



ALLERGY AND ANAPHYLAXIS POLICY

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1 Purpose of this Policy

Whitley Bay High School is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and supportive environment for students, staff and visitors with allergies. The school recognises that allergies can have a significant impact on health, wellbeing and participation in school life, and that severe allergic reactions, including anaphylaxis, are medical emergencies requiring an immediate and effective response.

This policy sets out the school's arrangements for:

- Promoting allergy awareness.
- Reducing the risk of exposure to known allergens.
- Supporting students with allergies to participate fully in school life.
- Managing medication, including Adrenaline Auto-Injectors (AAIs).
- Responding to allergic reactions and anaphylaxis.
- Meeting statutory guidance and best practice for allergy safety.

This policy applies to staff, students, parents/carers, contractors, volunteers and other visitors. It should be read in conjunction with:

- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy.
- Administration of Medication Procedures.
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- Anti Bullying Policy.

This policy will be published on the school website and made available to parents, carers, staff and governors.

2 Introduction and Definitions – Understanding Allergies

An **allergy** occurs when the body overreacts to a substance that is normally harmless. Instead of ignoring the trigger, the immune system releases histamine, which causes an allergic reaction. These reactions can range from mild (such as itching, redness, rashes, or sneezing) to far more serious responses known as anaphylaxis.

Anaphylaxis is a serious, systemic allergic reaction requiring urgent medical attention. It represents the most severe point on the allergic spectrum and is a life-threatening emergency. The reaction affects the entire body, often within minutes of exposure to an allergen, though in some cases symptoms may not appear until several hours later

An **allergen** is normally a harmless substance that can trigger an allergic reaction in certain individuals. Common allergens include specific foods, medications, animal dander, and pollen. Less common triggers include latex and insect stings.

Adrenaline Auto-Injector (AAI): A single-use device designed to deliver a fixed dose of adrenaline into the upper outer thigh for the emergency treatment of anaphylaxis. Common UK brands include EpiPen and Jext. Throughout this policy, all such devices are collectively referred to as AAIs.

Spare AAls: Whitley Bay High School currently holds 4 spare AAI devices. They may be used as a backup if a student's own device is unavailable and can also be used in emergencies to treat any individual showing signs of anaphylaxis, even if they do not have a prescribed AAI.

High-Risk Foods: The majority of severe food allergies are caused by nine foods: eggs, milk, peanuts, tree nuts (e.g., almonds, cashews, walnuts), sesame, fish, shellfish, soya, and wheat.

Legal Allergen Labelling: UK legislation requires 14 allergens are clearly identified on all pre-packaged food products. These allergens are: celery, cereals containing gluten, crustaceans, eggs, fish, lupin, milk, molluscs, mustard, peanuts, tree nuts, soya, sulphites, and sesame.

Individual Healthcare Plan/Allergy Action Plan: A personalised document created by a healthcare professional outlining a student's specific allergy risks and emergency treatment.

Risk Assessment: A document that identifies potential hazards linked to an activity and details the measures needed to minimise those risks. Allergies must be taken into account in all risk assessments where food is expected to be consumed during school activities.

3 Roles and responsibilities

Individuals with allergies have an important role in managing their condition, with age-appropriate support from their families and the school. Allergy awareness and safety are a shared responsibility across the entire school community, with everyone encouraged to show understanding and consideration for the challenges faced by those living with severe allergies.

The **Governing Body** will:

- Ensure suitable allergy management arrangements are in place.
- Review this policy annually.
- Monitor compliance with statutory guidance.

The **Headteacher** will:

- Ensure implementation of this policy.
- Ensure sufficient trained staff are available.
- Ensure records are maintained.
- Designate Allergy Leads / First Aid Team.

Staff will:

- Take reasonable steps to minimise exposure to known allergens.
- Consider allergens during curriculum activities.
- Consider allergies as part of trips and visits planning.
- Be alert and aware that food brought onto site may present allergen risks.
- Plan activities that consider allergen exposure.

