# Allergy and Anaphylaxis Policy

## 1. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This policy outlines Silcoates School's approach to allergy management, including how the whole-school community works to reduce the risk of an allergic reaction happening and the procedures in place to respond if one does. It also sets out how we support our pupils with allergies to ensure their wellbeing and inclusion, as well as demonstrating our commitment to being an Allergy Aware School.

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Visitors Policy
- Accident Reporting Policy

## 2. DEFINITIONS

**ALLERGY**: Allergy occurs when a person reacts to a substance that is usually considered harmless. It is an immune response and instead of ignoring the substance, the body produces histamine which triggers an allergic reaction.

Whilst most allergic reactions are mild, causing minor symptoms, some can be very serious and cause anaphylaxis, which is a life-threatening medical emergency.

People can be allergic to anything, but serious allergic reactions are most commonly caused by food, insect venom (such as a wasp or bee sting), latex and medication.

**ALLERGEN:** A normally harmless substance that, for some, triggers an allergic reaction. You can be allergic to anything. The most common allergens are food, medication, animal dander (skin cells shed by animals with fur or feathers) and pollen. Latex and wasp and bee stings are less common allergens.

Most severe allergic reactions to food are caused by just 9 foods. These are eggs, milk, peanuts, tree nuts (which includes nuts such as hazelnut, cashew nut, pistachio, almond, walnut, pecan, Brazil nut, macadamia etc.), sesame, fish, shellfish, soya and wheat.

There are 14 allergens required by law to be highlighted on pre-packed food. These allergens are celery, cereals containing gluten, crustaceans, egg, fish, lupin, milk, molluscs, mustard, peanuts, tree nuts, soya, sulphites (or sulphur dioxide), and sesame.

**ANAPHYLAXIS:** Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction that can be life-threatening and must be treated as a medical emergency.

**ADRENALINE AUTO-INJECTOR:** Single-use device which carries a pre-measured dose of adrenaline. Adrenaline auto-injectors are used to treat anaphylaxis by injecting adrenaline directly into the upper, outer thigh muscle. Adrenaline auto-injectors are commonly referred to as AAIs, Epipens or by the brand name EpiPen. There are two brands licensed for use in the UK: EpiPen and Jext Pen. For the purposes of this policy, they are referred to as Epipens.

**ALLERGY ACTION PLAN:** This is a document filled out by a healthcare professional, detailing a person's allergy and their treatment plan.

**INDIVIDUAL HEALTHCARE PLAN:** A detailed document outlining an individual pupil's condition, history, treatment, risks and action plan. This document should be created by schools in collaboration with parents/carers and, where appropriate, pupils. All pupils with an allergy should have an Individual Healthcare Plan and it should be read in conjunction with their Allergy Action Plan.

**RISK ASSESSMENT:** A detailed document outlining an activity, the risks it poses and any actions taken to mitigate those risks. Allergies should be included on all risk assessments for events on and off the school site.

**SPARE PENS:** The School holds spare Epipens which are held as a back-up, in case pupils' prescribed Epipens are not available. They can also be used to treat a person who experiences anaphylaxis but has not been prescribed their own adrenaline.

## 3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Silcoates School takes a whole-school approach to allergy management.

### 3.1 Designated Allergy Lead

The Designated Allergy Lead Mr Chris Evans, Deputy Head (and Designated Safeguarding Lead) who reports into the Head and the Safeguarding Governor. He is responsible for:

- Ensuring the safety, inclusion and wellbeing of pupils and staff with an allergy;
- Taking decisions on allergy management across the school;
- Championing and practising allergy awareness across the school;
- Being the overarching point of contact for staff, pupils and parents with concerns or questions about allergy management;
- Via the school nurse, ensuring allergy information is recorded, up-to-date and communicated to all staff;
- Making sure all staff are appropriately trained, have good allergy awareness and realise their role in allergy management (including what activities need an allergy risk assessment);
- Ensuring staff, pupils and parents have a good awareness of the school's Allergy and Anaphylaxis Policy, and other related procedures;
- Reviewing the stock of the school's Spare Pens (check the school has enough and the locations are correct) and ensuring staff know where they are;
- Keep a record of any allergic reactions or near-misses and ensure an investigation is held as to the cause and put in place any learnings;
- Regularly reviewing and updating the Allergy and Anaphylaxis Policy;

At regular intervals the Designated Allergy Lead will check procedures and report to the SLT.

