

# Allergy and Anaphylaxis Policy

North Halifax Grammar School



|                            |                        |
|----------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Approved by:</b>        | Headteacher            |
| <b>Last reviewed on:</b>   | Autumn Term 2026       |
| <b>Next review due by:</b> | Autumn Term 2027       |
| <b>Owner</b>               | School Welfare Officer |

***This policy is designed to be linked to the school's Supporting Students with Medical Needs and the Administration of Medicines Policy***

|                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Purpose</b>                   | To minimise the risk of any student suffering a serious allergic reaction whilst at school or attending any school-related activity. To ensure staff are properly prepared to recognise and manage serious allergic reactions should they arise. |
| <b>Links with other policies</b> | Supporting Students with Medical Needs and the Administration of Medicines Policy                                                                                                                                                                |

The named staff members responsible for coordinating staff anaphylaxis training and the upkeep of the school's anaphylaxis policy are:

|                     |                     |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Nicola Lamb:</b> | <b>Policy</b>       |
| <b>Jo Finnett:</b>  | <b>Training</b>     |
| <b>Amanda Cade:</b> | <b>Link Trustee</b> |

#### **Contents**

1. Introduction
2. Roles and responsibilities
3. Allergy action plans
4. Emergency treatment and management of anaphylaxis
5. Supply, storage and care of medication
6. Spare adrenaline auto-injectors in school
7. Staff training
8. Inclusion and safeguarding
9. Catering
10. School trips
11. Allergy awareness and nut bans
12. Risk assessment
13. Useful links

## 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 severe reaction called anaphylaxis.

Anaphylaxis is a serious, life-threatening allergic reaction. 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 North Halifax Grammar School will support students with allergies, to ensure they are safe and are not disadvantaged in any way whilst taking part in school life. The school will also share a register with all staff of all students who use Epipens on the school's management information system.

## 2. Role and responsibilities

### Parent Responsibilities

- On entry to the school, it is the parent's responsibility to inform the School Welfare Officer of any allergies. This information should include all previous serious allergic reactions, history of anaphylaxis and details of all prescribed medication.
- Parents should supply a copy of their child's Allergy Action Plan to school. If they do not currently have an Allergy Action Plan, a School Health Care Plan should be completed
- 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

- **First aiders** will complete detailed anaphylaxis training. Training is also provided for **all staff** on a face-to-face basis every 3 years, with an online top-up annually (1).
- Staff must be aware of the students 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 caution.
- Staff leading school trips will ensure they carry all relevant emergency supplies. Trip leaders to check that all students with medical conditions, including allergies, carry their medication. Students unable to produce their required medication will not be able to attend the excursion.
- The School Welfare Officer will ensure that the up-to-date Allergy Action Plan is kept with the student's medication and liaise with the trip leader.
- It is the parent's responsibility to ensure all medication is in date however the School Welfare Officer will check medication kept at school and send a reminder to parents if medication is approaching expiry.
- The School Welfare Officer keeps a register of students who have been prescribed an adrenaline auto-injector (AAI) and a record of use of any AAI(s) and emergency treatment given.
- The School Welfare Officer ensures that any reaction or near miss is recorded and reported internally or in accordance with RIDDOR

### Student Responsibilities

- Students 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.
- Students should carry an AAI with them at all times and have a spare AAI with their care plan in the main school office. This will be stored in a lockable cupboard

### 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.

British Society of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (BSACI) Allergy Action Plans are produced by a medical professional and should not be created by school. These are a national plan that has been agreed by the BSACI, Anaphylaxis UK and Allergy UK. The allergy action plans are designed to function as an individual healthcare plan.

### 4. Emergency Treatment and Management of Anaphylaxis

#### What to look for:

Symptoms usually come on quickly, within minutes of exposure to the allergen.

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.

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 severe 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 student 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.

What does adrenaline do?

- It opens up the airways
- It stops swelling
- It raises the blood pressure

**As soon as anaphylaxis is suspected, adrenaline must be administered without delay. Action:**

- Keep the child where they are, call for help and do not leave them unattended.
- **LIE CHILD FLAT WITH LEGS RAISED** – they can be propped up if struggling to breathe but this should be for as short a time as possible.
- **USE ADRENALINE AUTO-INJECTOR WITHOUT DELAY** and note the time given. AAI's

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 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 students must go to hospital for observation after anaphylaxis even if they appear to have recovered as a reaction can reoccur after treatment.

## 5. Supply, storage and care of medication

Depending on their level of understanding and competence, students will be encouraged to take responsibility for and to carry their own AAI on them at all times. A second AAI will be stored with their care plan in a suitable named container in the main school office. Some older students may wish to carry 2 AAIs on them.

Medication should be stored in a suitable container and clearly labelled with the student's name. The student's medication storage container should contain:

- An AAI i.e. EpiPen® or Jext® in the box, and then one on the student. (If possible 2 AAIs in the box and 1 with the student.)
- 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. The school will store it in a clearly labelled container. The School Welfare officer will check medication kept at school and send a reminder to parents if medication is approaching expiry.

Parents can subscribe to expiry alerts for the relevant AAIs 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

AAIs should be stored at room temperature, protected from direct sunlight and temperature extremes. These are stored in a lockable cupboard in the main school office

### Disposal

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. Sharps bins to be obtained from and disposed of by a **clinical waste team**. The sharps bin is kept in Pastoral 3, the Medical Room.

