MacIntyre Academies
Quest Academy

Allergy Policy

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Allergy Policy

1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Set out our academy's approach to allergy management, including reducing the risk of exposure and the procedures in place in case of allergic reaction
- Make clear how our academy supports learners with allergies to ensure their wellbeing and inclusion
- Promote and maintain allergy awareness among the academy community

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education (DfE)'s guidance on allergies in schools and supporting pupils with medical conditions at school, the Department of Health and Social Care's guidance on using emergency adrenaline auto-injectors in schools, and the following legislation:

- The Food Information Regulations 2014
- The Food Information (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2019
- Human Medicines Regulations 2012
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026

3. Roles and responsibilities

We take a whole-academy approach to allergy awareness.

3.1 Allergy lead

The nominated allergy lead is Rhiann McGarrity who is a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) with pastoral responsibilities.
They're responsible for:

- Promoting and maintaining allergy awareness across our academy community
- Recording and collating allergy and special dietary information for all relevant learners (although the allergy lead has ultimate responsibility, the information collection itself may be delegated to another member of staff)
- Keeping stock of the academy's adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs)
- Regularly reviewing and updating the allergy policy

Ensuring:

- All allergy information is up to date and readily available to relevant members of staff
- All learners with allergies have an Individual Health Care Plan, developed with parents/carers and where relevant healthcare professionals
- All staff receive an appropriate level of allergy training
- All staff are aware of the academy's policy and procedures regarding allergies
- Relevant staff are aware of what activities need an allergy risk assessment

3.2 Academy medical officer

The academy medical officer is responsible for:

- Co-ordinating the paperwork and information from families
- Co-ordinating medication with families
- Checking spare AAIs are in date

- Any other appropriate tasks delegated by the allergy lead

3.3a Teaching and support staff

All teaching and support staff are responsible for:

- Promoting and maintaining allergy awareness among learners
- Maintaining awareness of our allergy policy and procedures
- Being able to recognise the signs of severe allergic reactions and anaphylaxis
- Attending appropriate allergy training as required
- Being aware of specific learners with allergies in their care
- Carefully considering the use of food or other potential allergens in lesson and activity planning
- Ensuring the wellbeing and inclusion of learners with allergies

3.3b Agency Staff and Visitors

- Any agency staff, visitors or volunteers that will work with a child with an allergy will be made aware by the class teacher or delegated member of the team
- Agency staff, visitors or volunteers will not lone work with a child with a known allergy unless they have evidence of allergy awareness training

3.4 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are responsible for:

- Being aware of the academy's allergy policy
- Providing the academy with up-to-date details of their child's medical needs, dietary requirements, and any history of allergies, reactions and anaphylaxis
- If required, providing their child with 2 in-date adrenaline auto-injectors and any other medication, including inhalers, antihistamine etc., and making sure these are replaced in a timely manner
- Carefully considering the food they provide to their child as packed lunches and snacks, and trying to limit the number of allergens included
- Following the academy's guidance on food brought onto site
- Updating the academy on any changes to their child's condition

4. Assessing risk

The academy will conduct a risk assessment for any learner at risk of anaphylaxis taking part in activities such as the following:

- Lessons such as food technology
- Science experiments involving allergens
- Crafts using food packaging
- Off-site events and academy trips
- Any other activities involving animals or food, such as animal handling experiences or baking

This is not an exhaustive list but meant as a guide. A risk assessment for any learner at risk of an allergic reaction will also be carried out where a visitor requires a guide dog.

5. Managing risk

5.1 Hygiene procedures

Measures we will take to prevent contamination in our academy, such as:

- Learners are reminded to wash their hands before and after eating
- Sharing of food is not allowed
- Learners have their own named water bottles

5.2 Catering

The academy is committed to providing safe food options to meet the dietary needs of learners with allergies. Any catering provided will ensure the following:

- Catering staff receive appropriate training and can identify learners with allergies
- Academy menus are available for parents/carers to view with ingredients labelled
- Where changes are made to academy menus, we will make sure these continue to meet any special dietary needs of learners
- Allergen information labelling will follow all legal requirements that apply to naming the food and listing ingredients, as outlined by the Food Standards Agency (FSA)
- Catering staff follow hygiene and allergy procedures when preparing food to avoid cross-contamination