### 3.2 School Nurse

The School Nurse is responsible for:

- Collecting and coordinating the paperwork (including Allergy Action Plans and Individual Healthcare Plans) and information from families, liaising with the Admissions Manager for information on new joiners;
- Support the Designated Allergy Lead on how this information is disseminated to all school staff, including the Catering Team, occasional staff and staff running clubs

- Ensuring the information from families is up-to-date, and reviewed annually (at a minimum)
- Coordinating medication with families and ensuring medication is in date.
- Keeping an Epipen register to include Epipens prescribed to pupils and Spare Pens, including brand, dose and expiry date. The location of Spare Pens should also be documented.
- Regularly checking Spare Pens are where they should be, and that they are in date
- Replacing the Spare Pens when necessary
- Providing on-site Epipen training for other members of staff (First Aiders) and pupils and refresher training as required e.g., before school trips

### 3.3 Admissions Manager

The Admissions Manager is likely to be the first to learn of a pupil or visitor's allergy. They should work with the Designated Allergy Lead and school nursing team to ensure that:

- There is a clear method to capture allergy information or special dietary information at the earliest opportunity. This should be in place before a school visit, an Open Day or Taster Days if food is offered or likely to be eaten;
- There is a clear structure in place to communicate this information to the relevant parties (especially the school nursing team and catering team);
- Visitors (for example at Open Days and events) are aware of the catering set up and if food is to be offered and that plans for medication are provided if the child is to be left without parental supervision

### 3.4 All staff

All school staff includes teaching staff, support staff, Wilson Vale catering staff, occasional staff and volunteers (e.g., sports coaches, music teachers and invigilators). All school staff are responsible for:

- Championing and practising allergy awareness across the school
- Understanding and putting into practice the Allergy and Anaphylaxis Policy and related procedures, and asking for support if needed
- Being aware of pupils (and staff, when necessary) with allergies and what they are allergic to
- Considering the risk to pupils with allergies posed by any activities and assessing whether the use of any allergen in activity is necessary and/or appropriate
- Ensuring pupils always have access to their medication, which depending on their age can involve them carrying it on their own behalf
- Being able to recognise and respond to an allergic reaction, including anaphylaxis
- Taking part in training as required (at least once a year) and to tell a manager if you have not received any in the last 12 months
- Considering the safety, inclusion and wellbeing of pupils with allergies at all times
- Preventing and responding to allergy-related bullying, in line with the school's anti-bullying policy

### 3.5 All Parents and Carers

All parents and carers (whether their child has an allergy or not) are responsible for:

- Being aware of and understanding the school's Allergy and Anaphylaxis Policy and considering the safety and wellbeing of pupils with allergies
- Providing the School Nurse, with information about their child's medical needs, including dietary requirements and allergies, history of their allergy, any previous allergic reactions or

anaphylaxis. They should also inform the school of any related conditions, for example asthma, hay fever, rhinitis or eczema

- Considering and adhering to any food restrictions or guidance the school has in place when providing food, for example in packed lunches, as snacks or for fundraising events
- Refraining from telling the school their child has an allergy or intolerance if this is a preference or dietary choice
- Encouraging their child to be allergy aware

### 3.6 Parents of children with allergies

In addition to point 3.5, the parents and carers of children with allergies should:

- Work with the school to fill out an Individual Healthcare Plan and provide an accompanying Allergy Action Plan
- If applicable, provide the school or their child with two labelled Epipens and any other medication, for example antihistamine (with a dispenser, i.e., spoon or syringe), inhalers or creams
- Ensure medication is in-date and replaced at the appropriate time
- Update school with any changes to their child's condition and ensure the relevant paperwork is updated at the same time
- Give permission to the School to share appropriately a photograph of their child as part of their allergy management.
- Support their child to understand their allergy diagnosis and to advocate for themselves and to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of an allergic reaction occurring e.g., not eating the food they are allergic to.

