

ALLERGY POLICY

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Allergy Policy

1. Policy Statement

St Andrew's Academy is committed to being an allergy-aware school where every pupil, regardless of their medical needs, can learn and participate safely and fully. Allergic disease is one of the most common chronic conditions affecting children and we recognise our responsibility to put in place strong, consistent systems to reduce the risk of accidental exposure and to respond swiftly and effectively to allergic reactions.

This policy sets out our whole-school approach to allergy management in line with the guidance promoted through The Allergy Team's Designated Allergy Lead training, Government and NHS best practice, statutory guidance on supporting pupils with medical conditions and the principles of inclusion and safeguarding.

This policy applies to all staff, pupils, visitors, contractors, volunteers and external providers working on or off-site under the school's supervision.

2. Policy Aims

- Promote an allergy-aware and inclusive school culture.
- To ensure the safety and wellbeing of pupils and staff with allergies.
- To reduce the risk of exposure to known allergens and prevent avoidable reactions.
- To ensure all staff are confident in recognising allergic reactions, including anaphylaxis, and responding appropriately.
- To set out clear responsibilities for staff, parents/carers and pupils.
- To support all pupils in fully accessing the curriculum, activities, trips and school life.

3. Definitions and Key Concepts

Allergy: A reaction of the immune system to an allergen such as food, insect venom, animals or environmental triggers.

Anaphylaxis: A severe, life-threatening allergic reaction requiring immediate emergency action.

Adrenaline Auto-Injector (AAI): A prescribed medical device (eg. EpiPen, Jext, Emerade) used in response to anaphylaxis.

Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP): A detailed plan for each pupil with a diagnosed allergy, produced in collaboration with parents/carers and, where appropriate, medical professionals.

Spare AAIs: Emergency AAIs the school is permitted to purchase and hold for emergency use under government guidance.

4. Whole School Approach and Culture

St Andrew's Academy commits to:

- Creating an allergy-aware culture across the entire school, including classrooms, dining areas, clubs, trips and events.
- Ensuring that pupils with allergies are included in all aspects of school life and not unfairly excluded or segregated.
- Actively addressing and preventing allergy-related bullying or teasing.
- Promoting empathy and understanding among staff and pupils about food allergies and safety.

5. The Designated Allergy Lead (DAL)

The school will appoint a Designated Allergy Lead, trained via The Allergy Team or equivalent recognised provider. The DAL is responsible for:

5.1 Leadership and Oversight

- Championing allergy awareness and embedding this policy throughout the school.
- Acting as the main contact point for parents/carers of those pupils who are allergic.
- Liaising with medical professionals, catering teams and external activity providers.

5.2 Record-Keeping and Documentation

- Maintaining a register of all pupils with allergies.
- Ensuring every pupil who is allergic has an up-to-date IHP and/or Allergy Action Plan.
- Keeping accurate records of AAls kept in school, including expiry-date tracking.

5.3 Staff Training

- Ensuring all staff receive appropriate allergy and anaphylaxis training.
- Co-ordinating annual refresher training and updates for new staff.

5.4 Policy Monitoring and Review

- Reviewing incidents and near misses.
- Leading the annual review of this policy and recommending improvements.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 All School Staff

All staff must:

- Familiarise themselves with this policy and follow all procedures.
- Know how to recognise an allergic reaction and what action to take.
- Know the location of AAls (pupil-specific and spare).
- Take part in annual training and updates.
- Check classroom activities for allergen risks and take steps to mitigate them.
- Ensure pupils with allergies can participate fully and safely in activities and trips.

6.2 Catering Staff

Catering providers must:

- Comply with all legal allergen information requirements.
- Maintain accurate, up-to-date allergen menus.
- Avoid cross-contamination through safe food handling procedures.
- Ensure staff are trained in allergen safety.
- Communicate menu changes promptly to the DAL and parents/carers if relevant.

6.3 Parents/Carers

Parents/carers must:

- Provide accurate, up-to-date medical information and Action Plans.
- Supply prescribed AAls (minimum of two where clinically advised).
- Replace expired or soon-to-expire AAls.
- Inform the school of any changes in allergy status or treatment.
- Work in partnership with the school on safe participation in trips and activities.