The **First Aid Team** will:

- Send a WBHS Health Care Plan to parents/carers for students identified with allergies (at admission or if medical conditions change).
- **Promote a whole-school approach to allergy awareness** by working with staff and students to support an informed and caring approach to allergy management and anaphylaxis.
- **Arrange annual allergy awareness training for all school staff** and for information to be shared with students through supportive tutorial sessions.
- **Ensure relevant staff are informed** of all students with food allergies and those who have been prescribed an adrenaline auto-injector.
- **Maintain accurate allergy records** and ensure all information is up to date and communicated to appropriate staff.
- Ensure school holds an up-to-date Allergy Action Plan for each student with an AAI (where available).
- **Monitor medication expiry dates** - parents/carers will be notified if an item is nearing expiry.
- **Communicate allergy information to the external catering provider (Mellors)**
Allergies will be recorded on a student's catering account, and Mellors will receive an up-to-date list and photographs of students with allergies.
- **Review and maintain the school's stock of spare AAIs** and ensure that they are in-date, available, and stored in the correct locations, and that staff know where they can be found.
- **Record and review incidents** - staff will keep a record of any allergic reactions or near-miss events, ensure an investigation is carried out, and implement any necessary learning or improvements.
- **Regularly review and update the Allergy and Anaphylaxis Policy** to ensure it reflects current best practice and statutory guidance.
- **Arrange an annual Anaphylaxis Drill** to support staff preparedness and promote effective emergency response practices,

Staff will:

- **Check medication before school trips or off-site fixtures** - staff leading visits must ensure that all students with medical conditions, including allergies, are carrying their required medication. School reserves the right to prevent a student from attending a school trip or off-site fixture if they are not carrying their prescribed AAI, after all reasonable efforts to arrange this have failed.

We ask **parents/carers** to:

- **Inform school of any allergies as part of the admissions process** and complete a WBHS Healthcare Plan form. This includes an option to give consent for the use of the school's Adrenaline Auto-Injector (AAI) in an emergency.
- **Submit an up-to-date Allergy Action Plan or Individual Healthcare Plan** to the school with support from a healthcare professional.
- **Support their child to understand their allergy and how to manage it safely**, including checking food labels, talking to relevant staff members, and avoiding any foods that may trigger a reaction.

- **Supply two clearly labelled, in-date Adrenaline Auto-Injectors** (and any other prescribed medication, such as antihistamines or inhalers).
- **Ensure all medication carried by students is in-date, replaced before expiry and is kept accessible in their child's bags at all times** - both on and off-site for example during lunch breaks, school trips, or off-site PE lessons.
- **Update school** with any changes to their child's condition, treatment or medication and update all relevant documentation accordingly.

Student responsibilities:

- Students with prescribed allergies will know what their allergies are and how to mitigate their personal risk.
- Whilst support will be available, we do ask that students recognise and take personal responsibility for managing their allergy/allergies when they are on the school site.
- Students with allergies are asked to avoid their allergen as far as possible.
- Students must notify a member of staff if they are feeling unwell or suspect they might be having an allergic reaction.
- Students are required to know how to treat themselves and how to raise the alarm to get help. This includes understanding when to use their adrenaline auto-injector and how to respond to an allergic reaction, both on school premises and off-site during trips or activities.
- Students must carry two clearly labelled, prescribed adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs), along with any additional prescribed medication such as antihistamines or inhalers in their school bag. These items must be carried with students at all times, both on-site and off-site, such as during lunch breaks, school trips, or off-site PE lessons and fixtures.
- Students should report any inappropriate behaviour relating to their allergies to a member of staff.

4 Training and Allergy Awareness

Allergy awareness will be promoted through staff training, student tutorial activities and appropriate communication with parents and carers.

School will provide all staff with allergy and anaphylaxis awareness training at the beginning of each academic year. Training is also provided to new staff.

