and details how to make sure the pupil remains safe throughout the whole school day and on out-of-school activities. Risk assessments are carried out on all out-of-school activities, taking into account the needs of pupils with medical needs.
7. Julie Jones, Lead First Aid will provide further training for staff who have any concerns or questions about the procedures outlined in this policy.
8. The school has appropriate level of insurance and liability cover in place. This is reviewed by the Full Governing Body.
9. Bishop Challoner Catholic College will ensure that there is more than one member of staff trained to administer the medication and meet the care needs of an individual child.
10. Bishop Challoner Catholic College will ensure that there are sufficient numbers of staff trained to cover any absences, staff turnover and other contingencies.
11. Bishop Challoner Catholic College reviews all medical emergencies and incidents to see how they could have been avoided, and changes school policy according to these reviews.

Individual Health Care Plans

1. On entry to Bishop Challoner Catholic College, parent/carers will be asked to complete a medical questionnaire, indicating any known allergies and highlighting any previous severe allergic reactions, and any history of anaphylaxis.
2. This information will be made known to the First Aid Team. Julie Jones, the Lead First Aider will update Medical Tracker: the on-line health management system used by school.
3. The Medical Conditions Register will be updated and shared with staff.
4. The allergy will be highlighted on ClassCharts.
5. The Catering Manager will be made aware if the allergy is food related.
6. Bishop Challoner Catholic College will refer to the School Nurse Team and ensure that parent/carers and pupils complete an allergy care plan/Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP). A child's IHCP explains the response and care that would be required for that individual in an emergency. Parent/carers will be asked to sign to confirm that they understand the information in the IHCP and that they are satisfied with the care stipulated.
7. Parental permission will be required to enable the sharing of the IHCP within relevant emergency care settings.
8. IHCPs are added to Medical Tracker.

Storage of medication and equipment at school

1. All emergency medication/equipment is readily available wherever the child is in the school and on off-site activities, and is not locked away.
2. Bishop Challoner Catholic College will store medication that is in date and labelled in its original container where possible, in accordance with its instructions.
3. Pupils may carry their own medication/equipment.
4. Pupils can carry controlled drugs if they are competent, otherwise Bishop Challoner Catholic College will keep controlled drugs stored securely, but accessible, with only named staff having access.

5. If pupils do not keep their medication/equipment with them, they should be aware of where they can go to access it.
6. Parents are asked to collect all medications/equipment at the end of the school term, and to provide new and in-date medication at the start of each term.
7. Bishop Challoner Catholic College disposes of needles and other sharps in line with local policies. Sharps boxes are kept securely at school and will accompany a child on off-site visits. They are collected and disposed of in line with local authority procedures.
8. Spare Auto-injectors should be kept at an appointed place clearly marked with each pupil's name and also any other medication that might be used such as a spare inhaler and antihistamine. A copy of their care plan will also be available at this location.
9. From 1 October 2017 the Human Medicines (amendment) Regulations 2017 allow schools to buy adrenaline auto-injector (AAI) devices without a prescription:
 - a. These should be considered a spare/back-up device and should only be used on pupils known to be at risk of anaphylaxis, for whom medical authorisation and parental consent for use of the spare AAI has been provided.
 - b. The school's spare AAI can be administered to a pupil whose own prescribed AAI cannot be administered correctly immediately.

Administration of medication and equipment at school

1. Bishop Challoner Catholic College will not give medication (prescription or non-prescription) to a child under 16 without a parent's written consent except in exceptional circumstances where every effort will be made to encourage the pupil to involve their parent, while respecting their confidentiality.
2. Staff at Bishop Challoner Catholic College can administer a controlled drug to a pupil, once they have had specialist training.

Parent/Carer responsibilities

1. On entry to Bishop Challoner Catholic College, parent/carers are responsible for completing the medical questionnaire, indicating any known allergies and highlighting any previous severe allergic reactions, and any history of anaphylaxis.
2. Parents are responsible for ensuring that sufficient emergency supplies are kept on site (Auto-injectors, inhalers and antihistamine), are in date and replaced as necessary.
3. Parents are asked to collect all medications/equipment at the end of the school term, and to provide new and in-date medication at the start of each term.
4. It is the responsibility of the parent to keep the school up to date with current contact telephone numbers and details.
5. Parents are required to work with school staff in the best interest of the child.
6. If an episode of anaphylaxis occurs outside school, Bishop Challoner Catholic College must be informed. Parents are requested to keep Bishop Challoner Catholic College up to date with any changes in allergy management with regards to clinic summaries or re-testing and new food challenges.
7. It is the parent/carers responsibility to ensure home to school transport issues are managed.

Pupil responsibilities

Bishop Challoner Catholic College is aware that school is a common location for anaphylaxis to happen. Therefore;

1. Pupils must be familiar with what their allergies are and the symptoms that would indicate a reaction is happening.
2. Pupils are trained to administer their own auto-injector and must carry it on their person.
3. All pupils will be assessed for their competence of managing their allergies and emergency medication.
4. Pupils are encouraged to self-manage their condition while still in a semi-protected environment.