6.4 Pupils (where appropriate)

Pupils should:

- Avoid sharing food or drinks.
- Follow the allergy safety rules explained to them.
- Speak up if they feel unwell or think they may be having a reaction.

7. Identification and Communication

- All staff are made aware of pupils with allergies at the start of the academic year or when a new diagnosis is shared.
- Pupil allergies are discreetly indicated in staff planning systems (never publicly displayed in a way that compromises dignity).
- IHPs and Action Plans are shared with relevant staff including class teachers, lunchtime supervisors, catering and trip leaders.
- Key information accompanies pupils on off-site visits.

8. Individual Healthcare Plans (IHPs)

Each pupil with a diagnosed allergy must have an IHP that includes:

- Photograph and identifying information.
- Known allergens.
- Description of symptoms of mild, moderate and severe reactions.
- Details of prescribed medication including AAls.
- Storage arrangements.
- Day-to-day management strategies in the classroom, dining hall and during activities.
- Emergency procedures.
- Parent/carer and medical contacts.

IHPs must be reviewed at least annually or sooner if needed.

9. Day-to-Day Risk Reduction

The school will take reasonable steps to reduce exposure to allergens without relying on blanket bans. This includes:

- Encouraging handwashing before and after eating.
- Discouraging food sharing.
- Checking ingredients for classroom activities (eg. cooking, crafts).
- Risk-assessing events such as charity bake sales, celebrations or themed days.
- Ensuring cleaning routines reduce allergen transfer on surfaces.
- Managing the use of food-based rewards sensitively.

Where an allergen poses a severe or repeated risk, the school may implement targeted restrictions on specific foods, with parental communication.

10. School Trips, Events and Extracurricular Activities

All trips must include explicit consideration of allergy risks. Planning must include:

- Reviewing IHPs with the DAL.
- Ensuring AAls and staff trained in their use accompany the pupil.
- Checking allergen safety of packed meals or provided food.
- Confirming arrangements with venues, transport providers or activity leaders.
- Ensuring emergency protocols are understood by all supervising staff.

11. Medication Storage and Access

- Pupils' AAls must be stored in clearly marked, accessible locations known to staff.
- Spare AAls, where held, must be stored centrally and unlocked or in an emergency-accessible location.
- Expiry dates are checked monthly by the DAL.
- AAls must accompany pupils during PE, outdoor learning, trips and off-site activities.

12. Emergency Procedures

All staff must know the signs of an allergic reaction, including:

Mild to Moderate Symptoms:

- Hives, itching.
- Swelling of lips/face.
- Stomach pain or vomiting.
- Tingling mouth or throat.

Severe Symptoms (Anaphylaxis):

- Difficulty breathing.
- Wheezing or persistent coughing.
- Hoarse voice.
- Dizziness or collapse.
- Widespread flushing or hives.
- Pale, floppy or unresponsive (especially in young children).

Emergency Response Steps

1. **Administer the AAI immediately** if anaphylaxis is suspected.
2. **Call emergency services (999)** and state “anaphylaxis”.
3. **Lie the pupil flat** with legs raised unless breathing is severely impaired (then allow to sit).
4. **Stay with the pupil** and monitor closely.
5. **Give a second AAI after 5 minutes** if symptoms do not improve or worsen.
6. **Contact parents/carers** once the emergency response is underway.
7. After the incident, complete all required documentation and ensure a debrief and review with the DAL.

13. Staff Training

The school commits to:

- Annual whole-staff allergy and anaphylaxis training.
- Training for new staff before they take responsibility for pupils.
- Specialist training for high-risk activities (eg. catering).
- Maintaining a training record managed by the DAL.

Training will include:

- Understanding allergies and anaphylaxis.
- Recognising symptoms.
- Using AAI's correctly.
- Emergency response procedures.
- Risk reduction measures across the school day.

14. Monitoring, Review and Continuous Improvement

- This policy will be reviewed annually by the DAL and Leadership Team.
- Incidents, near misses and parent/carers feedback will inform revisions.
- Updates will be communicated clearly to staff, parents/carers and pupils.
- The Academy Council will oversee compliance and improvement.

15. Linked Policies

- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy.
- First Aid Policy.
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Health & Safety Policy.
- Educational Visits Policy.

Head teacher: David Braybrooke

Designated Allergy Lead: Jessica Johnston