

## 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. 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 before any symptoms can be seen.

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). Causes can include foods, insect stings, and drugs.

Common allergens in the UK include (but are not limited to):

- celery
- cereals containing gluten
- crustaceans (crab, prawns, lobster)
- molluscs (oysters, mussels)
- mustard
- soya beans
- sulphur dioxide/sulphites
- lupin (seeds often found in bread, pasta)
- peanuts
- tree nuts
- sesame
- milk
- egg
- fish
- latex
- insect venom
- pollen
- animal dander (found in hair, fur and feathers of animals)

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

## Roles and Responsibilities

### **Parent Responsibilities**

- On entry to the School, it is the parent's responsibility to inform reception staff and/or Alistair McDougall, Assistant Head (Pastoral), of any allergies that their child has. This information should include all previous serious allergic reactions, history of anaphylaxis and details of all prescribed medication.
- Parents must supply a copy of their child's Individual Healthcare Plan. If they do not currently have a Healthcare Plan, this should be developed as soon as possible in collaboration with a healthcare professional, such as the NHS school nurse assigned to Wellington or the child's GP or allergy specialist.
- Parents are responsible for ensuring any required medication is supplied, in date and replaced as

necessary (please refer to the Medications Policy for further details).

- Parents are requested to keep the school up to date with any changes in allergy management. The Healthcare Plan should be updated accordingly.
- Parents should complete the allergens form for our catering partner Sodexo on an annual basis. This information will be held confidentially in both the Nursery (if applicable) and the main school kitchen.

## **Staff Responsibilities**

- All staff will complete anaphylaxis training on an annual basis each August. Members of staff who join during the session will be provided with training during their induction.
- Staff must be aware of the pupils in their care 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 care and attention.
- 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, and, if applicable, the trip leader will carry any additional or spare supplies, such as Piriton or an EpiPen. Pupils unable to produce their required medication will not be able to take part in the excursion. Staff are advised to have a face to face or telephone conversation with parents of children with specific needs in advance of a residential trip so that any questions may be asked, and procedures clarified if necessary.
- School office staff, supported by the Assistant Head (Pastoral), will ensure that up to date Healthcare Plans are stored with the pupil's medication.
- It is the parent's responsibility to ensure all medication is in date, however the School office staff/Assistant Head Pastoral will check medication kept at school on a termly basis and send a reminder to parents if medication is approaching expiry.
- School office staff will maintain 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. This information will be held centrally in the main school office.

## **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 who are trained and confident to administer their own AAIs will be encouraged to take responsibility for always carrying them on their person. It is expected that by Primary 7, pupils should be able to carry their own AAI or other prescribed treatments as they will be moving around the school campus more frequently.

## Individual Healthcare Plans

Individual Healthcare Plans are designed to function as individual plans for children with allergies, providing medical and parental consent for schools to administer medicines in the event of an allergic reaction. Wellington School recommends the use of NHS care plans, which will ensure continuity of care between local health and education providers. Parents should contact their GP or health professional in the first instance for further information.

## Emergency Treatment and Management of Anaphylaxis

Symptoms usually come on quickly, within minutes of exposure to the allergen. However, there is often a range of symptoms, depending on how severe the reaction is.

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

At this point, depending on the details in the Individual Healthcare Plan, prescription or non-prescription medication may be administered, such as Piriton.

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 pupil 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. It opens up the airways, reduces swelling, and raises blood pressure. As soon as anaphylaxis is suspected, adrenaline must be administered without delay.

Staff will be asked to follow the action points below if the administration of adrenaline through an AAI is required:

- Keep the child where they are, call for help and do not leave them unattended
- Lie child flat with their legs raised if possible – they can be propped up if struggling to breathe but this should be for as short a time as possible
- Use the adrenaline auto-injector (AAI) (EpiPen is the most common brand) **WITHOUT DELAY** and note the time given.
- AAIs should be given into the muscle in the outer thigh. Specific instructions vary by brand – always follow the instructions on the device
- CALL 999 and state ANAPHYLAXIS (ana-fil-axis)
- If no improvement after 5 minutes, administer the second AAI
- If no signs of life commence CPR
- Call parent/carer as soon as possible
- Whilst you are waiting for the ambulance, keep the child 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 pupils must go to hospital for observation after anaphylaxis even if they appear to have recovered as a reaction can reoccur after treatment.

