

Allergy Policy (SS-32)

Ratified by Governors:	Mr R Crozier, Chair of Finance & Staffing Committee
Signature:	
Date:	September 2026

Ratified by SLT:	Mr R J King, Headteacher
Signature:	
Date:	September 2026

Committee Responsible:	Finance & Staffing
Author:	Mr M Smillie
Compliant with Equality Scheme:	Yes
Date to be Reviewed:	September 2028 Every 2 Years
Version Number:	01

Version	Date	Comments	Author
01	September 2026	Based on K Allen model and added to.	MSM/SMG
02			
03			
04			
05			

Introduction

The roles responsible for co-ordinating the school's overall approach to allergy safety, staff anaphylaxis training and the upkeep of the school's medical conditions and health and safety policies are:

- Designated Safeguarding Lead - Lead for Allergy Policy
- School Business Manager – Lead for Health and Safety
- Premises Manager – Coordinator for Health and Safety, EVC & First Aider Training
- Pastoral Administration Coordinator – Recording and Communicating IHCPs
- First Aider – Any member of staff trained under Level 3 First Aid at Work (RQF)
- Allergy First Responder – All members of school staff (including agency staff).
- Catering Manager – Catering service manager.
- Parents – parents/carers aware of their own student's allergy status.
- Student – student aware of their own allergy status.

Culture

The school will ensure an aware, ready, proactive, able and assertive approach to supporting students and staff in the management of allergies. All members of staff are potential allergy first responders and the school's approach is built on all staff acting to support allergy management in a supportive and evidence-based way.

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.

There are 14 major food allergens: Celery, Cereals containing gluten, Crustaceans, Eggs, Fish, Lupin, Milk, Molluscs, Mustard, Nuts, Peanuts, Sesame Seeds, Soya and Sulphur Dioxide.

This policy sets out how Cockermouth School will support students with allergies, to ensure they are safe and are not disadvantaged where practically possible whilst taking part in school life.

Roles and Responsibilities

Student Responsibilities

- Students already aware of having an allergy are encouraged to and will make staff aware of this as appropriate to the circumstances and ask about ingredients if unsure.
- Students are supported to be open about their allergy status knowing the school will respect this. Students with allergies serious enough to carry allergy medications will be familiar with their Individual Healthcare Plan IHCP and follow the medications carrying requirements of this plan.
- Students 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.
- Students who are trained and confident to administer their own Adrenaline Auto Injector(AAI) will be encouraged to take responsibility for carrying the required number on their person at all times labelled with their full name and initials in brackets.

Parent Responsibilities

- On entry to the school, it is the parent's responsibility to inform the school of any allergies and if needed to ensure school has an Individual Healthcare Plan (IHCP). This information should include all previous serious allergic reactions, history of anaphylaxis and details of all prescribed medication. The school will record this information to inform those working with the student. Admissions forms/processes will include a request for this information. The Pastoral Administration Support Coordinator will oversee the IHCP recording and communication to relevant other staff.
- Parents/carers are to supply a copy of their child's Allergy Action Plan to school - **see appendix A**. If they do not currently have an Allergy Action Plan this should be developed as soon as possible in collaboration with a healthcare professional e.g. GP/allergy specialist and prior to the student attending school.
- 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 Allergy Action Plan will be kept updated accordingly.

Staff Responsibilities

- All staff will be briefed on how to provide an allergy First Response, and, in all cases call for a First Aider. It is impracticable for all staff to complete Level 3 First Aid anaphylaxis training – however during the period 8.30 to 3.30 a First Aid rota will ensure trained individuals are available. However, all staff will be trained to provide a First Response for anaphylaxis: Injecting an adrenaline auto-injector, AAI, (e.g., EpiPen, Jext, or Emerade) into the outer thigh. This training for all staff will take place during annual INSET and on induction as part of the school's "onboarding" process. The DSL, School Business Manager and Premises Manager will provide these training sessions.
- Awareness for all staff on what to do as a First Response if they encounter anaphylaxis will be included in all staff's annual online training also.
- First response covers:
 - Raising the alarm (First Aid and 999)
 - Giving Adrenaline
 - Positioning the person
 - Monitoring
- Additionally, school will train and maintain an adequate number of First Aiders trained to ensure first aid for anaphylaxis is available during school opening hours and on school Visits. Training is provided for these staff on a 3 yearly basis.
- First Aid covers:

- Call emergency services (dial 999 in the UK).
- Correctly position the patient (lie flat with legs raised, or sit up if struggling to breathe)
- Remove the allergen (e.g., scrape off an insect sting).
- Monitor the patient and administer a second adrenaline dose if needed after 5 minutes.
- Provide basic life support if needed.
- Record the First Aid assessment, treatment and recovery/hand over.
- Staff must be aware of the students in their care (regular or cover classes) who have known allergies as an allergic reaction could occur at any time and not just at mealtimes. Any food-related activities must be supervised with due caution. Pastoral Support Administrators will maintain records of all students with allergies for this purpose.
- Staff leading Educational Visits will ensure they carry all relevant emergency supplies. Visit leaders will check that all students with medical conditions, including allergies, carry their medication. Students unable to produce their required medication on the day of departure will not be able to attend the educational visit.
- Where parents provide an Allergy Action Plan (**see appendix A**) school will ensure that the up-to-date Allergy Action Plan is kept with the student's medication if this is stored by school.
- It is the parent's responsibility to ensure all medication is in date however the Pastoral Support Administrators will check medication stored in school on a termly basis and send a reminder to parents if medication is approaching expiry.
- First Aiders record all use of any AAI(s) and emergency treatment given.

School Responsibilities

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that this policy is in place and reviewed periodically as necessary including covering this issue at INSET accordingly.
- The School Business Manager will ensure that a rota is in place of Level 3 trained First Aiders and that the annual first response anaphylaxis training is in place. They will ensure coordination and effective communication between the Pastoral Administration, Catering and Premises Manager (EVC lead).
- The Catering Manager will maintain an awareness of all known student allergies in school and ensure that common allergens are either not present in the food served (e.g. nuts/shellfish) or clearly labelled (e.g. gluten).
- The Premises Manager will ensure all Educational Visits have allergy requirements appropriately planned for including spare adrenaline injectors being present as part of the EVC sign off process. They will also ensure the training for First Aiders remains well planned for and that there is annual online Health and Safety and Anaphylaxis training in place as part of the school's online training for all staff.

Allergy Action Plans

Allergy action plans are designed to function as individual healthcare plans for person with severe 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 autoinjector.

Cockermouth School recommends using the British Society of Allergy and Clinical Immunology 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/Allergy Specialist) and provide this to the school.

The Pastoral Administration Coordinator will advise parents of the correct allergy action plan / IHCP forms to use depending on the complexity of medical conditions of the student.

Emergency Treatment and Management of Anaphylaxis

What to look for:

Symptoms usually come on quickly, within minutes of exposure to the allergen.

Mild to moderate allergic reaction symptoms may include:

- a red raised rash (known as hives or urticaria) anywhere on the body
- a tingling or itchy feeling in the mouth
- swelling of lips, face or eyes
- stomach pain or vomiting.

More serious symptoms are often referred to as the 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 sleepiness, tiredness, confusion, pale clammy skin, loss of consciousness.

The term for this more serious reaction is anaphylaxis. In extreme cases there could be a dramatic fall in blood pressure. The person may become weak and floppy and may have a sense of something terrible happening. This may lead to collapse and unconsciousness and, on rare occasions, can be fatal.

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 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

Action:

- If you observe the more severe symptoms described above or the person makes you aware of these then **ACT IMMEDIATELY**.
- **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. Locate as indicated in highlighted section below.
- Keep the person where they are, **CALL FOR HELP** and do not leave them unattended. Call First Aid and call **999** and state **ANAPHYLAXIS (ana-fil-axis)**. **CONTINUE UNTIL HELP ARRIVES**.
- **LIE PERSON FLAT WITH LEGS RAISED** – they can be propped up if struggling to breathe but this should be for as short a time as possible.
- If no improvement after 5 minutes, administer second AAI.
- If no signs of life commence CPR (Trained First Aider preferably).
- Ensure school calls parent/carers as soon as possible.

Whilst you are waiting for the ambulance, keep the person 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 anaphylaxis even if they appear to have recovered as a reaction can reoccur after treatment. If parents / carers are present they can accompany the student with the emergency services, or if they decide, take the student directly to hospital. If they are not present a member of school staff should accompany the student to hospital.

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 AAls in suitable numbers on them at all times (in a suitable bag/container).

For younger persons 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.

School emergency injectors are located at Reception, IT, SRP and Pastoral Admin Offices.

All school held medication provided by students is accessed via the Pastoral Administrators Office.

Educational Visits injectors are located in the Medical/Cover Room.

Individual student medication should be stored in a suitable container and clearly labelled with the student's name. Parents should ensure that the student's medication storage container should contain:

- Two AAls i.e. EpiPen®/ Jext® /EURNeffy®
- 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 person's parents to ensure that the anaphylaxis kit is up-to-date and clearly labelled, however the school pastoral administration team will check medication kept at school on a termly basis and send a reminder to parents if medication is approaching expiry.

Parents can subscribe to expiry alerts for the relevant AAls their person is prescribed, to make sure they can get replacement devices in good time.

Adults / older children medication

Adults and teenagers should, whenever possible, assume responsibility for their emergency kit (for under 18s this should be under the guidance of their parents). However, symptoms of anaphylaxis can come on **very suddenly**, so school staff need to be prepared to administer medication if the person cannot.

