



HARLINGTON LOWER AND SUNDON LOWER SCHOOL **ALLERGY AWARENESS POLICY**

Approved by Curriculum Trustee Committee: November 2023
Approved by Board of Trustees: January 2020 (to be reviewed January 2024)
Next review: November 2027

Introduction

Harlington Lower School (HLS) and Sundon Lower School (SLS) are committed to ensuring that all pupils, staff and volunteers are safe and their well-being is maintained. It is recognised that there is a growing case for awareness of the potential for individuals in the school to suffer from allergies. Consequently we must respond to the needs of those pupils, staff and volunteers with identified allergies.

Allergic reactions can vary from mild discomfort to severe reactions with the potential to be fatal. Anaphylaxis is a severe and sudden allergic reaction. Common allergens include but are not limited to nuts, eggs, shellfish, wheat, pollens, dairy products, bee stings and grass.

Given the number and variety of allergy triggers, it is difficult to protect members of the school community from exposure to allergens. This policy is in place to minimise the risk of exposure to allergens and triggers to severe allergic reactions and ensure that appropriate staff are trained to provide first aid should a child or adult have an allergic reaction.

Aims

- To minimise risks to staff and pupils within HLS and SLS who are identified as having the potential for a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis).
- To develop an understanding about allergies and their triggers, and promote education about safe practice for appropriate staff.
- To be aware of staff, pupils and volunteers who have allergies and their Individual Health Care Plans.

Objectives

HLS and SLS are committed to taking four key steps to develop an Allergy Aware Environment. These are:

1. To obtain medical information about children at risk and obtain a written care plan devised by a health professional and the pupil's family.
2. To educate appropriate members of staff responsible for the care of pupils, concerning the risk of severe allergic reactions.
3. To implement practical strategies to avoid exposure to known triggers, where possible.
4. To regularly review and monitor all Individual Health Care Plans (IHCP).

Identification and Documentation of Medical Information

- Obtain medical information regarding the allergy at the time of admission, or diagnosis if later.
- When a pupil or staff member is diagnosed with an allergy, relevant documentation is to be provided by an authorised adult and medical practitioner (where appropriate) in the form of an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP). This IHCP and any relevant medication, including Epinephrine Auto-Injectors (Epipens), will be held at HLS in the School Office (Years 1 -4)

and in Oak Class (Year R), and at SLS in the child's classroom and in the medical cupboard in the School Office.

- A copy of the IHCP is to be taken with the relevant medication by the teacher, whenever the person at risk leaves the grounds e.g. for excursions, walks, etc.
- Where a pupil, staff member or volunteer has an allergy, consent for information and photograph to be displayed in classrooms, the school office and kitchen.
- Photographs of pupils with known allergens are to be kept with medication to minimise the possibility of wrongly administering medication.
- Parents will be alerted to the benefits of using a Medical Alert Identification – bracelet or necklace, where appropriate.
- Medication will be returned to parents at the end of every school term.

Education

- **Whole school community** – The school community will be encouraged not to bring foods that may trigger severe allergies to school e.g. nuts or products containing nuts using the school website and newsletters to communicate with parents/carers.
- **Staff** – appropriate staff to undertake appropriate Medical Needs and Epipen training at regular intervals e.g. annually. Staff who have contact with pupils with known allergies need to be aware of risk factors for that pupil. Staff in contact with a pupil with a severe allergy will need to adhere to any special requirements put in place for that class.
- **Pupils with an allergy** – parents/caregivers, in consultation with a medical practitioner, to educate the at risk pupil in the self-management of their allergy, e.g. what is safe and unsafe, strategies for avoiding exposure to allergens, symptoms of allergic reactions, how and when to tell an adult they may be having an allergy-related problem. Where a severe food allergy exists it may be recommended that the 'at risk' pupil only consumes foods which have been prepared at home.
- **Other students** – where there is a pupil with a severe allergy, the class teachers will teach pupils about the common triggers and signs of allergic reactions, and to report immediately any suspected symptoms. They will also educate pupils regarding strategies which could be employed in the event of an attack when an adult is not present as well as sensible precautions that should be taken such as no sharing or swapping of food, drinks, containers and utensils. Pupils to be encouraged to wash hands both before and after eating, and after contact with known allergens to minimise the risk of accidental transference.
- **Volunteers** – If volunteering in a class where there is a pupil with a severe allergy, the volunteer will need to read and adhere to any special requirements put in place for that class and pupil.

Implementation of Practical Strategies

Environment

Whole school

- While food products that may cause allergies will not be banned from the school, it is school policy that certain products will be banned from school as necessary to protect those with severe allergies. Parents and carers are asked to consider alternatives for their child's lunches and snacks. Similarly all adult groups involved in school functions will be reminded of school policy and asked not to bring these products on site due to the risk of transference.
- Special attention will be given to nuts and nut products given the severity of reactions at minimal exposure levels. In addition to this, risk assessments will need to be completed on all products and foreign objects, including animals, brought into the school environment which may be triggers, so as to minimise risk of exposure to other allergens such as pollens, pet hair, bee-stings, cleaning agents etc, where a child has been identified as at risk of an allergic reaction.

Classroom

- Exposure to Food Substances – where a pupil in a particular class is identified as having a severe food allergy, and exposure to that food, even without ingestion will put that pupil at risk; additional precautions will need to be put in place within that classroom. In such circumstances a note will be sent home to parents notifying them of the situation and requesting that foods which may cause a problem not be sent to school. Should foods containing such allergens be brought to school, the food will be confiscated and parent/carer contacted to arrange provision of a suitable alternative
- Birthday celebrations– we request that parents do not send in food to be given to other children.
- All pupils will be encouraged to wash their hands before and after eating.
- Regarding other allergens, precautions need to be taken to minimise the exposure risk to identified staff, pupils or volunteers. This is to take the form of risk assessments and monitoring what comes into the classroom, e.g. pets – if there is a severe allergy to pet hair; flowers – if there is an allergy to pollen; cleaning products - if there is an allergy to certain chemicals.
- Classroom teachers and other staff should also be aware of risks during science experiments, school trips, visits and physical education activities.

Dining Hall at Lunchtime

- No sharing or swapping of food, drinks, containers and utensils to be allowed.
- Should foods containing known allergens be brought to school, the child who has brought them will be directed to move to a designated space to consume them, to minimise risk of transference within the dining hall.

Linked to the Medical Conditions Policy



We support children in becoming well rounded individuals where they naturally demonstrate the values of the school in all aspects of their lives.