## Supply, storage and care of medication

Depending on their level of understanding and competence, pupils will be encouraged to take responsibility for and to carry their own AAIs. For younger children, normally Junior School pupils, their medication and anaphylaxis kit will be stored safely in a central location which is accessible to staff as required. Medication will be stored in a suitable container and clearly labelled with the pupil's name.

The pupil's medication storage container should contain:

- Two AAIs i.e. EpiPen® or Jext® or Emerade®
- An up-to-date allergy action plan
- Antihistamine as tablets or syrup (if included on health care plan)
- Spoon if required
- Asthma inhaler (if required)

AAIs should be stored at room temperature, protected from direct sunlight and temperature extremes. AAIs are single use only and must be disposed of as sharps. Used AAIs can be given to ambulance paramedics on arrival or can be disposed of in a pre-ordered sharps bin.

## Staff Training

The named staff member responsible for coordinating staff anaphylaxis training and the School's allergens policy is Alistair McDougall (Assistant Head, Pastoral).

All staff will complete in person anaphylaxis training at the start of every new academic year. Training includes:

- Knowing the common allergens and triggers of allergy
- Spotting the signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction and anaphylaxis
- Administering emergency treatment (including AAIs) in the event of anaphylaxis – knowing how and when to administer the medication/device
- Measures to reduce the risk of a child having an allergic reaction e.g. allergen avoidance
- A practical demonstration of how to use AAI trainer devices

## Inclusion and safeguarding

Wellington School is committed to ensuring that all children 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 potential.

## Catering

Catering at Wellington is provided by our partners Sodexo. They employ best practice required of all food providers. Food Information Regulations (2014) 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 in advance on the School website at: <https://wellingtonschool.org/our-school/parents-information/>

The Assistant Head (Pastoral) will inform the Catering Manager, David Gray and Allergens Champion, Dot

Group of pupils with food allergies. Sodexo staff will have photographs and essential information of the pupils with allergies to ensure pupils are easily identified. Parents are encouraged to meet with the catering staff should they have any questions about catering and the provision of school lunches. As mentioned in the 'parent responsibility' section, parents should carefully complete the Sodexo allergens and special diets form on an annual basis to ensure the most up to date information is received by Sodexo and their staff.

The School adheres to the following guidance on catering:

- If food is purchased from the Dining Hall, parents should check the appropriateness of foods on the school website or by speaking to the Catering Manager or Allergens Champion if they have questions about specific food stuffs
- Pupils should check with catering staff, before purchasing food or selecting their lunch choice, if they have any questions about allergies
- Where necessary, school staff can help pupils recognise food allergens on labels
- Catering staff are instructed about measures to prevent cross contamination during the handling, preparation and serving of food.
- Food should not be given to primary school age food-allergic children without parental engagement and permission (e.g. birthday parties, food treats).
- Use of food in craft lessons, science experiments and special events (e.g. fetes, assemblies, cultural events) is risk assessed and guidance provided to participants (e.g. no nuts or nut products are permissible).

### Allergy awareness and Nut Ban

Wellington is a 'nut free' establishment. Pupils are regularly reminded not to bring in any products containing nuts and parents are informed about this rule by the Assistant Head Pastoral on an annual basis.

### Other Reasons for Special Diets

The School will ask parents to provide information about dietary requirements for other medical or religious reasons (for example kosher or halal meat) as part of the annual data capture process. A suitable choice of hot or cold meals will always be available to pupils with specific dietary requirements.

Parents should contact Alistair McDougall, Assistant Head Pastoral, ([amcdougall@wellingtonschool.org](mailto:amcdougall@wellingtonschool.org)) if they have any questions regarding their child's specific dietary requirements.

### Useful Links

- Scottish Government Guidelines - [Supporting children and young people with healthcare needs in schools: guidance - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- Anaphylaxis UK - <https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/>