Swanshurst School

ALLERGY SAFETY POLICY

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Contents

1. Definition of Anaphylaxis 3

2. Policy Statement 3

3. Roles and Responsibilities 3

3.1 School Board 3

3.2 Designated Leader for Allergy Safety (DLAS) 4

3.3 Staff 4

3.4 Parents and Carers 4

3.5 Students 4

4. Awareness and Training 5

5. Promoting Wellbeing 6

6. Identifying Students with Allergies 6

7. Individual Healthcare Plans (IHPs) 7

8. Unacceptable Practice 7

9. Minimising Risk 8

10. Food Allergy Management 8

11. Adrenaline Auto-Injectors (AAIs) 9

12. Spare Adrenaline Auto-Injectors 9

13. Educational Visits and Off-Site Activities 10

14. Emergency Procedures 10

15. Reporting, Monitoring and Near Misses 10

16. Information Sharing and Confidentiality 11

17. Communication and Raising Awareness 11

18. Monitoring and Review 12

19. Links with other policies 12

DRAFT

This policy has been developed in line with statutory guidance on allergy safety in schools and is designed to ensure that all students, staff, visitors and contractors are protected from avoidable risks associated with allergies. The policy promotes a safe, inclusive and supportive environment for students with allergies and sets out procedures for prevention, identification and emergency response.

1. Definition of Anaphylaxis

Anaphylaxis is a severe and potentially life-threatening allergic reaction requiring immediate treatment.

2. Policy Statement

Swanshurst School recognises that allergies can have a significant impact on the health, wellbeing and educational experience of students. Some allergic reactions can be life-threatening and require immediate treatment.

The school promotes a whole-school allergy safety culture in which students, staff, parents, carers, visitors and contractors understand their responsibilities and work together to minimise allergy risks whilst supporting inclusion and full participation in school life.

The school is committed to:

- Providing a safe environment for all members of the school community
- Raising awareness and understanding of allergies
- Minimising the risk of exposure to known allergens
- Supporting students with allergies to participate fully in all aspects of school life
- Ensuring staff are trained to recognise and respond appropriately to allergic reactions and anaphylaxis
- Maintaining effective communication with parents, carers, healthcare professionals and other stakeholders

This policy is based on:

- DfE Allergy Safety in Schools statutory guidance
- DfE Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions at School
- Department of Health and Social Care Guidance on Using Emergency Adrenaline Auto-Injectors in Schools
- Food Information Regulations 2014
- Food Information (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2019

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 School Board

The School Board will:

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- Ensure the school maintains and annually reviews this Allergy Safety Policy
- Monitor implementation and compliance
- Ensure appropriate resources are available to support allergy management
- Ensure significant allergy-related risks are identified, assessed and included within the school's risk management framework and risk register where appropriate.

3.2 Designated Leader for Allergy Safety (DLAS)

The Designated Leader for Allergy Safety (DLAS) will be the Strategic Operations and Estates Manager, or another member of the Senior Leadership Team nominated by the Headteacher.

The DLAS will:

- Lead allergy safety arrangements across the school
- Coordinate policy implementation and review
- Ensure staff training is completed
- Monitor incidents and identify improvements
- Liaise with families and healthcare professionals where appropriate

3.3 Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy
- Attending allergy awareness training
- Understanding the needs of students with allergies
- Knowing how to recognise allergic reactions and respond in emergencies
- Reporting incidents and near misses

3.4 Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are expected to:

- Inform the school of any allergy diagnosis
- Provide up-to-date medical information and action plans
- Supply prescribed medication where required
- Inform the school promptly of any changes to their child's condition
- Parents/carers will be asked annually to confirm or update allergy information and must notify the school immediately of changes during the school year.

3.5 Students

Students should:

- Take responsibility appropriate to their age and understanding.
- Carry prescribed medication where agreed within their healthcare plan.

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- Inform staff immediately if they feel unwell or believe they may have been exposed to an allergen.

4. Awareness and Training

Swanshurst School will provide annual allergy awareness and emergency response training for all staff, including:

- Teachers
- Support staff
- Catering staff

Training will include:

- Understanding allergies and allergic conditions
- Food allergies, asthma, eczema, hay fever and related conditions
- Differences between allergy, coeliac disease and food intolerance
- Recognition of allergy symptoms and anaphylaxis
- Emergency procedures
- Administration of adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs)
- Use of emergency asthma inhalers where appropriate
- Location of emergency medication
- Understanding Allergy Action Plans and Individual Healthcare Plans (IHPs)
- Reporting procedures for incidents and near misses

All new employees, supply staff engaged for long-term placements and volunteers with regular pupil contact will receive allergy awareness information before undertaking unsupervised duties.