### 3.7 All pupils

As appropriate to their age, all pupils at the school should:

- Be allergy aware
- Understand the risks allergens might pose to their peers
- Learn how they can support their peers and be alert to allergy-related bullying.
- Older pupils will learn how to recognise and respond to an allergic reaction and to support their peers and staff in case of an emergency
- Consider and adhere to any food restrictions or guidance the School has in place when buying snacks outside of School or bringing in food from home.

### 3.8 Pupils with allergies

In addition to point 3.7, pupils with allergies are responsible for:

- Knowing what their allergies are and how to mitigate personal risk (although the School recognises that this will depend on age and may not be appropriate with very young children;
- Avoiding their allergen as best as they can
- Understanding that they should notify a member of staff if they are not feeling well, or suspect they might be having an allergic reaction

- If age-appropriate, to carry two Epipens with them at all times. They must only use them for their intended purpose
- Understand how and when to use their Epipen
- Talking to the Designated Allergy Lead or a member of staff if they are concerned by any school processes or systems related to their allergy
- Raising concerns with a member of staff if they experience any inappropriate behaviour in relation to their allergies
- Sixth Form pupils who are permitted to leave the school site during the school day should know what to do if they have an allergic reaction off school premises. This should include how to treat themselves and raise the alarm to get help. At all times, they should carry two Epipens with them.

## 4 INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTATION

### 4.1 Register of pupils with an allergy

The school has a register of pupils who have a diagnosed allergy. This includes children who have a history of anaphylaxis or have been prescribed Epipens, as well as pupils with an allergy where no Epipens have been prescribed.

### 4.2 Individual Healthcare Plans

Each pupil with an allergy has an Individual Healthcare Plan. The information on this plan includes:

- Known allergens and risk factors for allergic reactions
- A history of their allergic reactions
- Detail of the medication the pupil has been prescribed including dose, this should include Epipens, antihistamine etc.
- A copy of parental consent to administer medication, including the use of spare Epipens in case of suspected anaphylaxis
- A photograph of each pupil
- A copy of their Allergy Action Plan.

## 5 ASSESSING RISK

Allergens can crop up in unexpected places. Staff (including visiting staff) will consider allergies in all activity planning and include it in risk assessments. Some examples include:

- Classroom activities, for example craft using food packaging, science experiments where allergens are present, food tech or cooking
- Bringing animals into the school, for example a dog or hatching chick eggs can pose a risk.
- Running activities or clubs where they might hand out snacks or food “treats”. Ensure safe food is provided or consider an alternative non-food treat for all pupils.
- Planning special events, such as cultural days and celebrations
- Running day and residential trips where there is the potential for food items to be bought or for other children to bring food with them

Inclusion of pupils with allergies must be considered alongside safety and they should not be excluded. If necessary, staff should adapt the activity to be inclusive.

## 6 FOOD, INCLUDING MEALTIMES & SNACKS

### 6.1 Catering in school

The school is committed to providing a safe meal for all students, staff and visitors, including those with food allergies.

- Due diligence is carried out with regard to allergen management when appointing catering staff
- All catering staff and other staff preparing food will receive relevant and appropriate allergen awareness training
- Anyone preparing food for those with allergies will follow good hygiene practices, food safety and allergen management procedures
- The catering team will endeavour to get to know the pupils with allergies and what their allergies are, supported by school staff.
- The catering team will endeavour to provide varied meal options to students and staff with allergies.
- The school has robust procedures in place to identify pupils with food allergies. For Junior School and Pre-School children, there is a visual check from the Form Teacher or Head of Pre-School who is familiar with the pupils who have allergies. The Catering Manager also performs visual checks/ Photos of pupils with allergies are also available in the catering facility. Pre-school children have individualised coloured trays which give a clear visual method for ensuring that allergens are managed for our very youngest children.
- Food containing the main 14 allergens (see Allergens definition) will be clearly identified for pupils, staff and visitors to see. Other ingredient information will be available on request.
- Food packaged to go will comply with PPDS legislation (Natasha's Law) requiring the allergen information to be displayed on the packaging.
- Where changes are made to the ingredients this will be communicated to pupils with dietary needs by the Catering Manager.
- Food provided at breakfast club and after school clubs (late stays) will follow these procedures
- The School is "nut-aware" and the catering department avoid food with nuts as an ingredient
- Any food sold on site (i.e., from a Tuck Shop), follows the same procedures and the products sold will follow the food restrictions in terms of nuts.

