

St Oswald's C of E Primary School

Allergy Management Policy



Policy Approved: May 2026

Next reviewed: May 2027

Introduction

Allergy is the response of the body's immune system to normally harmless substances. These do not cause any problems in most people, but in allergic individuals the immune system identifies them as 'allergens' and produces an inappropriate 'allergic' response. This can be relatively minor, such as localised itching, but it can also be much more serious, causing anaphylaxis which can lead to breathing problems and collapse. Common allergic triggers include nuts, cow's milk and other foods, venom (bee and wasp stings), drugs, latex and hair dye. The most common cause of anaphylaxis in children/young people are foods. Symptoms often appear quickly and the 'first line' emergency treatment for anaphylaxis is adrenaline which is administered with an adrenaline auto-injector (AAI).

In order to keep our pupils with allergy safe, we have a clear and consistent policy on managing allergies at school. We take a whole-school approach which involves all members of the school, including teaching staff, caterers, pupils and parents to ensure that the needs of the allergic pupils are met.

Parents can be confident in our schools' ability to keep their children safe, and be reassured that our staff are sufficiently trained to act immediately in the event of an allergic reaction.

Government legislation

Our school has a legal duty to support pupils with medical conditions, including allergy. We adhere to legislation and statutory guidance on caring for pupils with medical conditions, including the administration of allergy medication and adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs).

Health and Safety Policy

This policy must be read in conjunction with the Health and Safety Policy as the management of anaphylaxis is integral within the management of First Aid. Designated first aiders will be provided have specific training on anaphylaxis and understand their responsibilities in this regard.

Roles and Responsibilities

The **governing body** are required to develop policies to cover their own school. This should be based on a suitable and sufficient risk assessment carried out by a competent person. The governing body has general responsibility for all the school's policies, even when it is not the employer. In practice, most of the day-to-day functions of managing health and safety are delegated to the head teacher.

The **head teacher** is responsible for putting the governing body's policy into practice and for developing detailed procedures. The head teacher should also make sure that parents are aware of the school's health and safety policy, including arrangements for managing children with allergies and at risk of anaphylaxis.

Teachers' conditions of employment do not include giving first aid, although any member of staff may volunteer to undertake these tasks. Teachers and other staff in charge of pupils are expected to always use their best endeavors, particularly in emergencies, to secure the welfare of the pupils at the school in the same way that parents might be expected to act

towards their children. In general, the consequences of taking no action are likely to be more serious than those of trying to assist in an emergency.

The **employer** must arrange adequate and appropriate training and guidance for staff who volunteer to be first aiders/ appointed persons. The employer must ensure that there are enough trained staff to meet the statutory requirements and assessed needs, allowing for staff on annual/sick leave or off-site.

At St Oswald's, the majority of staff (not just those who are first aid trained), are trained to use adrenaline autoinjectors.

Management of Anaphylaxis

All pupils at risk of anaphylaxis have an Allergy Action Plan and IHCP that describes exactly what to do and who to contact in the event that they have an allergic reaction.

Allergy Action Plans

These plans are designed to facilitate first aid treatment of anaphylaxis, to be delivered by people without any special medical training nor equipment, apart from access to adrenaline autoinjectors (AAs). The plans are medical documents and should be completed by the child/young person's healthcare professional in partnership with parents/carers.

Individual Healthcare Plan (IHCP)

These plans are drawn up in partnership between the school, parents/carers, and a relevant healthcare professional, e.g. school nurse, specialist or children's community nurse or paediatrician, who can best advise on the particular healthcare needs of a child/young person. Pupils should also be involved whenever appropriate. The aim should be to capture the steps which a school should take to help the child/young person manage their specific condition, and overcome any potential barriers to getting the most from their education.

At St Oswald's, when a child has an allergy the allergy action plan is included in the IHCP. School and parents work alongside each other to produce the IHCP and each adult who works closely with the child reads and signs it. A physical copy is stored in the inclusion room and digital copies are stored both on the child's Arbor and CPOMs account

Staff Allergy Training

An allergic reaction can occur at any time, so all staff are trained on what to do in the event of an allergic reaction, as a student may be under their supervision when this happens. Allergy training is refreshed yearly annually and new staff are trained as soon as they join the school to ensure confidence and competence.

Training includes a basic understanding of allergic disease and its risks which include:

- 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 AAs) 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
- Associated conditions e.g. asthma
- Managing Allergy Action Plans and ensuring these are up to date.

Identification of Children with Allergies

All children with allergies requiring medication are listed (with photographs) on the appropriate school medical registers. These are saved electronically as well as displayed in all classrooms and office in school.

Storage of Allergy Medicines/AAIs

All students with prescribed allergy medicines (e.g. anti-histamines) are required to keep this medicine in school. They are stored in Medical Cabinet 1 in the School Office.

All students with a prescribed AAI are required to have two AAI's in school. One is kept in the child's classroom in a red drawstring medical bag. It is known to everyone who works with that child where the red bag is in the classroom. The other AAI is stored in the school office, in Medical Cabinet 1. The red medical bags are taken with the class when they go offsite.

If a child was to need to use their epi pen, it would be taken to them.

Spare AAI'S in School

School has purchased spare adrenaline auto-injector (AAI) devices for emergency use in children who are risk of anaphylaxis, but their own devices are not available or not working (e.g. because they are out of date). These are stored in the School Office (Medical Cabinet 2), kept safely but not locked away. They are accessible and known to all staff.

Expiry Dates

All medication kept in school is checked every month to confirm it is in its expected location and in date, this includes AAI's. Expiry dates are checked and cross referenced to the medical registers. If the expiry date is close, then parents are contacted and a request is made for a new one.

Once parents have brought in a new AAI, then the old one is sent home with the parents to be disposed of.

Catering at School

At St Oswald's, all children with allergies are included in school life. The staff members in the kitchen, as well as the lunchtime supervisors, know which children have allergies, so they can ensure that they are involved at meal times and kept safe. If the children are using food in class activities, ingredients will be looked at prior so everybody is able to be involved.

All children with food allergies, whether requiring emergency medication or not, will complete a Special Diet Form provided by our Catering Team who will then provide a suitable menu. The Catering Team are all trained in allergy awareness.

Nut-Free Environment

Although we recognise that this cannot be guaranteed, St Oswald's aims to be a Nut-Free school. We do not allow nuts or products containing nuts in school lunch boxes and we ask that the following items are not be brought into school:

- Packs of nuts,
- Peanut butter or Nutella/nut spread sandwiches,
- Fruit and cereal bars that contain nuts,
- Chocolate bars or sweets that contain nuts,
- Sesame seed rolls (children allergic to nuts may also have a severe reaction to sesame)
- Cakes made with nuts.

We do not use nuts in any of our food prepared on site at our school. Our suppliers provide us with nut-free products. However, we cannot guarantee freedom from nut traces.

School Activities and Trips

Children with allergies at St Oswald's are never excluded from off-site activities.

Prior to overnight school trips, such as residentials, meetings with parents will take place and plans will be set in place to ensure the child can be included.