Training includes:

- Understanding common allergens and typical triggers.
- Recognising early signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction and anaphylaxis, including when to contact emergency services.
- Administering emergency treatment, including the correct use and timing of AAIs during an anaphylactic reaction.
- Strategies to reduce the risk of allergic reactions in school.
- Supporting student wellbeing, including the potential mental health impact of living with severe allergies.

5 Supporting Wellbeing

The school recognises that living with allergies can affect both physical health and emotional wellbeing and is committed to supporting students to participate fully and confidently in school life."

Students with allergies can experience anxiety, social isolation and concerns about participation in school activities. The school is committed to creating an inclusive environment in which students with allergies feel safe and supported.

Allergy-related bullying, teasing or actions such as deliberate exposure to allergens will be treated as a serious matter and managed in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying and Behaviour Management Policies.

6 Allergy Care Plans and Anaphylaxis Management

The school will make reasonable adjustments where required to enable students with allergies to access education and participate fully in school activities.

Students with diagnosed allergies will have a WBHS Care Plan. A standard care plan includes:

- Known allergens and identified risk factors.
- Relevant history of allergic reactions.
- Details of prescribed medication, including dosage where appropriate.
- Parent/carer and emergency contact information.
- Any additional measures required to support the student's safety and participation in school activities.

WBHS Care Plans are reviewed every year and updated whenever the school is notified of a change in the student's medical condition or treatment.

Where a student has a known airborne or contact allergy, the school will consider appropriate risk reduction measures based upon professional medical advice and individual risk assessment.

Students Prescribed an Adrenaline Auto-Injector (AAI)

Students who have been prescribed an AAI are considered to be at risk of anaphylaxis and require additional planning and support.

Parents and carers are asked for a copy of their child's **Allergy Action Plan** completed by a healthcare professional, which provides information about:

- The student's allergens and triggers.
- Signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction and anaphylaxis.
- Emergency treatment and medication requirements.
- Instructions for administering an AAI.

Parents and carers are required to notify the school immediately of any changes to allergies, symptoms, treatment, or medication.

Parents and carers are asked to provide the main office with two in-date AAI and any antihistamines for their child. This is in addition to the two AAI and antihistamines carry by students in their school bags.

Where parental consent has been provided, the school may also administer a school-held spare AAI in an emergency and in accordance with current legislation, guidance and school procedures.

7 Medication Management and Adrenaline Auto-Injectors

- The school holds **generic antihistamines** in the main office. Students may also bring in their own prescribed antihistamines.
- Students prescribed an AAI must **always carry two in-date devices in their school bag**.
- Students are asked to bring up to two additional AAI devices to be stored in the school office.
- All AAI's stored in school will be kept in an easily accessible, clearly labelled, unlocked cupboard (medical room in the main office).
- All AAI's must be **clearly labelled with the student's name, and expiry dates** will be checked regularly by first-aiders. Parents/carers will be advised when replacements are needed.
- AAI's are **single-use devices** and will be disposed of as sharps after use, either by first-aid staff or by the attending paramedic.
- Out-of-date AAI's will be returned to parents/students for disposal or taken to a pharmacy for safe disposal in line with local medicines disposal procedures.

8 Symptoms of Anaphylaxis

Airway

- Swollen tongue
- Difficulty speaking and/or swallowing
- Tightness in the throat
- Change in voice (such as hoarseness or croaky sound)

Breathing

- Difficult or noisy breathing
- Tightness in the chest
- Persistent coughing
- Wheeze (a whistling sound caused by narrowed airways)

Circulation

- Feeling faint or dizzy
- Collapse
- Loss of consciousness (unresponsive)

People with allergies may experience a single symptom or a combination of symptoms.

Reactions can vary significantly from person to person, and not everyone will display the same signs. A reaction does not need to involve every symptom to be considered serious.

The severity of an allergic reaction can be influenced by a range of factors, including the amount of allergen involved, illness, stress, exercise, or underlying medical conditions such as asthma. Because allergic reactions can develop rapidly and unpredictably, anyone with a known allergy who reports feeling unwell should always be taken seriously and monitored appropriately.

