



**WOODTHORPE INFANT SCHOOL**  
**Allergen and Anaphylaxis Policy**

**Updated September 2025**

**Signed: E Bowler (Head Teacher)**

**Signed: L Kay (H&S Governor)**

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## **Statement of intent**

Woodthorpe Infant School strives to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community. For this reason, this policy is to be adhered to by all staff members, parents/carers and pupils, with the intention of minimising the risk of anaphylaxis occurring whilst at school.

In order to effectively implement this policy and ensure the necessary control measures are in place, parents/carers are responsible for working alongside the school in identifying allergens and potential risks, in order to ensure the health and safety of their children.

Woodthorpe Infant School supports the approach advocated by The Anaphylaxis Campaign and Allergy UK towards nut bans/nut free schools. They would not necessarily support a blanket ban on any particular allergen in any establishment, including in schools. This is because nuts are only one of many allergens that could affect pupils, and no school could guarantee a truly allergen free environment for a child living with a food allergy. They advocate instead for schools to adopt a culture of allergy awareness and education.

A whole school awareness of allergies is a much better approach, as it ensures teachers, pupils and all other staff are aware of what allergies are, the importance of avoiding the pupils' allergens, the signs and symptoms, how to deal with allergic reactions, and to ensure policies and procedures are in place to minimise risk. Additionally, third parties and visitors will be made aware of the school's approach and will be asked to follow the guidance set out in this policy.

## 1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Children and Families Act 2014
- The Human Medicines (Amendment) Regulations 2017
- The Food Information (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2019 (Natasha's Law)
- Department of Health (2017) 'Guidance on the use of adrenaline auto-injectors in schools'
- DfE (2015) 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions'
- DfE (2022) 'Allergy guidance for schools'

This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Administering Medication Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Visits Policy

## 2. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy:

**Allergy** – is a condition in which the body has an exaggerated response to a substance. This is also known as hypersensitivity.

**Allergen** – is a normally harmless substance that triggers an allergic reaction for a susceptible person.

**Allergic reaction** – is the body's reaction to an allergen and can be identified by, but not limited to, the following symptoms:

- Hives
- Generalised flushing of the skin
- Itching and tingling of the skin
- Tingling in and around the mouth
- Burning sensation in the mouth
- Swelling of the throat, mouth, or face
- Feeling wheezy
- Abdominal pain
- Rising anxiety
- Nausea and vomiting
- Alterations in heart rate

- Feeling of weakness

**Anaphylaxis** – is also referred to as anaphylactic shock, which is a sudden, severe, and potentially life-threatening allergic reaction. This kind of reaction may include one or more of the following symptoms:

Airway:

- Swelling of the mouth, throat, or tongue, which can cause breathing and swallowing difficulties.
- 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, faint, or sleepy
- Collapse
- Loss of consciousness (unresponsive)
- For infants and younger pupils, becoming pale or floppy.

### **3. Roles and responsibilities**

The governing body is responsible for:

- Ensuring that policies, plans, and procedures are in place to support pupils with allergies and who are at risk of anaphylaxis and that these arrangements are sufficient to meet statutory responsibilities and minimise risks.
- Ensuring that the school's approach to allergies and anaphylaxis focusses on, and accounts for, the needs of each individual pupil.
- Ensuring that staff are properly trained to provide the support that pupils need, and that they receive food allergy and anaphylaxis training at least annually.
- Monitoring the effectiveness of this policy and reviewing it on an annual basis, and after any incident where a pupil experiences an allergic reaction.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The development, implementation and monitoring of this policy and related policies.
- Ensuring that parents/carers are informed of their responsibilities in relation to their child's allergies.