### 6.2 Food brought into school

The School's policy is that any food brought into School or taken on school trips or sports fixtures should follow the guidelines set out above. This includes birthday cakes, other food brought into School as snacks or gifts (e.g. at Christmas) and for any fundraisers.

### 6.3 Food bans or restrictions

It is not possible for the School to ban an allergen completely from the School site. We prefer to remind everyone to be allergy aware and to remain vigilant.

The School is an Allergen Aware school. The School has students with a wide range of allergies to different foods, so it encourages a considered approach to bringing in food.

The School tries to restrict peanuts and tree nuts as much as possible on the site and check all foods coming into the kitchen.
All food coming onto school premises or taken on a school trip or to a match should be checked to ensure peanuts and tree nuts are not an ingredient in another product. Please check the label on all foods brought in. Common foods that contain these goods as an ingredient include: packaged nuts, cereal bars, chocolate bars, nut butters, chocolate spread, sauces

**6.4 Food hygiene for pupils**

- Pupils will wash their hands before and after eating. Hand sanitiser is available at the door to the Dining Hall.
- Sharing, swapping or throwing food is not allowed
- Water bottles and packed lunches should be clearly labelled

**7 SCHOOL TRIPS AND SPORTS FIXTURES**

- Staff leading the trip will have a register of pupils with allergies with medication details. They should also be aware of any members of staff with allergies who is accompanying the trip.
- Allergies will be considered on the risk assessment and catering provision put in place
- Parents may be consulted if considered necessary, or if the trip requires an overnight stay
- Staff (and some pupils, if appropriate) accompanying the trip will be trained to recognise and respond to an allergic reaction
- Allergens will be clearly labelled on catered packed lunches.
- If attending Match Tea at another school, details of their dietary requirements will be sent ahead to ensure they have a safe meal.
- See Epipens section for School Trips and Sports Fixtures

**8 INSECT STINGS**

Those with a known insect venom allergy should:

- Avoid walking around in bare feet or sandals when outside and, where possible, keep arms and legs covered.
- Avoid wearing strong perfumes or cosmetics
- Keep food and drink covered

The school grounds team will monitor the grounds for wasp or bee nests. Pupils (with or without allergies) should notify a member of staff if they find a wasp or bee nest in the school grounds and avoid them.

**9 ANIMALS**

It is normally the dander that causes a person with an animal allergy to react.

Precautions to limit the risk of an allergic reaction include:

- A pupil with a known animal allergy should avoid the animal they are allergic to
- A risk assessment is in place for Darwin, the School dog. If another animal comes on site, a risk assessment will be done prior to the visit
- Areas visited by animals will be cleaned thoroughly
- Anyone in contact with an animal will wash their hands after contact
- School trips that include visits to animals will be carefully risk assessed

## 10 ALLERGIC RHINITIS/ HAY FEVER

Hay fever, also known as allergic rhinitis, is an allergic reaction that occurs when the immune system overreacts to allergens present in the air.

Seasonal allergic rhinitis occurs during specific times of the year and is associated with seasonal allergens such as pollen. This is usually worse between March and September when the pollen count is at its highest.

Perennial allergic rhinitis refers to year-round symptoms regardless of the season. Common triggers are house dust mites, mould spores and pet dander.

Medication for allergic rhinitis including antihistamines and nasal steroids can be very effective when used correctly. Pupils are requested to take their medication before coming to School.

## 11 INCLUSION AND MENTAL HEALTH

Allergies can have a significant impact on mental health and wellbeing. Pupils may experience anxiety and depression and are more susceptible to bullying.

- No child with allergies should be excluded from taking part in a school activity, whether on the school premises or a school trip.
- Pupils with allergies may require additional pastoral support including regular check-ins from their form tutor
- Affected pupils will be given consideration in advance of wider school discussions about allergy and school Allergy Awareness initiatives
- Bullying related to allergies will be treated in line with the school's anti-bullying policy

## 12 EPIPENS

See the government guidance on Epipens in Schools.