## 6. 'Spare' adrenaline auto-injectors in school

North Halifax Grammar School has purchased spare **AAIs for emergency use in children who are at risk of anaphylaxis**, if their own devices are not available or not working (e.g. because they are out of date) or are experiencing anaphylaxis for the first time.

These are stored in a green emergency adrenaline pen kit clearly labelled 'Emergency Anaphylaxis Adrenaline Pen', kept safely, not locked away and **accessible and known to all staff in**

### **the Medical Room, Pastoral 3.**

North Halifax Grammar School holds 4 spare pens which are kept in the following locations:

- **Main School Office**
- **Pastoral 3, Medical Room**

The School Welfare Officer is responsible for checking the spare medication is in date and replace as needed.

Written parental permission for use of the spare AAI is included in the student's allergy action plan.

## **7. Staff Training**

The named staff members responsible for coordinating staff anaphylaxis training and the upkeep of the school's anaphylaxis policy are:

|                     |                 |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Nicola Lamb:</b> | <b>Policy</b>   |
| <b>Jo Finnett:</b>  | <b>Training</b> |

All staff will complete AllergyWise® allergy and anaphylaxis training (2) annually, and on an ad-hoc basis during induction of new staff.

Training includes:

- Knowing the common allergens and triggers of allergy
- Spotting the signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction and anaphylaxis. Early recognition of symptoms is key, including knowing when to call for emergency services
- 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, knowing who is responsible for what
- Managing allergy action plans and ensuring these are up to date
- **North Halifax Grammar School** ensures that staff undertake a practical session using trainer devices (these can be obtained from the manufacturers' websites: [www.epipen.co.uk](http://www.epipen.co.uk) and [www.jext.co.uk](http://www.jext.co.uk))

## **8. Inclusion and safeguarding**

**North Halifax Grammar 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.

## **9. Catering**

All food businesses (including school caterers) must follow the Food Information Regulations 2014 which states that allergen information relating to the 'Top 14' allergens must be available for all food products.

The school's menu is available for parents to view **fortnightly** in advance with all ingredients listed and allergens highlighted on the organisation's website at [www.nhgs.co.uk](http://www.nhgs.co.uk).

The School Nurse Welfare Officer will inform the Catering Manager of students with food allergies.

Parents/carers are encouraged to meet or contact the Catering Manager, [a.mclaughlin@nhgs.co.uk](mailto:a.mclaughlin@nhgs.co.uk) to discuss their child's needs.

The school adheres to the following **Department of Health guidance** recommendations:

- Bottles, other drinks and lunch boxes provided by parents for students with food allergies should be clearly labelled with the name of the child for whom they are intended.
- If food is purchased from the school canteen, parents should check the appropriateness of foods by speaking directly to the catering manager.
- The student should be taught to also check with catering staff before purchasing food or selecting their lunch choice.
- Where food is provided by the school, staff should be educated about how to read labels for food allergens and instructed about measures to prevent cross contamination during the handling, preparation and serving of food. Examples include: preparing food for children with food allergies first; careful cleaning (using warm soapy water) of food preparation areas and utensils. For further information, parents/carers are encouraged to liaise with the Catering Manager.
- 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.

## **10. School trips**

Staff leading school trips will ensure they carry all relevant emergency supplies. Trip leaders will check that all students with medical conditions, including allergies, carry their medication. Students 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 students 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).

### **Sporting Excursions**

Allergic children should have every opportunity to attend sports trips to other schools. The school will ensure that the P.E. teacher/s are fully aware of the situation. The school being visited will be notified that a member of the team has an allergy when arranging the fixture. A member of staff trained in administering adrenaline will accompany the team. If another school feels that they are not equipped to cater for any food-allergic child, the school will arrange for the child to take alternative/their own food.

Most parents are keen that their children should be included in the full life of the school where possible, and the school will need their co-operation with any special arrangements required.

## **11. Allergy awareness and nut bans**

**North Halifax Grammar School** is a nut-free school. We support the approach advocated by Anaphylaxis UK towards nut bans/nut free schools. However, in terms of all allergens, no school could guarantee a truly allergen-free environment for a child living with food allergy, so we also encourage a culture of allergy awareness and education. This approach ensures teachers, students and all other staff are aware of what allergies are, the importance of avoiding the students' allergens, the signs & symptoms, how to deal with allergic reactions and to ensure policies and procedures are in place to minimise risk.

## **12. Risk Assessment**

**North Halifax Grammar School** will conduct a detailed risk assessment to help identify any gaps in our systems and processes for keeping allergic children safe.

## **13. Useful Links**

Anaphylaxis UK - <https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/>

- Safer Schools Programme - <https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/education/safer-schools-programme/>
- AllergyWise for Schools online training - <https://www.allergywise.org.uk/p/allergywise-for-schools1>

Allergy UK - <https://www.allergyuk.org>

- Whole school allergy and awareness management - <https://www.allergyuk.org/schools/whole-school-allergy-awareness-andmanagement>

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 students at school with medical conditions - [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/803956/supporting-students-at-school-with-medical-conditions.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/803956/supporting-students-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>

## Footnotes:

- 1 It is strongly recommended that all staff complete allergy and anaphylaxis training to ensure that any member of staff can react quickly and accurately when a child has a reaction. When the training is limited to one or only a few members of staff, children with allergies are left in a potentially life-threatening situation if that member of staff is absent or deployed elsewhere.
- 2 AllergyWise® training is produced by Anaphylaxis UK, the only charity in the UK supporting those with severe allergies. The training is medically reviewed by leading allergy specialists.