- Ensuring that all relevant risk assessments, e.g. to do with food preparation, have been carried out and controls to mitigate risks are implemented.
- Ensuring that all designated first aiders are trained in the use of adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs) and the management of anaphylaxis.
- Ensuring that all staff members are provided with information regarding allergic reactions and anaphylaxis, including the necessary precautions and how to respond.
- Ensuring that catering staff are aware of pupils' allergies and act in accordance with the school's policies regarding food and hygiene, including this policy.
- Ensuring that there are effective processes in place for medical information to be regularly updated and disseminated to relevant staff members, including supply and temporary staff.

The special educational needs and disability coordinator (SENDCO) is responsible for:

- Seeking up-to-date medical information about each pupil via an individual healthcare plan sent to parents/carers on an annual basis, including information regarding any allergies.
- Contacting parents/carers for required medical documentation regarding a pupil's allergy.

All staff members are responsible for:

- Attending relevant training regarding allergens and anaphylaxis.
- Being familiar with and implementing IHPs as appropriate.
- Responding immediately and appropriately in the event of a medical emergency.
- Reinforcing effective hygiene practices, including those in relation to the management of food.
- Monitoring all food supplied to pupils by both the school and parents/carers.
- Ensuring that pupils do not share food and drink to prevent accidental contact with an allergen.

All parents/carers are responsible for:

- Notifying the school of their child's allergens, the nature of the allergic reaction, what medication to administer, specified control measures and what can be done to prevent the occurrence of an allergic reaction.
- Keeping the school up to date with their child's medical information.
- Providing school with two in date AAIs.
- Providing the school with written medical documentation, including instructions for administering medication as directed by the child's doctor.
- Raising any concerns they may have about the management of their child's allergies with the classroom teacher.

All pupils are responsible for:

- Ensuring that they do not exchange food with other pupils.
- Avoiding food which they know they are allergic to, as well as any food with unknown ingredients.
- Notifying a member of staff immediately in the event they believe they are having an allergic reaction, even if the cause is unknown, or have come into contact with an allergen.

#### **4. Food allergies**

Parents/carers will provide the school with a written list of any foods that their child may have an adverse reaction to, as well as the necessary action to be taken in the event of an allergic reaction, such as any medication required.

Information regarding all pupils' food allergies will be collated, indicating whether they consume a school dinner or a packed lunch, and this will be passed on to the school's catering service.

The school menu for the term is available to view on the school's website at <https://www.woodthorpeinfantschool.co.uk/school-dinner-menu/>. When making changes to menus or substituting food products, the school will ensure that pupils' special dietary needs continue to be met by:

- Checking any product changes with all food suppliers
- Asking caterers to read labels and product information before use
- Using the Food Standards Agency's allergen matrix to list the ingredients in all meals.
- Ensuring allergen ingredients remain identifiable.

Kitchen staff will have a full list of allergens and will avoid using them within the menu where possible. The use of food containing nuts will always be avoided.

The school will ensure that there are always dairy- and gluten-free school meal options available for pupils with allergies and intolerances.

To ensure that kitchen staff and midday supervisors can appropriately identify pupils with dietary needs, pupils will have a placemat at their seat in the dining halls which contains information of their dietary needs.

All food tables will be disinfected before and after being used.

Boards and knives used for fruit and vegetables will be a different colour to the rest of the kitchen knives in order to remind kitchen staff to keep them separate.

Any sponges or cloths that are used for cleaning will be colour-coded according to the areas that they are used to clean.

There will be a set of kitchen utensils that are only for use with the food and drink of the pupils at risk.

There will also be a set of kitchen utensils with a designated colour. These utensils will be used only for food items that contain bread and wheat related products.

The chosen catering service of the school is responsible for ensuring that the school's policies are adhered to at all times, including those in relation to the preparation of food, taking into account any allergens.