### 12.1 Storage of Epipens

- Pupils prescribed with Epipens will have easy access to two, in-date pens at all times.
- Pupils in Senior School (Year 7 and upwards) carry two Epipens with them at all times.
- Two Epipens are kept in an emergency pouch with each pupil in Junior School
- For Pre-School pupils, two Epipens are kept in a secure place and taken by staff to the Dining Hall daily
- Pens are stored in the School Clinic, the Dining Room and the DT (Food) classroom.
- Spot checks will be made to ensure Epipens are where they should be and in date
- Epipens are not kept locked away

- Epipens are stored at moderate temperatures not in direct sunlight or above a heat source (for example a radiator)
- Used or out of date pens will be disposed of as sharps

### 12.2 Spare Pens

This school has three Spare Pens to be used in accordance with government guidance. The Spare Pens are clearly signposted and are stored in the Clinic, Dining Room and the DT Classroom.

The Allergy Lead and School Nurse are responsible for deciding:

- How many Spare Pens are required;
- What dosage is required (based on the Resuscitation Council UK's age-based guidance);
- Which brand(s) to buy;
- Where to distribute the pens around the site and the signage required.

### 12.3 Epipens on school trips and match days

- No child with a prescribed Epipen will be able to go on a school trip without two of their own Epipens. It is the trip leader's responsibility to check they have them.
- Epipens will be kept close to the pupils at all times e.g., not stored in the hold of the coach when travelling or left in changing rooms
- Epipens will be protected from extreme temperatures
- Staff accompanying the pupils will be aware of pupils with allergies and be trained to recognise and respond to an allergic reaction
- Staff will consider whether to take Spare Pens to sporting fixtures and on trips

## 13 RESPONDING TO AN ALLERGIC REACTION /ANAPHYLAXIS

See Appendix on recognising and responding to an allergic reaction

- If a pupil has an allergic reaction, they will be treated in accordance with their Allergy Action Plan and a member of staff will instigate the school's Emergency Response Plan as set out in the First Aid Policy.
- If anaphylaxis is suspected, adrenaline will be administered without delay, lying the pupil down with their legs raised as described in the Appendix. They will be treated where they are and medication brought to them.
- A pupil's own prescribed medication will be used to treat allergic reactions if immediately available.
- This will be administered by the pupil themselves, if age appropriate, or by a member of staff. Ideally the member of staff will be trained, but in an emergency, **anyone** will administer adrenaline.
- If the pupil's own Epipen is not available or misfires, then a Spare Pen will be used.
- If anaphylaxis is suspected but the pupil does not have a prescribed Epipen or Allergy Action Plan, a member of staff will ensure they are lying down with their legs raised, call 999 and explain anaphylaxis is suspected. They will inform the operator that Spare Pens are available and follow instructions from the operator. The MHRA says that in exceptional circumstances, a spare Epipen can be administered to **anyone** for the purposes of saving their life.

- If, after 5 minutes, there is no improvement, a second Epipen will be used and the person administering the pen will and call the emergency services to tell them you have done so.
- The pupil will not be moved until a medical professional/ paramedic has arrived, even if they are feeling better.
- Anyone who has had suspected anaphylaxis and received adrenaline must go to hospital, even if they appear to have recovered. A member of staff will accompany the pupil in an ambulance and stay until a parent or guardian arrives.

## 14 TRAINING

The School is committed to training all staff annually to give them a good understanding of allergies. This includes:

- Understanding what an allergy is
- How to reduce the risk of an allergic reaction occurring
- How to recognise and treat an allergic reaction, including anaphylaxis
- How the school manages allergy, for example Emergency Response Plan, documentation, communication etc
- Where Epipens are kept (both prescribed pens and spare pens) and how to access them
- Which designated members of staff (First Aiders) have been trained in the administration of Epipens and can assist in an emergency
- The importance of inclusion of pupils with food allergies, the impact of allergy on mental health and wellbeing and the risk of allergy related bullying
- Understanding food labelling

## 15 ASTHMA

It is vital that pupils with allergies keep their asthma well controlled, because asthma can exacerbate allergic reactions. Pupils with asthma are encouraged to carry their own inhaler at all times.

