

ALLERGENS POLICY



Author:	Claire Shaw
School Role:	Headteacher
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Reviewer:	Claire Shaw
School Role:	Headteacher
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1. Principles of this Allergens Policy

Our school is committed to ensuring that all pupils with allergies are safely supported, have full access to education, and participate in all school activities. This policy sets out how we meet our legal duties under Section 100 of the Children and Families Act 2014, requiring schools to support pupils with medical conditions, including allergies.

This policy sits alongside our Medical Conditions Policy, in line with the DfE's statutory guidance (currently being strengthened through 2026 consultation).

2. Legal and Statutory Framework

This policy is informed by:

- DfE Allergy Guidance for Schools (2025 update) – guidance on managing allergen risks, food substitutions, and legal duties for caterers.
- DfE "Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions" statutory guidance – including requirements for Individual Healthcare Plans (IHPs), training, emergency procedures and record-keeping.
- Proposed reforms requiring dedicated allergy safety policies, allergy-awareness training for all staff, and stocked spare adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs) from September 2026.
- Food Information Regulations 2014 – requirement for allergen labelling by food providers.

3. Definitions

Allergy: An immune response to a substance (food or non-food).

Anaphylaxis: A severe, potentially life-threatening allergic reaction requiring urgent treatment.

Adrenaline Auto-Injector (AAI): A device used to administer adrenaline in the event of anaphylaxis.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Governing Board

The governing board will:

- Ensure arrangements are in place to support pupils with allergies.
- Ensure a published medical conditions policy and a separate, published allergy policy (as proposed in 2026 updates).
- Ensure adequate staffing, training and resources.

4.2 Headteacher

Responsible for ensuring:

- Staff receive regular, up-to-date training in managing allergies and anaphylaxis.
- AAIs are accessible, in date, and stored appropriately.
- All school activities (trips, events, clubs) fully include pupils with allergies.

4.3 Staff

All staff must:

- Know which pupils have allergies and understand their IHPs.
- Recognise symptoms of an allergic reaction and act immediately using school emergency procedures.

4.4 Parents/Carers

Parents must:

- Provide up-to-date medical information and any prescribed medication.

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- Participate in annual reviews of the pupil's IHP.

4.5 Pupils

When appropriate, pupils will be supported to understand their allergy, know triggers, and participate in self-management.

5. Identification and Management of Pupils with Allergies

5.1 Individual Healthcare Plans (IHPs)

All pupils with diagnosed allergies must have an IHP outlining:

- Known allergens and severity
 - Preventive measures
 - Emergency response steps
 - Prescribed medication and location
- This aligns with DfE guidance on IHPs and proposed strengthened requirements.

5.2 Risk Assessment

For each pupil, the school will complete an individual risk assessment, including:

- Classroom, dining, and break-time environments
 - Practical subjects (DT, Science, Food Tech) and trips
 - Emergency evacuation/lockdown procedures
- This is consistent with national best practice.

6. Allergy-Safe Environment

6.1 Food Provision

- Caterers must comply with the Food Information Regulations allergen labelling rules.
- The school will maintain up-to-date menu allergen charts.
- Any menu substitutions must continue to meet needs of allergic pupils.

6.2 Classroom Practice

- All staff must avoid using food products with high allergen risk unless agreed in a pupil's IHP.
- Sharing food is discouraged to minimise risk.

6.3 “Nut-Free” Stance

Current guidance suggests risk-assessed strategies rather than blanket bans. Schools are encouraged to use safe-zones and targeted measures instead of declaring the whole school nut-free.

7. Emergency Procedures

- Staff must act immediately if anaphylaxis is suspected.
- The school will maintain spare AAs in accordance with 2026 proposed statutory requirements.
- Emergency plans are clearly displayed and included in IHPs.
- All incidents and “near misses” must be recorded and reviewed to improve practice.

8. Staff Training

- Annual allergy and anaphylaxis training is mandatory for all staff.
- New staff will receive induction training.
- Staff directly involved with high-risk pupils may require additional practical AAI training.

9. Inclusion in School Activities

- Pupils with allergies will be fully included in trips, PE, residential visits and events with appropriate planning and risk assessment, in line with statutory medical conditions guidance.

10. Record Keeping and Data Protection

- All medical information is stored securely and shared on a need-to-know basis.
- Incident logs, training records and IHPs will be maintained in line with DfE record-keeping expectations.

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11. Complaints

Concerns regarding allergy management should be raised first with the Headteacher. If unresolved, the formal complaints procedure applies, consistent with DfE medical conditions guidance.

12. Monitoring and Review

- This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner following changes in legislation, guidance or incidents.
- Reviews will reflect ongoing DfE updates from the 2026 allergy and medical conditions statutory guidance reforms