Additionally, the school adheres to the following Department of Health guidance recommendations:

- Bottles, other drinks and lunch boxes provided by parents/carers for pupils with food allergies should be clearly labelled with the name of the child for whom they are intended.
- Where food is provided by the school, staff should be educated about how to read labels for food allergens and instructed about measures to prevent cross contamination during the handling, preparation and serving of food. Examples include preparing food for children with food allergies first, and careful cleaning (using warm soapy water) of food preparation areas and utensils.
- Food should not be given to primary school aged food-allergic children without parental engagement and permission e.g., birthday treats.
- Foods containing nuts are discouraged from being brought into school through parent/carer information meetings when starting school, regular reminders in the school newsletter and signage around school.
- Use of food in crafts, design and technology lessons, experiments and special events needs to be considered and may need to be restricted/risk assessed depending on the allergies of particular children and their age.

Class teachers will discuss with the parents/carers of a child with an allergy whether it would be appropriate to set up a 'treat box' for them with checked, safe food/treats in the event of any food or treats being given out to children e.g., Christmas time or birthdays.

## **5. Animal allergies**

Pupils with known allergies to specific animals will have restricted access to those that may trigger a response.

In the event of an animal on the school site, staff members will be made aware of any pupils to whom this may pose a risk and will be responsible for ensuring that the pupil does not come into contact with the specified allergen.

The school will ensure that any pupil or staff member who comes into contact with the animal washes their hands thoroughly to minimise the risk of the allergen spreading.

## **6. Seasonal allergies**

The term 'seasonal allergies' refers to common outdoor allergies, including hay fever and insect bites.

Precautions regarding the prevention of seasonal allergies include ensuring that grass within the school premises is not mown whilst pupils are outside.

Pupils with severe seasonal allergies will be provided with an indoor supervised space to spend their break and lunchtimes in, avoiding contact with outside allergens.

Staff members will monitor pollen counts, making a professional judgement as to whether the pupil should stay indoors.

Pupils will be encouraged to wash their hands after playing outside.

Staff members will be diligent in the management of wasp, bee and ant nests on school grounds and in the school's nearby proximity, reporting any concerns to the caretaker.

The caretaker is responsible for ensuring the appropriate removal of wasp, bee and ant nests on and around the school premises.

Where a pupil with a known allergy is stung or bitten by an insect, medical attention will be given immediately.

## **7. Adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs)**

Pupils who suffer from severe allergic reactions may be prescribed an AAI for use in the event of an emergency. The school will request that each child with a prescribed AAI also has a spare available in school. If a spare cannot be provided by parents/carers, Woodthorpe Infant School will explore the option of purchasing a spare AAI. The expiry dates for all AAIs will be logged onto Medical Tracker and the school will notify parents/carers when these are close to expiring.

Pupils' AAIs are not located more than five minutes away from where they may be required. All AAIs are stored in individual red draw string bags in the child's class (large green cupboard).

All staff, including external club providers, have access to AAI devices, but these are out of reach and inaccessible to pupils – AAI devices are not locked away where access is restricted.

All spare AAI devices will be clearly labelled to avoid confusion with any device prescribed to a named pupil.

All AAI devices are stored at room temperature in line with manufacturer's guidelines, protected from direct sunlight and extreme temperature.

Used AAIs may be given to paramedics upon arrival, in the event of a severe allergic reaction, in accordance with this policy.

A sharps bin is utilised where used or expired AAIs are disposed of on the school premises.

Where any AAIs are used, the following information will be recorded on the AAI Record:

- Where and when the reaction took place
- How much medication was given and by whom

## **8. School trips**

The headteacher will ensure a risk assessment is conducted for each school trip to address pupils with known allergies attending. All activities on the school trip will be risk assessed to see if they pose a threat to any pupils with allergies and alternative activities will be planned where necessary to ensure the pupils are included.

The school will speak to the parents/carers of pupils with allergies where appropriate to ensure their co-operation with any special arrangements required for the trip.

A designated adult will be available to always support the pupil during a school trip.

If the pupil has been prescribed an AAI, at least one adult trained in administering the device will attend the trip. The pupil's medication will be taken on the trip and stored securely.