5.3 Food restrictions

We acknowledge that it is impractical to enforce an allergen-free academy. However, we would like to encourage learners and staff to avoid certain high-risk foods to reduce the chances of someone experiencing a reaction. These foods include:

- Packaged nuts
- Cereal, granola or chocolate bars containing nuts
- Peanut butter or chocolate spreads containing nuts
- Peanut-based sauces, such as satay
- Sesame seeds and foods containing sesame seeds

If a learner brings these foods into the academy, they will not be allowed to eat these items on site.

5.4 Insect bites/stings

Procedures for preventing and dealing with insect bites/stings:

When outdoors:

- Shoes should always be worn
- Food and drink should be covered wherever possible
- First aid kit available and always taken on off-site visits
- Medication waist bags with staff supervising learners on off-site visits containing AAIs

5.5 Animals

Hygiene procedures for managing allergies to animals include:

- All learners will always wash hands after interacting with animals to avoid putting learners with allergies at risk through later contact
- Learners with animal allergies will not interact with animals
- Risk assessments in place for any animals on site

5.6 Support for learners

Our academy is committed to ensuring that all learners with medical conditions, including allergies, in terms of both physical and mental health, are properly supported so that they can play a full and active role in academy life, remain healthy and achieve their potential. Wherever possible, allergies will be managed with discretion, while respecting a learner's right to privacy, but there may be times it is important to make clear statements to other learners about the risk of some items and/or allergens in specific cases. Again, this will be done respectfully and where possible with the agreement of the learner with the allergy and their family.

5.7 Events and academy trips

- For events, including ones that take place outside of the academy, and academy trips, no learners with allergies will be excluded from taking part

- The academy will plan accordingly for all events and academy trips, and arrange for the staff members involved to be aware of learners' allergies and to have received adequate training
- Appropriate measures will be taken in line with the academy AAI protocols for off-site events and academy trips.

5.8 Other sources of allergens

We recognise that allergens are not only found in food. Staff will be aware that allergens and allergic triggers can also be present in areas such as the following, and will consider these when planning lessons and activities:

- Art, craft and design materials, such as food packaging, egg boxes, pasta, flour, dough and play dough (which may contain wheat), and other items that may contain or have been in contact with allergens
- Science and food technology equipment and ingredients, including any items that have been used with allergens and not cleaned thoroughly
- Sensory and play resources, such as bean bags, sensory trays and Early Years resources that may contain nuts, seeds, pulses or grains
- Toiletries and personal care products, such as soap, hand wash, moisturiser, sun cream and cosmetics, which may contain ingredients such as nut oils, sesame, oats or milk proteins
- Latex, found in some balloons, gloves, elastic bands and PE or sports equipment
- Animal feed and bedding, and the animals themselves, for any animals on site or visiting the academy
- Shared surfaces and equipment, such as tables, door handles, musical instruments and play equipment, where traces of allergens may be left behind
- Outdoor environments, including pollen, plants and grass

This is not an exhaustive list but meant as a guide. Where a learner has an allergy to a non-food trigger, this will be recorded on their Individual Health Care Plan and the allergy lead will make sure relevant staff are aware. Parents/carers are asked to tell the academy about any non-food allergens affecting their child.

6. Procedures for handling an allergic reaction

6.1 Register of learners with AAIs

The academy maintains a register of learners who have been prescribed AAIs or where a doctor has provided a written plan recommending AAIs to be used in the event of anaphylaxis. The register includes:

- Known allergens and risk factors for anaphylaxis
- Whether a learner has been prescribed AAI(s) (and if so, what type and dose)
- Where a learner has been prescribed an AAI, whether parental/carer consent has been given for use of the spare AAI, which may be different from the personal AAI prescribed for the learner
- A photograph of each learner to allow a visual check to be made

The register is kept centrally on SharePoint and can be checked quickly by any member of staff as part of initiating an emergency response.

