

# Victoria College Belfast



## Anaphylaxis policy

Approved –  
Drafted by – F.Cromie

## **1. 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. Causes can include foods, insect stings, and drugs.

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).

It is possible to be allergic to anything which contains a protein, however most people will react to a fairly small group of potent allergens.

Common UK Allergens include (but are not limited to):-

Peanuts, Tree Nuts, Sesame, Milk, Egg, Fish, Latex, Insect venom, Pollen and Animal Dander.

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

## **2. Role and responsibilities**

### **Parent Responsibilities**

- On entry to the school, it is the parent's responsibility to inform the College of any allergies by completing the medical forms issued on entry to the College. This information should include all previous serious allergic reactions, history of anaphylaxis and details of all prescribed medication.
- Parents are to supply a copy of their child's Allergy Action Plan (BSACI plans preferred) to school. If they do not currently have an Allergy Action Plan this should be developed as soon as possible in collaboration with a healthcare professional e.g. School nurse/GP/allergy specialist.
- Parents are responsible for ensuring any required medication is supplied, in date and replaced as necessary.

- Parents are requested to keep the school up to date with any changes in allergy management. The Allergy Action Plan will be kept updated accordingly.

### **Staff Responsibilities**

- All staff will complete anaphylaxis training. Training is provided for all staff on a yearly basis and on an ad-hoc basis for any new members of staff.
- Staff must be aware of the pupils in their care (regular or cover classes) 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 caution.
- 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. Pupils unable to produce their required medication will not be able to attend the excursion.
- The School Nurse will ensure that the up-to-date Allergy Action Plan is kept with the pupil's medication.
- It is the parent's responsibility to ensure all medication is in date however the School Nurse will check medication kept at school on a termly basis and send a reminder to parents if medication is approaching expiry.
- The School Nurse keeps 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.

### **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 carrying them on their person at all times.

## **3. Allergy action plans**

Allergy action plans are designed to function as individual healthcare plans for children with food allergies, providing medical and parental consent for schools to administer medicines in the event of an allergic reaction, including consent to administer a spare adrenaline auto-injector.

It is the parent/carer's responsibility to complete the allergy action plan with help from a healthcare professional (e.g.GP/School Nurse/Allergy Specialist) and provide this to the school.

#### 4. 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 **two** AAls on them at all times (in a suitable bag/container).

Medication should be stored in a suitable container and clearly labelled with the pupil's name.

The pupil's medication storage container should contain:

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

It is the responsibility of the child's parents to ensure that the anaphylaxis kit is up-to-date and clearly labelled, however the School Nurse/First Aider will check medication kept at school on a termly basis and send a reminder to parents if medication is approaching expiry.

Parents can subscribe to expiry alerts for the relevant AAls their child is prescribed, to make sure they can get replacement devices in good time.

#### **Older children and medication**

Older children and teenagers should, whenever possible, assume responsibility for their emergency kit under the guidance of their parents. However, symptoms of anaphylaxis can come on **very suddenly**, so school staff need to be prepared to administer medication if the young person cannot.

#### **Storage**

AAls should be stored at room temperature, protected from direct sunlight and temperature extremes.

#### **Disposal**

AAls are single use only and must be disposed of as sharps. Used AAls can be given to ambulance paramedics on arrival.

## 5. **Staff Training**

The named staff members (at least 2) responsible for co-ordinating staff anaphylaxis training and the upkeep of the school's anaphylaxis policy are:-

Fiona Cromie

Fiona Harvey

All staff will complete online anaphylaxis training at the start of every new academic year. Training is also available on an ad-hoc basis for any new members of staff.

## 6. **Inclusion and safeguarding**

The 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 academic potential.

## 7. **Catering**

The School Nurse will obtain information on pupils with special dietary needs, including any medical assessment from their Doctor/Dietician, where available, and inform the Catering Manager.

Under the legislation **EU Food Information for Consumers Regulation (No. 1169/2011)**, all food business operators have the responsibility to provide the [correct allergen information](#) about the ingredients that are in the food they make or serve to customers.

Pupils with allergies should check with catering staff, before purchasing food or selecting their lunch choice.

The School catering service will provide allergen information for unpackaged food verbally, on request. Catering staff are trained in Allergen management and to refer any questions regarding an allergy to the Catering Supervisor or Allergen Champion.

The College also has a display including photographs of pupils with allergies in a special diet folder which is only visible to the Catering Staff.

Use of food in crafts, cooking classes, science experiments and special events (e.g. fetes, assemblies, cultural events) needs to be considered and may need to be restricted/risk assessed depending on the allergies of particular children and their age.

## 9. **School trips**

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. Pupils unable to produce their required medication will not be able to attend the excursion.

All the activities on the school trip will be risk assessed to see if they pose a threat to allergic pupils and alternative activities planned to ensure inclusion.

Overnight school trips should be possible with careful planning and a meeting for parents with the lead member of staff planning the trip should be arranged. Staff at the venue for an overnight school trip should be briefed early on that an allergic child is attending and will need appropriate food (if provided by the venue).

## 12. **Useful Links**

Anaphylaxis UK Safer Schools

Programme - <https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/education/safer-schools-programme/>

AllergyWise for Schools (including certificate) online training

- <https://www.allergywise.org.uk/p/allergywise-for-schools1>

BSACI Allergy Action Plans - <https://www.bsaci.org/professional-resources/resources/paediatric-allergy-action-plans/>

Spare Pens in Schools - <http://www.sparepensinschools.uk>

Department for Education Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions  
- [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/803956/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/803956/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions.pdf)

Department of Health Guidance on the use of adrenaline auto-injectors in schools -  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/645476/Adrenaline auto injectors in schools.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/645476/Adrenaline_auto_injectors_in_schools.pdf)

Food allergy quality standards (The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, March 2016) <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs118>

Anaphylaxis: assessment and referral after emergency treatment (The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, 2020) <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg134?unlid=22904150420167115834>