Cover and agency staff must:

- be informed of pupils at risk of anaphylaxis within the areas they supervise
- be advised of medication locations
- receive allergy safety information and emergency procedures appropriate to their role before supervising students.

The school will ensure that:

- Training records are maintained
- Refresher training is delivered annually and following significant incidents
- An appropriate number of designated staff have received practical training in the administration of AAIs and the management of anaphylaxis emergencies.
- Training is refreshed in accordance with current guidance and local procedures.
- All staff know how to summon a trained member of staff in an emergency.

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The school recognises that in a life-threatening emergency any member of staff may administer an AAI where necessary to preserve life.

> The school will periodically test emergency arrangements through scenario-based exercises or table-top discussions to ensure staff remain familiar with procedures.

5. Promoting Wellbeing

Swanshurst School recognises that living with allergies can cause anxiety and affect wellbeing.

The school will:

- Foster an inclusive culture that supports students with allergies
- Encourage students to discuss concerns with trusted staff
- Ensure support is available through pastoral systems
- Address any bullying, teasing or discriminatory behaviour relating to allergies through the Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy
- Deliberate exposure of another student to known allergens will be treated as a serious behavioural matter and managed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy
- Promote awareness and understanding amongst students in an age-appropriate manner
- Make reasonable adjustments where required to enable pupils with allergies to participate fully in school life.

6. Identifying Students with Allergies

The school will maintain an up-to-date register of students with allergies. The allergy register will be reviewed at least annually and whenever new medical information is received.

Information will be gathered through:

- Admissions documentation
- Medical information forms
- Communication with parents and carers
- Healthcare professionals
- Previous educational settings where appropriate

The register will identify:

- Known allergens
- Severity of allergy
- Emergency medication requirements
- Type and dosage of AAI

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- Presence of Individual Healthcare Plans and Allergy Action Plans
- Students prescribed adrenaline auto-injectors
- Parental consent status for emergency medication
- Photograph where appropriate
- Medication storage location

Where relevant, the school will record known severe allergies affecting staff, volunteers and regular visitors to support emergency response arrangements.

7. Individual Healthcare Plans (IHPs)

Parents / carers of pupils with known food or insect sting allergies should provide an up-to-date Allergy Action Plan issued by an appropriate healthcare professional wherever available.

An Individual Healthcare Plan will be required where a student:

- Has an allergy that significantly affects their school life
- Is at risk of harm from their allergy
- Requires arrangements additional to those generally available.

The IHP must include:

- Details of known allergens
- Signs and symptoms of a reaction
- Emergency response procedures
- Medication arrangements
- Reasonable adjustments required
- Staff responsibilities

Allergy Action Plans provided by healthcare professionals will be attached to or referenced within the IHP.

IHPs will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where medical needs or prescribed treatment change.

8. Unacceptable Practice

The school will not:

- Prevent students from accessing prescribed medication
- Assume every allergic reaction requires the same response
- Exclude students from activities solely because they have an allergy unless a specific risk assessment identifies that this is necessary
- Ignore the requirements of an Allergy Action Plan or Individual Healthcare Plan
- Delay the administration of adrenaline where anaphylaxis is suspected

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- Require parents or carers to attend school to administer emergency medication in place of staff acting in accordance with this policy

9. Minimising Risk

Swanshurst School cannot guarantee an allergen-free environment; however, reasonable steps will be taken to minimise risk.

These measures include:

- Reviewing allergens in food provided by the school
- Communicating dietary requirements with the catering department
- Encouraging good handwashing before and after eating
- Cleaning dining and food preparation surfaces appropriately
- Monitoring curriculum activities involving:
    - Science practicals involving food
    - Animal handling
    - Residential visits
    - Overseas visits
    - Visitors bringing animals onto site
    - Other potential allergens
- Establishing risk assessments where required
- Considering allergies during all educational visits and enrichment activities
- Relevant contractors, visitors and external providers working in pupil areas will be informed of allergy-related controls and restrictions where necessary to maintain the safety of students with known allergies.

Students will not be routinely excluded from activities due to allergies. Appropriate adjustments will be made wherever possible.

10. Food Allergy Management

The school's catering manager will make allergen information available for all food provided by the school in accordance with food information legislation. Students and parents/carers will be able to access allergen information on request.

Where necessary:

- Individual dietary requirements will be communicated to catering staff
- Alternative food arrangements will be considered
- Staff supervising food-related activities will consider allergen risks

Food should not routinely be shared between students. Parents and students bringing food into school should avoid sharing food with others.

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Staff organising events involving food must complete a proportionate risk assessment where students with significant allergies may be affected.

The school may implement additional measures where specific allergy risks have been identified.