Allergen management

1. Bishop Challoner Catholic College is **not** a nut-free environment as we believe this can lead to a false sense of security. Staff and Governors are not in a position to guarantee an allergen free environment, rather to minimise the risk of exposure and encourage self-responsibility and vigilance.
2. Staff and pupils are asked not to bring nuts or foods containing nuts into school or on trips and visits.
3. The catering department is aware by use of the school's internal system of all individual pupil food allergies and specific dietary requirements.
4. The catering department provides clear orange labelling, to all food containing one of the 14 allergens (listed below), served in the dining hall at all times.

The 14 most common food allergens;

- Cereals containing gluten
 - Crustaceans, for example prawns, crabs, lobster and crayfish
 - Eggs
 - Fish
 - Peanuts
 - Soybeans/Soya
 - Milk
 - Nuts such as almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, cashews, pecan nuts, Brazil nuts, pistachio nuts, macadamia (Queensland) nuts
 - Celery (and celeriac)
 - Mustard
 - Sesame seeds
 - Sulphur dioxide and sulphites
 - Lupin
 - Molluscs for example clams, mussels, whelks, oysters, snails, and squid
5. The Catering Manager will make themselves available to meet with any parent who wishes to discuss the individual dietary requirements of their child.
 6. All catering staff are trained in Food Safety and Hygiene; food preparation and handling techniques, to reduce the risk of a food allergic reaction due to the possibility of cross-contamination.
 7. A spreadsheet with every item of food used in the kitchen is kept in the main dining area and is uploaded on to the school web site; this allows parent/carers to be aware of foods/allergens within school.
 8. The catering team works with LACA Allergen Management Guidance for Catering in Education, who support schools, caterers and pupils in understanding the best practice for caterers in education with regard to managing allergens safely: understanding legal requirements, roles and responsibilities and Allergen Management i.e. risk assessment tools.
 9. The catering team adhere to and uphold Natasha's Law: This legislation came into effect 1 October 2021. Under this law, all food outlets must provide full ingredients lists with clear allergen labelling on all food that is pre-packed for direct sale. This change in the law will give people with food allergies confidence when they are buying pre-packaged food for direct sale such as sandwiches and salads.

Emergency response

1. Bishop Challoner Catholic College staff are trained to understand what constitutes an emergency for an individual child.
2. If someone appears to be having a severe allergic reaction, 999 MUST be dialled immediately, even if an AAI device has been used.
3. In the event of a possible severe allergic reaction in a pupil who does not meet these criteria, emergency services (999) should be contacted and advice sought from them as to whether administration of the spare emergency AAI is appropriate.
4. When dialing 999, give clear and precise information.
5. If a pupil's condition deteriorates and a second dose adrenaline is administered after making the initial 999 call, make a second call to the emergency services to confirm that an ambulance has been dispatched and update the operator.
6. If a pupil needs to attend hospital, a member of staff (preferably known to the pupil) will stay with them until a parent arrives or accompanies a child taken to hospital by ambulance.
7. The used Auto-injector and the IHCP go with the pupil to Hospital.

Symptoms usually develop quite quickly after exposure, although occasionally they develop gradually over a few hours. One or more symptoms can occur:

- Rash developing to hives across the body
- Abdominal cramps
- Localised inflammation and/or localised tingling sensation
- Swelling of the tongue, throat and mouth
- Asthma symptoms; noisy breathing, wheezing
- Difficulty in swallowing or speaking
- Sudden feeling of weakness, faintness due to a fall in blood pressure
- Collapse/Unconsciousness
- Anaphylaxis

Actions following a mild allergic reaction

- Call for the First Aider
- Keep the pupil calm and still
- Remain with the pupil until the First Aider arrives
- The First Aider will follow the pupil IHCP and give antihistamine
- Locate adrenaline auto injector
- Contact parent/carers
- The First Aider will record all relevant detail on Medical Tracker
- The First Aider will make follow up calls and contact should the pupil be absent from school following the reaction

Treatment following anaphylactic reaction

- Lie the pupil flat with legs raised (if breathing is difficult allow the pupil to sit)
- For those prescribed an adrenaline auto injector - a single dose of adrenaline via a needle into the upper outer thigh and can be given through clothing (two members of staff must be present)
- Always dial 999 and request an ambulance whenever anaphylaxis has occurred
- If a person's condition deteriorates after making the initial 999 call, a second call to the emergency services should be made to update paramedics
- If no improvement after 5 minutes, give a further dose of adrenaline using another adrenaline auto injector
- Try to ascertain what triggered the reaction and let the first aider/medical professional know
- Pupil to be accompanied to the hospital in the absence of a parent/carer