



Allergy Policy:

Policy Lead:	Nicola Trigg
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Approval needed by:	Local Governing Board

Allergy Policy

1. Purpose of Policy

To minimise the risk of any pupil suffering a serious allergic reaction whilst at school or attending any school related activity. To ensure staff are properly prepared to recognise and manage serious allergic reactions should they arise.

2. Introduction

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 requiring **immediate medical attention**. 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.

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

3. Role and responsibilities

Parent Responsibilities

- On entry to the school, it is the parent's responsibility to inform reception staff (First Aider) of any allergies. 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 (BSACI plans preferred) to 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 e.g. GP/Allergy specialist.
- 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 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 the pupils 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.

- Staff leading school trips will ensure they carry all relevant emergency supplies. Trip leaders will check that all pupils with medical conditions, including allergies, carry their medication. Pupils unable to produce their required medication will not be able to attend the excursion.
- First Aider will ensure that the up-to-date Allergy Action Plan is kept with the pupil's medication.
- It is the parent's responsibility to ensure all medication is in date however the School First Aider will check medication kept at school on a termly basis and send a reminder to parents if medication is approaching expiry.
- School First Aider keeps a register of pupils who have been prescribed an adrenaline auto-injector (AAI) and a record of use of any AAI(s) and emergency treatment given.

Pupil Responsibilities

- Pupils 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.
- Pupils are asked to take responsibility for carrying their AAI on their person at all times.

4. Allergy Action Plans

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 autoinjector. Congleton High 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 (Allergy Specialist) and provide this to the school.

5. Treatment

The treatment for a severe allergic reaction is an injection of adrenaline. Pre-loaded injection devices containing one measured dose of adrenaline are available (via prescription). All staff members have full yearly training on how to use adrenaline. First aid responders have regular contact with the Allergy Nurse for updates regarding student.

When to use Adrenalin:

Should a severe allergic reaction occur the adrenalin injection should be administered into the muscle of the upper outer thigh. An ambulance should always be called. Adrenaline injectors, given in accordance with the prescribed instructions, are a safe delivery mechanism. It is not possible to give too large a dose using this device. In cases of doubt, it is better to give the injection than hold back.

Day to day policy measures are needed for food management, awareness of the young person's needs in relation to diet (care plan and risk assessment to be completed prior to attending CHS), individual meal requirements and snacks in school.

Parents may often ask for the Headteacher to exclude from the premises the food to which their child is allergic. This is not always feasible, although appropriate steps to minimise any risks to allergic young people should be taken. Anaphylaxis is manageable. With sound precautionary measures and support from the staff, school life may continue as normal for all concerned.

6. Supply, storage and care of medication

Pupils will take responsibility for and to carry their own two AAls on them at all times (in a suitable bag/container).

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

- Two AAls i.e. EpiPen® or Jext®
- 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 to ensure that the anaphylaxis kit is up-to-date and clearly labelled, however the First Aider 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 child is prescribed, to make sure they can get replacement devices in good time.

The school requests that parents supply two spare pens for emergency use should the child's pens fail. These will be kept in the school office.

Children should assume responsibility for their emergency kit 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 young 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. Sharps bins to be obtained from and disposed of by a clinical waste contractor/specialist collection service/local authority (delete as appropriate). The sharps bin is kept in the Medical room.

'Spare' adrenaline auto-injectors in school

Congleton High School has purchased spare AAls for emergency use in children who are at risk of anaphylaxis and their own devices are not available or not working (e.g. because they are out of date). These are stored in the main school office on a labelled shelf.

The School holds spare pens which are kept in the following location:- Main school office

Our Medical Officer is responsible for checking the spare medication is in date on a monthly basis and to replace as needed. Written parental permission for use of the spare AAls is included in the pupil'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.

7. Staff Training

The named staff members responsible for co-ordinating staff anaphylaxis training and the upkeep of the school's Allergy / Anaphylaxis policy are:-

1. Nicola Trigg
2. Julie Pini

Staff will be given annual training by the Allergy Nurse, and if unavailable to attend they will need to complete online ad hoc training.

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 treatment (including AAI's) in the event of anaphylaxis – knowing how and when to administer the medication/device. Training pens are available in the Main office.
- 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.

8. 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 Medical Officer will inform the Catering Manager of pupils with food allergies. Congleton High School ensures catering staff can identify pupils with allergies by providing a full pupil list with photographs. We also hold a central log which we manage and maintain.

Parents/carers are encouraged to collate information about their child's needs and share with the school who will pass to our Catering team.

The 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 the school canteen/tuck shop, parents should check the appropriateness of foods by speaking directly to the catering manager.
- The pupil 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 will 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.

9. School trips

Staff leading school trips will ensure they carry all relevant emergency supplies. Trip leaders will check that all pupils with medical conditions, including allergies, carry their medication. Pupils 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 see if they pose a threat to allergic pupils 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).

10. Allergy awareness and nut bans

Congleton High School supports the approach advocated by Anaphylaxis UK towards nut bans/nut free schools. They would not necessarily support 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 pupils, and no school could guarantee a truly allergen free environment for a child living with food allergy. Congleton adopts a culture of allergy awareness and education. A 'whole school awareness of allergies' is a much better approach, as it ensures teachers, pupils and all other staff are aware of what allergies are, the importance of avoiding the pupils' allergens, the signs & symptoms, how to deal with allergic reactions and to ensure policies and procedures are in place to minimise risk.

11. Risk Assessment

Congleton High School will conduct a detailed individual risk assessment for all new joining pupils with allergies and any pupils newly diagnosed, to help identify any gaps in our systems and processes for keeping allergic children safe.