9 Emergency treatment of anaphylaxis

The following actions are to be taken if emergency treatment is required.

Mild Allergic Reaction

- **Administer the prescribed antihistamine** (e.g., Cetirizine or Loratadine) for mild symptoms such as a rash, hives, or any other symptoms of a mild allergic reaction, following the student's Healthcare Plan/Allergy Action Plan. Record the time the medication is given.

Suspected Anaphylaxis – for a child with a prescribed AAI

- Administer the student's Adrenaline Auto-Injector (AAI) or assist them to self-administer if they are presenting with any signs of anaphylaxis.
- Record the time the AAI is administered.
- **Call 999** and clearly state that the student is experiencing **anaphylaxis**.
- **Position the student safely** – lay them flat with legs raised. If breathing is difficult, allow them to sit up. Avoid moving the student unnecessarily.
- **Contact parents/carers** as soon as practicable.
- Give a second AAI after 5 minutes if symptoms do not improve.
- **Start CPR** if the student becomes unresponsive and stops breathing.
- **Ensure the student remains under appropriate medical supervision until transferred to hospital** - secondary (biphasic) reactions can occur even if symptoms appear to improve

Suspected Anaphylaxis – for a child without a prescribed AAI

- Lie the student down flat with legs raised or sit them up if breathing is difficult and avoid moving them.
- **Call 999** telling the call handler you suspect **anaphylaxis** and confirm that you have a school-held spare AAI (adult dose for student age in WBHS).
- Send a staff member to locate the school-held spare adrenaline auto-injector.
- With the call handler's agreement, **administer the generic AAI** if tongue/lip swelling, breathing difficulty, or faintness is present. Record the time.
- If symptoms remain after 5 minutes, **administer a second school-held spare AAI**.
- **Start CPR** if the individual stops breathing.
- Stay with the individual until emergency services arrive.

Use of Spare Adrenaline Auto-Injectors (AAls):

The school holds 6 spare generic AAls. They are in:

- Main Office (2 kept in an unlocked medical cabinet).
- The Bungalow (unlocked metal cabinet).
- Food Technology Department.
- 1 in each of the school minibuses.

Post-Emergency Procedures:

After the emergency, the incident must be reviewed. The following questions will be considered as part of a post-incident check:

- Where the incident happened.
- What caused or contributed to the event.
- Whether the individual has fully recovered.
- Their current location and condition.
- Who administered treatment.
- Whether the individual self-administered any medication.

10 School Catering

The school outsources catering to Mellors Catering Services as an independent third-party contractor. The school are informed of Mellors procedures regarding allergen management, however Mellors retain responsibility for implementation and monitoring of their allergen procedures, including training, menu development, risk assessment and communication.

Mellors maintain recipe and ingredient information for foods prepared and served by the catering team and are responsible for providing allergen information relating to their catering provision.

The cashless catering and biometric system records allergy information using information provided by the school and provides alerts to catering staff to support the safe service of food and help students make informed food choices.

Prepacked for Direct Sale (PPDS) foods will be labelled in accordance with current food information legislation, including ingredients and allergen information where required.

To support the delivery of catering services, the school will:

- Provide student photographs and allergen information of those with allergies and intolerances.
- Notify the Mellors Catering Manager of new allergies or relevant changes to existing allergy information throughout the academic year.

Students:

- Students with food allergies are encouraged to speak with catering staff before purchasing or consuming food if there is any uncertainty.

Further information about Mellors can be found by visiting their website:

<https://www.mellorscatering.co.uk/>.

The termly menu is also available on the school's website.

11 Food Technology practical lessons

Food Technology is a popular part of the school's curriculum, and we aim to include all students with food allergies in practical lessons whenever possible and safe to do so.

As part of the curriculum, lessons may also be used to raise awareness of food allergies, to highlight how common they are and to demonstrate or recommend allergy safe substitutes (for example, egg substitutes or dairy-free alternatives).

School Responsibilities:

Departmental Training:

All Food Technology staff receive training in:

- Safe food handling and hygiene.
- Allergy awareness and risk-reduction.
- Understanding food labels and allergen information.
- Preventing cross-contamination.