11. Adrenaline Auto-Injectors (AAIs)

Students prescribed AAIs will either carry their medication or have it stored in a location agreed within their Individual Healthcare Plan, ensuring it can be accessed immediately in an emergency.

The school will:

- Keep records of students prescribed AAIs
- Record locations of prescribed medication
- Ensure medication accompanies students during off-site activities
- Remind parents to replace medication before expiry dates
- Maintain copies of Allergy Action Plans

12. Spare Adrenaline Auto-Injectors

The school will maintain emergency spare AAIs in accordance with current legislation and guidance. Emergency medication will be stored strategically to minimise delays in access.

The school will ensure:

- Spare devices are clearly labelled
- Spare devices are stored in accessible locations and not locked away
- Devices are stored in pairs where possible
- Replacement arrangements are in place when devices are used or expire
- Expired devices will be disposed of safely
- Emergency instructions are available with the devices

Spare AAIs are stored along with first aid kits in the following locations:

- **Food Tech:** 2 kits
- **Science Tech Room – Centre:** 2 kits
- **Science Tech Room – Upper:** 2 kits
- **Canteen:** 1 kit
- **DT:** 2 kits
- **Staff Rooms:** 1 kit in each
- **Hub Reception:** 1 kit
- **Upper Foyer Office:** 1 kit
- **OU Block:** 1 kit
- **LC:** 1 kit
- **OL Block:** 1 kit
- **PA Block:** 1 Kit

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- **SSA:** 1 kit

The First Aid Lead and DLAS are responsible for monthly checks of stock levels and expiry dates.

13. Educational Visits and Off-Site Activities

The principles of this policy apply equally to breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, holiday provision, enrichment activities and any other school-organised activities where students are under the school's supervision. Appropriate allergy risk assessments, emergency medication arrangements and staff awareness measures will be implemented as required.

Students with allergies will be supported to participate fully in educational visits.

Prior to visits:

- Suitable risk assessments will be completed
- Allergy needs will be reviewed
- Emergency medication arrangements will be confirmed
- Trained staff will accompany students at risk of anaphylaxis
- Students at risk of anaphylaxis must have immediate access to their prescribed medication at all times during visits and trips, including while travelling to and from the destination
- Individual Healthcare Plans and Allergy Action Plans will be reviewed prior to all residential visits and overseas visits

14. Emergency Procedures

Any suspected allergic reaction will be treated seriously.

Staff will:

- Follow the student's Allergy Action Plan where available
- Administer adrenaline immediately where anaphylaxis is suspected
- Call 999 and request an ambulance
- Inform parents or carers as soon as possible
- Continue monitoring the student until emergency services arrive
- Record the incident in accordance with school procedures

15. Reporting, Monitoring and Near Misses

A **serious incident** is any event relating directly to a medical condition (including allergy) in which a pupil, member of staff or visitor with a medical condition or allergy is harmed or is placed at an immediate and significant risk of harm, including situations requiring emergency medication, urgent clinical intervention or attendance by emergency services

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A **'near miss'** is an event relating directly to a medical condition (including allergy) that did not result in harm but had the clear potential to do so – for example, where an error, omission, or system failure could reasonably have led to a serious incident had circumstances been only slightly different.

All allergy-related incidents and near misses will be recorded and reviewed.

The school and DLAS will:

- Investigate incidents
- Record on CPOMS
- Notify parents
- Report to School Board where appropriate
- Identify lessons learned
- Review procedures where necessary
- Share relevant findings with staff to improve safety
- Monitor trends to inform future risk reduction measures

Where legally required, incidents will be reported to external agencies including the Health and Safety Executive and other relevant authorities.

The DLAS will review incident and near miss trends periodically to identify emerging risks and opportunities for improvement.

16. Information Sharing and Confidentiality

Information regarding students at risk of anaphylaxis will be shared with teaching staff, support staff, catering staff, first aiders and trip leaders where necessary for safeguarding and medical purposes while respecting confidentiality requirements.

The school will:

- Comply with UK GDPR requirements
- Securely store medical information
- Ensure appropriate staff have access to emergency information
- Handle information sensitively and respectfully
- Share appropriate allergy information during admission, transition and transfer processes to support continuity of care and pupil safety

17. Communication and Raising Awareness

This policy will be:

- Published on the Swanshurst School website
- Available in hard copy upon request
- Shared with staff through training and induction processes
- Reviewed annually or following significant incidents

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The school will promote awareness of allergy safety among students and staff to encourage a supportive and inclusive environment.

18. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the School Board and DLAS, or sooner following any significant allergy-related incident, near miss or change in legislation or statutory guidance.

19. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to the following policies and documents:

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

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