## 16 REPORTING ALLERGIC REACTIONS

The school will log allergic reaction incidents and near-misses in line with the Accident Reporting Policy.

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|---|---|---|---|
| The School is fully committed to ensuring that the application of this policy is non-discriminatory in line with the UK Equality Act (2010). Further details are available in the School's Equal Opportunity Policy document. | | | |
| **Reviewed by:** | Mrs Emma Sanderson – Bursar<br>Mr Chris Evans – Senior Deputy Head, DSL<br>Mrs Jan Alkadi – School Nurse | | |
| **Date of last review:** | June 2026 | **Date of next review:** | June 2027 |

This policy will be further reviewed for September 2026 as informed by the Department for Education draft guidance "Supporting children and young people with medical conditions and allergy" (2026) and anticipating the requirements of Benedict's Law.

# APPENDIX
# MANAGING ALLERGIC REACTIONS

## ALLERGIC REACTIONS VARY

Allergic reactions are unpredictable and can be affected by factors such as illness or hormonal fluctuations. You cannot assume someone will react the same way twice, even to the same allergen.

Reactions are not always linear. They don't always progress from mild to moderate to more serious; sometimes they are life-threatening within minutes.

## MILD TO MODERATE ALLERGIC REACTIONS

Symptoms include:

- Swollen lips, face or eyes
- Itchy or tingling mouth
- Hives or itchy rash on skin
- Abdominal pain
- Vomiting
- Change in behaviour

Response:

- Stay with pupil
- Call for help
- Locate Epipens
- Give antihistamine
- Make a note of the time
- Phone parent or guardian
- Continue to monitor the pupil

## SERIOUS ALLERGIC REACTIONS / ANAPHYLAXIS

The most serious type of reaction is called **ANAPHYLAXIS**. Anaphylaxis is uncommon, and children experiencing it almost always fully recover. Anaphylaxis usually occurs within 20 minutes of eating a food but can begin 2-3 hours later.

**In rare cases, anaphylaxis can be fatal. It should always be treated as a time-critical medical emergency.**

People who have never had an allergic reaction before, or who have only had mild to moderate allergic reactions previously, can experience anaphylaxis.

# APPENDIX
# RESPONDING TO ANAPHYLAXIS

## SYMPTOMS OF ANAPHYLAXIS

### A – Airway

- Persistent cough
- Hoarse voice
- Difficulty swallowing
- Swollen Tongue

### B – Breathing

- Difficult or noisy breathing
- Wheeze or cough

### C - Circulation

- Persistent dizziness
- Pale or floppy
- Sleepy
- Collapse or unconscious

## DELIVERING ADRENALINE

1. Take the medication to the patient, rather than moving them.
2. The patient should be lying down with legs raised. If they are having trouble breathing, they can sit with legs outstretched.
3. It is not necessary to remove clothing but make sure you're not injecting into thick seams, buttons, zips or even a mobile phone in a pocket.
4. Inject adrenaline into the upper outer thigh according to the manufacturer's instructions.
5. Make a note of the time you gave the first dose and call 999 (or get someone else to do this while you give adrenaline). Tell them you have given adrenaline for anaphylaxis.
6. Stay with the patient and do not let them get up or move, even if they are feeling better (this can cause cardiac arrest).
7. Call the pupil's emergency contact.
8. If their condition has not improved or symptoms have got worse, give a second dose of adrenaline after 5 minutes, using a second device. Call 999 again and tell them you have given a second dose and to check that help is on the way.
9. Start CPR if necessary.
10. Hand over used devices to paramedics and remember to get replacements.

**For more information see the Government's Guidance for the use of adrenaline auto-injectors in schools.**

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Silcoates School
Wrenthorpe
Wakefield
WF2 0PD

01924 291 614
enquiries@silcoates.org.uk
silcoates.org.uk
Charity number: 1158796

Head: Mr Phil King
BA (Sheffield) PGCE (Sheffield) NPQH (BPN)