

Policy and Procedure for Students with Allergies

Approval and Effective Date:

This policy was approved by the Headteacher Andrew Dean on 01/09/2024 and is effective immediately.

Review Date: 01/09/2025

1. Policy Overview

This policy applies to all students with known allergies, including but not limited to food allergies, insect stings, environmental allergens, and drug allergies. The goal is to minimise exposure to allergens and ensure quick and appropriate treatment if an allergic reaction occurs.

2. Identification of Allergies

- **Mild, Moderate, Severe:** Any allergic reactions should be made clear immediately including the severity rating with the RAG criteria mild, moderate and severe.
 - **Student Information:**
Parents/guardians and host schools are required to notify Balance Alternative Provision of any allergies their child has, including details of the allergens, the severity of the allergy, and any known triggers. This information and any other reasonable measures should be submitted alongside the referral form and risk assessment as part of an 'Allergy Action Plan'.
 - **Medical Documentation:**
Where appropriate and necessary, copies of medical requests from a healthcare provider confirming the student's allergy and the recommended treatment plan must be submitted during the admission procedure. This plan should include the type of reaction (mild, moderate, severe) and the specific medications required. This document, and any risk assessments used by a student's host school should be sent prior to the student starting at Balance AP.
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3. Storage of Medication

- **Medication Requirements:**
Students with allergies requiring prescribed medication (e.g., epinephrine auto-injectors, antihistamines) must have requests on file and supplied by the parents and given directly to the Provision to be stored in the first aid room (excluding epinephrine auto-injectors that are usually kept by the student on their person). All medication must be in its original, labelled container with the student's name, dosage, and administration instructions supplied. Please refer to our Medicines Policy for more information.

- **Location of Medication: First Aid Room**

Any prescribed additional medication should be supplied and administered by parents.

- **Field Trips and Extra-Curricular Activities:**

Teachers and chaperones must be informed of the student's allergies and will carry the agreed emergency medication while off-site.

- **Access to Medication:**

All staff members must be aware of the medical needs of students. Photographs of students with medical needs must be displayed in a secure location for immediate access. Responsibility for epinephrine auto-injectors, will belong to the Student.

4. Treatment of Symptoms

- **Mild to Moderate Allergic Reactions:**

- **Symptoms:** Itching, hives, mild swelling, sneezing, or mild gastrointestinal discomfort.

- **Treatment:**

- Administer antihistamine (as prescribed by the doctor) if necessary to be brought and administered by parents / guardians.
- The First Aider will be notified and be the first response.
- Staff will monitor the student closely, supplying cooling paper towels or ice-packs if necessary. If symptoms do not improve or worsen, initiate emergency response procedures.

- **Severe Allergic Reactions (Anaphylaxis):**

- **Symptoms:** Difficulty breathing, swelling of the throat, severe hives, wheezing, dizziness, fainting, or a rapid drop in blood pressure.

- **Immediate Treatment:**

- Students will administer epinephrine (via auto-injector) immediately where prescribed.
 - 999 will be called in case of emergency.
 - Staff will keep the student calm and in a position that facilitates breathing (usually sitting with legs raised), or in recovery position if required in an emergency.
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5. Emergency Response Procedures

- **Designated First Aid Responder**

- **First Aid Response:** The provision has designated First Aid responders and posters are visible for staff and students across the provision.
- The Designated First Aid Responder will assess the situation and decide to treat or take emergency action.

- **Notification Chain:** In the event of an allergic reaction, staff members must immediately notify parents, guardians and host schools via usual reporting procedures.
 - **Post-Incident Follow-Up:**
 - The Provision will conduct a follow-up with the student and parents after a severe allergic reaction to discuss any necessary adjustments to the allergy action plan.
 - A review of the incident will be conducted to evaluate the response and make any necessary improvements to the 'Allergy Action Plan'.
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6. Education and Awareness

- **Training for Staff:**

All Provision staff will receive regular training on recognising symptoms of allergic reactions, facilitating students to administer epinephrine, and following emergency responses as per the procedure.
 - **Student Education:**

Students will be educated regarding allergies and contagions as part of PSHE and RSE curriculum.
 - **Parent and Guardian Communication:**

Parents/guardians and host schools can access the allergy policy via the website.
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7. Allergen Avoidance Measures

- **Classroom Measures:**

Teachers and staff will make every effort to avoid bringing allergens into the classrooms and social spaces. This includes promoting nut-free environments as much as possible, or other restrictions based on specific student needs. However, there is an understanding that allergens may be unavoidable.
 - **Special Events and Activities:**

For special events (trips, visitors and off-site education), teachers will have risk assessments in place to ensure that every measure is taken to prevent students from being exposed to allergens.
 - **Lunchroom and packed lunches:**

Lunch is provided via an independent supplier. Whilst requests for allergen free lunches are made, students with known allergies will provide their own lunch from home to ensure their personal safety. This is an expectation of the Provision.
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8. Record Keeping and Confidentiality

- **Medical Administration Records:**

The Provision will provide written 'Cause for Concern' Forms as part of reporting procedure to host schools as necessary. Parents and guardians will be immediately informed if and when students require medical treatment. Any incidents are added to the Incident book in the First Aid Room.

- **Review and Update:**

All 'Allergy Action Plans' will be reviewed and updated annually or as required.

9. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Provision's Senior Leadership Team to ensure it remains compliant with best practices, OFSTED recommendations and regulatory requirements. Any necessary updates will be made and communicated to all relevant stakeholders.