Staff leading practical lessons also complete allergy first aid training, including how to:

- Recognise an allergic reaction.
- Respond to suspected anaphylaxis.
- Administer an Adrenaline Auto-Injector (AAI).

Safe Classroom Practice:

- Food Technology staff will be provided with up-to-date information about students' dietary requirements and medical conditions, including access to WBHS Healthcare Plans, Allergy Action Plans and Individual Healthcare Plans where appropriate.
- Food Technology staff will maintain a safe working environment by ensuring:
 - ✓ Clearly labelled work areas.
 - ✓ Robust hygiene and cleaning procedures.
 - ✓ Effective equipment cleaning to reduce cross-contamination.
- Food Technology staff will consider using allergy free substitutes within practical lessons as standard.

Examinations:

- Careful consideration will be given by the Head of Department and class teachers regarding suitable ingredients for students to complete Year 11 and Year 12 food practical examinations and Year 13 science investigations.
- Planning will be undertaken in line with the latest national advice and guidance regarding allergen management with adaptations made where necessary.

- Ingredients will be stored within the Food Technology department prior to the school day commencing to reduce the likelihood of contact with students outside of the designated examination class.
- Students will be provided with their own workstation as standard.
- High levels of hygiene and cleanliness will be maintained.
- In the event a student has an airborne allergy, they will be provided with an alternative room to complete their examination, without detriment.

Parents/Carers Responsibilities:

- Provide up-to-date medical information each year, including details of any food allergies, and notify the school promptly of any changes.
- Supply all ingredients required for Food Technology lessons, including allergen safe substitutes where necessary *.
- Ensure all ingredients are:
 - ✓ Clearly labelled
 - ✓ Unopened (where appropriate)
 - ✓ In-date and suitable for their child's dietary needs

** The school can provide advice and guidance regarding sourcing substitute items if required.*

Student Responsibilities:

- Bring all required ingredients from home, including any allergy safe substitutes provided by parents/carers.
- Follow all hygiene and safety instructions from staff.
- Use only their own ingredients and equipment, avoid sharing food, utensils or work surfaces.
- Be considerate of classmates with allergies by preparing ingredients safely, keeping their work area clean, and following staff guidance.
- Inform staff immediately if they feel unwell or are concerned about possible allergen exposure.
- Contribute to a safe, well-organised kitchen environment through good practice and cooperation.

12 Food rewards and treats

Staff may occasionally provide pre-packaged sweets, chocolates, or other food items to students as incentives and rewards. Food items purchased via the Finance Office will be labelled with a generic allergen awareness prompt for staff to refer to prior to issue.

Staff are made aware of students with known allergies and should take reasonable steps to check that any food offered is suitable for the individual student. Students with allergies are also encouraged to check ingredients and decline any food item if they are unsure whether it is suitable for them to consume.

13 Students leaving site over lunchtime

At the beginning of each academic year, parents/carers are asked whether they consent to their child leaving the school site during the lunch break. Students who are permitted to leave site at lunchtime are not under the supervision of the school whilst off-site.

During this time, responsibility for allergy management, including food choices, checking ingredients, and ensuring that prescribed medication is carried and readily accessible, remains with the student and their parents/carers.

Leaving the school site during lunchtime is optional, as onsite catering facilities are provided with duty staff designated for supervision.

14 Educational Visits, PE and Off-Site Activities

All students have the right to participate in offsite educational activities, where it is safe for them to do so.

Safe participation for students with allergies requires parents/carers and students to take an active role in managing their allergy needs to support the school's allergen management procedures.

Trips and Visits

School responsibilities:

- Trip leaders will contact parents/carers prior to the trip with information about the visit and will invite a discussion about specific allergy requirements.
- Identify students with allergies on the trip risk assessment and ensure all information is accurate and complete.
- Liaise with the Designated Allergy Leads prior to departure to confirm which students have allergies and which are prescribed AAls.
- Ensure two in date AAls (and antihistamines if required) are available for each student with an allergy, which may include a generic AAl if appropriate.
- Check, before departure, that students who carry their own AAls have them on their person.
- Ensure that any students who are prescribed AAls and do not have access to two in date devices do not travel.