Storage

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

Disposal

AAls are single use only and must be disposed of as sharps. Used AAls can be given to ambulance paramedics on arrival or can be disposed of in a pre-ordered sharps bin. The sharps bin is kept in the Pastoral Administration Office – N10.

'Spare' Adrenaline Auto-injectors in School

Cockermouth School has purchased spare **AAls for emergency use in person who are risk of anaphylaxis**, but their own devices are not available or not working (e.g. because they are out of date).

These are stored to be easily located and clearly labelled 'Emergency Anaphylaxis Adrenaline Pen', kept safely, not locked away and **accessible and known to all staff**.

School emergency injectors are located at Reception, IT SRP and Pastoral Admin Offices.

Educational Visits injectors are located in the Medical/Cover Room and accessed by Premises Manager or his deputy upon request for each approved Educational Visit taking place.

All staff are responsible for reporting use of an autoinjector to the Premises Manager to enable re-stocking to take place and returning un-used autoinjectors to the correct storage location.

The Premises Manager is responsible for checking the spare medication & Visits medication is in date and to replace as needed.

Staff Policies and Training

The school roles responsible for co-ordinating the interlinked elements of this policy are:

- Designated Safeguarding Lead – Management of Medical Conditions Policy
- School Business Manager – Health and Safety Policy and Allergy Safety Policy
- Premises Manager (including Health and Safety Coordinator) – Anaphylaxis Training and AAI availability

All staff will receive an annual “First Response” anaphylaxis update as part of their INSET training. This will ensure all staff are aware of the appropriate first response to provide.

First Aiders will receive a full First Aid at Work Level 3 Award updated every 3 years including anaphylaxis and basic life support.

Allergy First Response Training includes:

- Knowing the common allergens and triggers of allergy
- Measures to reduce the risk of a person having an allergic reaction e.g. allergen avoidance, knowing who is responsible for what.
- Awareness of AAI in school and how to be aware of students with allergies and their allergy action plans.
- 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 AAI) in the event of anaphylaxis – knowing how and when to administer the medication/device

Inclusion and safeguarding

Cockermouth School is committed to ensuring that all persons 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. All school staff have a common-law duty to ensure safety, comfort and reassure and call for help, school First Aiders are trained and available, emergency services will be called on a pre-cautionary basis as necessary.

Catering & Food Technology

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 on the school website.

The Pastoral Administration Team will ensure that the school catering team is aware of all students with allergies that school is made aware of.

Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the Catering Manager to discuss their person’s needs and how these can be supported.

Food technology staff will review and risk assess all activities considering the known allergic students and potential for allergic reactions in all students and will undertake suitable food handling/hygiene courses for their roles.

Similarly, parents/carers are encouraged to contact staff working in Food Technology classes to discuss their student's needs and how these can be supported.

The school adheres to the following Department of Health guidance recommendations for persons with known allergies:

- Bottles, other drinks and lunch boxes provided by parents for students with food allergies should be clearly labelled with the name of the person for whom they are intended.
- The student should check with catering staff, before purchasing food or selecting their lunch choice.
- If food is purchased from the school canteen, parents should check the appropriateness of foods by speaking directly to 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 person and their age.

School Visits

Staff leading school visits will ensure they carry all relevant emergency supplies. Visit 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 school visit.

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

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

Sporting School visits

Allergic person should have every opportunity to attend sports visits to other schools. The school will ensure that the P.E. teacher/s are fully aware of the situation. If the Visit includes catering, then 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 (usually the PE teacher who will be First Aid trained). If another school feels that they are not equipped to cater for any food-allergic person, the school will arrange for the person to take alternative/their own food.

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

Allergy Awareness and Nut Bans

Cockermouth School supports the approach advocated by Anaphylaxis UK towards nut bans/nut free schools. This approach is not necessarily 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 students, and no school could guarantee a truly allergen free environment for a person living with food allergy. They advocate instead for schools to adopt a culture of allergy awareness and education. As a working rule, Cockermouth School avoids nuts in all school catering activities and asks students and staff to respect the risk nuts pose in the school setting.

A 'whole school awareness of allergies' is the approach adopted, as it ensures teachers, students and all other staff are aware of what allergies are, the importance of avoiding the students' allergens, the signs & symptoms, how to deal with allergic reactions and to ensure policies and procedures are in place to minimise risk.

Appendix A

1 page Allergy Actions Plans for parents to download and complete and then send to school.

<https://www.bsaci.org/resources/resources/paediatric-allergy-action-plans/>

Note – the above link includes an allergy action plan available for those prescribed EpiPen, Jext and EURNeffy AAI's and also an allergy action plan available for those assessed as not needing AAI.

Headteacher:
Mr R J King BSc

Chair of Governors:
Mr A Rankin

Cockermouth School · Castlegate Drive
Cockermouth · Cumbria · CA13 9HF

Tel: 01900 898888

www.cockermouthschool.org
reception@cockermouthschool.org