DITCHAM PARK SCHOOL

Where every child is known and valued

Allergy & Intolerance Management Policy

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Approved by	Headmaster & Head of Juniors
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Allergy & Intolerance Management Policy

Introduction

There are a number of students at our school who have severe food allergies. The most common of these allergens are peanuts, tree nuts, eggs, fish and shellfish, soy and wheat. The most serious risk in our school is peanut allergies, which, along with various other allergens, has the potential to cause life threatening anaphylactic reactions.

This policy applies to the whole school, including the EYFS.

Aims

The school aims to provide a safe learning environment for all members of the Ditcham Park School community and to raise awareness regarding severe allergies.
Although we recognise that this cannot be guaranteed, Ditcham Park School aims to be a Nut-Free school. This policy serves to set out all measures to reduce the risk to those children and adults who may suffer an anaphylactic reaction if exposed to nuts or other foods to which they are sensitive.
We do not allow nuts or nut products in school as snacks, in our catering facilities at functions or in school lunch boxes. If nuts or nut products are brought on to site they will be bagged up and sent home, areas will be sanitised and hands washed. Parents of allergic children are contacted to advise if the School considers they may be at any risk as a result of such an incident. Reminders are sent home and included in the School newsletter of our "Nut-Free" aim to raise awareness. An entry to the School's Evolve Accident Book may be made to record the actions taken.

Management

Taking a whole school approach, this policy will be managed by:

- Parents, guardians and carers being requested NOT to send food to school that contains nuts[1]. This includes all types of nuts, peanut butter, Nutella and other foods containing nuts (e.g. cakes, chocolate bars, fruit and cereal bars and sesame seed rolls).
- The school kitchen (and the food it produces) are to be nut free. However, we cannot guarantee freedom from "nut traces"
- Staff supervising eating at lunchtime[2]
- Students being encouraged NOT to share food
- Students being encouraged to wash hands before and after eating
- Staff training[3] in understanding and dealing with Anaphylaxis (severe allergic reactions) as the need arises

[1] All product packaging must be checked for warnings directed at nut allergy sufferers.
[2] If Staff distribute confectionary, care must be taken to ensure that no nuts are included in the product. Fruit sweets such as Haribo are a better alternative.
[3] Epi Pen trained staff are named First Aiders. Please check the school office, medical room and the Staffroom noticeboard for a list of qualified staff.

Parents, guardians and carers must notify staff of any known or suspected allergy and provide all medical and necessary information. This will be added to the child's information held on the School's Management Information System (Schoolbase). If considered necessary a meeting will be organised with the Headmaster's PA, Head of Seniors or Head of Juniors.

It is important that allergic pupils are not stigmatised or discriminated against in any way at school due to their allergy. For example, they should not be separated at mealtimes or excluded from class activities (unless this has been specified in the pupil's Allergy Plan). Drawing attention to the allergy in this way could result in allergy bullying by other pupils, so inclusivity and overall awareness amongst pupils is vital.

Promotion

The policy will be promoted by:

- A copy of this policy being issued to all parents, guardians and carers
- Staff being informed and provided with training opportunities
- Publication of this policy on the school website
- Pupils being informed via teachers and support staff:
    - to be responsible when eating and handling food both inside and outside of school
    - helping students to understand that the foods they enjoy eating can also be dangerous to others
    - encouraging students to support their classmates with allergies by eating and handling food responsibly

Risk Assessment regarding Nut Allergy

- Staff will be alert to any obvious signs of nuts being brought in, but they will not inspect all food brought into school

- If staff do notice a student that has brought in food that contains nuts or nut products these items will be removed and if required, an alternative will be provided from the school kitchen

Definitions

Allergy

Allergy is the response of the body's immune system to normally harmless substances such as foods, pollen and house dust mites. Whilst these substances (allergens) may not cause any problems in most people, in allergic individuals their immune system identifies them as a 'threat' and produces an inappropriate response. This can be relatively minor, such as localised itching, but it can be much more severe causing anaphylaxis which can lead to upper respiratory obstruction and collapse. Common triggers are nuts and other foods, venom (bee and wasp stings), drugs, latex and hair

dye. Symptoms often appear quickly and the 'first line' emergency treatment for anaphylaxis is adrenaline which is administered with an Adrenaline Auto-Injector (AAI).

Anaphylaxis

Anaphylaxis is an extreme allergic reaction requiring urgent medical treatment. When such severe allergies are diagnosed, the children concerned are made aware from a very early age of what they can and cannot eat and drink and, in the majority of cases; they go through the whole of their school lives without incident. The most common cause is food - in particular nuts, fish, and dairy products. Wasp and bee stings can also cause an allergic reaction. In its most severe form, the condition can be life-threatening, but it can be treated with medication. This may include antihistamine, adrenaline inhaler or adrenaline injection, depending on the severity of the reaction.

The device for injecting adrenaline (issued in the most severe cases) looks like a fountain pen and is pre-loaded with the correct dose of adrenaline and is normally injected into the fleshy part of the thigh.
The needle is not revealed, and the injection is easy to administer. It is not possible to give too large a dose using this device. In cases of doubt, it is better to give the injection than to hold back. Whilst responsibility for giving the injection should ideally rest with a trained first aider, the school expects any member of staff to administer the injection if they are the only adult around at the time. To this end, the school has provided INSET training to all staff on how to administer an adrenaline injection and information is available from the school office. If the pupil is considered responsible enough to carry his or her own medication, they should be encouraged to do so but if not, it will be stored in the First Aid room which is accessible by all staff, continuously during the school day.

If a pupil is likely to suffer a severe allergic reaction, all staff are made aware of the condition.

Symptoms (ABC)

Symptoms of anaphylaxis include one of more of the below:

Airway:
- Swollen tongue
- Difficulty swallowing/speaking
- Throat tightness
- Change in voice (hoarse or croaky sounds)

Breathing:
- Difficult or noisy breathing
- Chest tightness
- Persistent cough
- Wheeze (whistling noise due to a narrowed airway)

Circulation:

- Feeling dizzy or faint
- Collapse
- Babies and young children may suddenly become floppy and pale
- Loss of consciousness (unresponsive)

The symptoms of anaphylaxis usually start between three and sixty minutes after contact with the allergen. Less commonly they can occur a few hours or even days after contact.

Anaphylaxis varies in severity. Sometimes it causes only mild itchiness and swelling, but in some people, it can cause sudden death. If symptoms start soon after contact with the allergen and rapidly worsens, this indicates that the reaction is more severe.

Health Plans and Emergency Response

The school has Individual Health Care Plans for children with allergies and Allergy Lists are displayed highlighting Health Care Plans in place, triggers and medication.
Medication will be stored, administered and documented in accordance with our First Aid and Medical Needs Policy.