Parent/carer responsibilities:

- Ensure the school holds accurate, up to date allergy information, including a WBHS Healthcare Plan and Allergy Action Plan and details of prescribed medication.
- Notify the school immediately of any changes to allergies, symptoms, treatment, or medication.
- Always provide two in date AAls and any required antihistamines for their child, ensuring replacements are provided before expiry

- Communicate with the trip leader about their child's allergy needs and raise any concerns promptly.
- Ensure their child (where appropriate) understands how to manage and carry their own medication safely.
- Check medication on return from the trip and replace any missing or expired items.

Student responsibilities:

- Take an active role in understanding their allergy, symptoms, and what to do if they feel unwell.
- Carry their own AAls and any antihistamines as prescribed for the duration of the trip.
- Inform staff immediately if they experience symptoms or believe they have been exposed to an allergen.
- Follow staff instructions relating to safety, dietary restrictions, and allergen avoidance
- Never share or misuse their medication or another student's medication.

Residential Visits

In addition to the above, for residential visits the school will:

- Confirm providers can meet dietary needs and share this to parents/carers where appropriate.

PE and Sporting Activities

All students with allergies who have been prescribed an Adrenaline Auto-Injector (AAI) must bring two in-date clearly labelled (in-date) devices to all PE lessons, sports activities and sporting fixtures.

To ensure AAls are readily accessible in an emergency, students need to hand their clearly labelled AAls to their PE teacher or member of staff leading the activity to ensure they are readily accessible in an emergency. Students will then be able to collect their AAls from the teacher/member of staff at the end of their lesson.

Managing insect sting allergies

Students with insect sting allergies should take the following precautions when outdoors:

- Keep arms and legs covered where possible.
- Avoid wearing strong perfumes or scented cosmetics, which may attract insects.
- Keep food and drink covered to reduce the likelihood of attracting wasps and other insects.

15 Recording Incidents and Near Misses

We aim to prevent incidents through proactive risk management. Where a serious incident or near-miss occurs, the school is aware of the need to record incidents to enable monitoring of the safety management system.

For this policy, a near miss is an event which could have resulted in allergen exposure, allergic reaction or anaphylaxis but where harm was avoided.

The school will -

- Report incidents in line with the established school reporting procedure.
- Inform parents and, if necessary, the Governing Body, alongside any statutory reporting requirement.
- Encourage near miss and incident reporting and their subsequent investigation.
- Ensure that all incidents and near misses are promptly reported and investigated.
- Review serious incidents or near misses with an openness to consider lessons to be learned.
- Replace used AAls promptly.

Parents/carers are advised to inform the school where the impact of exposure to an allergen while in school was not recognised until the child is back at home.

16 Information Sharing and Data Protection

A child's health information is considered special category data under UK GDPR, which means it is highly sensitive and has additional legal protections.

Schools have a lawful basis to hold, use and share a child's special category health data when this is necessary, but this will be done in a controlled and respectful way, because unnecessary sharing can reduce children's confidence in practitioners and can be embarrassing for children and young people who may not want to be singled out.

Information relating to allergies will be shared with staff on a need-to-know basis in order to safeguard students and support safe participation in school activities. Recipients will include the school's catering provider, relevant class teachers and support staff, and school trip and sport fixture leads.

17 Visitors, contractors and external providers

Visitors, contractors and external providers are expected to comply with school health and safety arrangements and should notify the school of any significant allergy-related medical needs prior to their visit.

18 External Lettings and Community Use

External organisations who use the school premises outside normal school hours remain responsible for their own allergy management arrangements, whilst complying with any school requirements.

19 Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if required due to:

- Changes in legislation.
- Updated national guidance.
- Significant incidents.
- Recommendations arising from investigations or policy reviews.