6.2 Allergic reaction procedures

- As part of the whole-academy awareness approach to allergies, all staff are trained in the academy's allergic reaction procedure, and to recognise the signs of anaphylaxis and respond appropriately
- Staff are trained in the administration of AAIs to minimise delays in learners receiving adrenaline in an emergency
- If a learner has an allergic reaction, a staff member will follow the learner's allergy action plan

- Staff will call 999 immediately after administering adrenaline and give a second dose after 5 minutes if needed. Staff will always send the child to hospital even if they show signs of improvement

If an AAI needs to be administered, a member of staff will use the learner's own AAI, or if it is not available, an academy one. Spare AAIs can be used on anyone in an emergency.

If the learner has no allergy action plan, staff will follow the academy's procedures on responding to allergy and, if needed, the academy's normal emergency procedures. An academy AAI device will be used instead of the learner's own AAI device if:

- Medical authorisation and written parental consent have been provided, or
- The leaner's own prescribed AAI(s) are not immediately available (for example, because they are broken, out-of-date, have misfired or been wrongly administered)

- If a learner needs to be taken to hospital, staff will stay with the learner until the parent/carer arrives, or accompany the learner to hospital by ambulance
- If the allergic reaction is mild (e.g. skin rash, itching or sneezing), the learner will be monitored and the parents/carers informed

7. Adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs)

7.1 Storage (of both spare and prescribed AAIs)

The allergy lead will make sure all AAIs are:

- Stored at room temperature (in line with manufacturer's guidelines), protected from direct sunlight and extremes of temperature
- Kept in a safe and suitably central location that all staff can always access but that is out of learners' reach
- Not located more than 5 minutes away from where they may be needed
- Held as spare pairs, with appropriate dosages available to meet the needs of the academy's learners, in line with DfE guidance

Spare AAIs will be kept separate from any learner's own prescribed AAI and clearly labelled to avoid confusion.

7.2 Maintenance (of spare AAIs)

The allergy lead and the academy medical officer are responsible for checking monthly that:

The AAIs are present and in date

Replacement AAIs are obtained when the expiry date is near

7.3 Disposal

AAIs can only be used once. Once an AAI has been used, it will be disposed of in line with the manufacturer's instructions. If instructions are unclear, we may contact our local pharmacy for advice.

7.4 Emergency anaphylaxis kit

The academy holds an emergency anaphylaxis kit. This includes:

- Spare AAIs
- Instructions for the use of AAIs
- Instructions on storage
- Manufacturer's information

- A checklist of injectors, identified by batch number and expiry date with monthly checks recorded
- A note of arrangements for replacing injectors
- A list of learners to whom the AAI can be administered

8. Training

The academy is committed to training all staff, via The National College, in allergy response. The National College training is delivered by Anaphylaxis UK and is compliant with statutory guidance. This includes:

- How to reduce and prevent the risk of allergic reactions
- How to spot the signs of allergic reactions (including anaphylaxis)
- The importance of acting quickly in the case of anaphylaxis
- How to administer AAIs
- The wellbeing and inclusion implications of allergies

Training is undertaken within the first 12 weeks of a new staff member's induction. All adults on site are expected to complete this training, including agency staff and external contractors (such as therapists and the cleaning teams). The training must be repeated at least annually.

Information on where AAIs are kept, and how to access them, will be given regularly in staff briefings.

In some areas, an Integrated Care Board (ICB) of the NHS may choose to provide training in person for the staff that support specific children where the medical professionals deem this necessary. We will comply with such requests and make staff available to receive such training at a mutually convenient time.
All staff will also be made aware that if they have not had this specific training from the ICB, they would still be expected to act to fulfil their duty of care for any child experiencing an allergic reaction of any sort in line with their national college training.

8.1 Learning from incidents and/or near misses

In line with our health and safety policy, if there are near misses or incidents that arise regarding avoidable exposure to allergens and/or anaphylaxis, we will evaluate what has happened, review our procedures and take any necessary measures in our control to prevent further incidents. Near misses are reported via Iris Adapt, investigated by the School Business Manager and reviewed in the termly local Health & Safety Committee meeting.

9. Links to other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

Health and safety policy
Supporting pupils with medical needs policy
Academy food policy