A member of staff is assigned responsibility for ensuring that the pupil's medication is carried at all times throughout the trip.

Two AAIs will be taken on the trip and will be easily accessible at all times.

Where the venue or site being visited cannot assure appropriate food can be provided to cater for pupils' allergies, the pupil will take their own food, or the school will provide a suitable packed lunch.

## **9. Medical attention and required support**

Once a pupil's allergies have been identified, a meeting will be set up between the pupil's parents/carers, the relevant classroom teacher, and any other relevant staff members, in which the pupil's allergies will be discussed and a plan of appropriate action/support will be developed through an IHP.

All medical attention, including that in relation to administering medication, will be conducted in accordance with the Administering Medication Policy and the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy.

Parents/carers will provide school with any necessary medication, ensuring that this is clearly labelled with the pupil's name, class, expiration date and instructions for administering it.

Pupils will not be able to attend school or educational visits without any life-saving medication that they may have, such as AAI's.

All members of staff involved with a pupil with a known allergy are aware of the location of emergency medication and the necessary action to take in the event of an allergic reaction. All emergency medication will be stored in the staffroom and is accessible to all staff, including external club providers.

Any specified support which the pupil may require is outlined in their IHP.

All staff members providing support to a pupil with a known medical condition, including those in relation to allergens, will be familiar with the pupil's IHP, including external providers that operate through the school.

The SENDCO is responsible for working alongside relevant staff members and parents/carers in order to develop IHPs for pupils with allergies, ensuring that any necessary support is provided, and the required documentation is completed, including risk assessments being undertaken.

The headteacher has overall responsibility for ensuring that IHPs are implemented, monitored and communicated to the relevant members of the school community.

## **10. Staff training**

Designated staff members will be trained in how to administer an AAI, and the sequence of events to follow when doing so.

In accordance with the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, staff members will receive appropriate training and support relevant to their level of responsibility, in order to assist pupils with managing their allergies.

The school will carry out toolbox training on a termly basis, in addition to annual food allergy awareness and anaphylaxis training, where a pupil in the school has been diagnosed as being at risk of anaphylaxis, in addition to regularly discussing how to minimise risk through staff briefings.

All staff members will:

- Be trained to recognise the range of signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction.
- Understand how quickly anaphylaxis can progress to a life-threatening reaction, and that anaphylaxis can occur with only prior mild to moderate symptoms, such as a runny nose, a skin rash, or a 'strange feeling'.
- Understand that AAIs should be administered without delay as soon as anaphylaxis occurs.
- Understand how to check if a pupil is on the Register of AAIs.
- Understand how to access AAIs.
- Understand who the designated members of staff are, and how to access their help.
- Understand that it may be necessary for staff members other than designated staff members to administer AAIs, e.g. in the event of a delay in response from the designated staff members, or a life-threatening situation.
- Be aware of how to administer an AAI should it be necessary.
- Be aware of the provisions of this policy.

## **11. Mild to moderate allergic reaction**

Mild to moderate symptoms of an allergic reaction include the following:

- Hives
- Generalised flushing of the skin
- Itching and tingling of the skin
- Tingling in and around the mouth
- Burning sensation in the mouth
- Swelling of the throat, mouth, or face
- Feeling wheezy
- Abdominal pain
- Rising anxiety
- Nausea and vomiting
- Alterations in heart rate
- Feeling of weakness

If any of the above symptoms occur in a pupil, their allergy action plan should be followed, but typically the following action should be taken:

- The nearest adult will stay with the pupil and call for help from the designated staff members able to administer AAIs.
- Locate the pupil's AAI in the event of anaphylaxis.
- Administer antihistamine.
- Contact parent/carer/emergency contact.

If emergency services are contacted, "anaphylaxis" should be mentioned to the call operator immediately.

## **12. Managing anaphylaxis**

Staff must remain vigilant to determine whether symptoms are progressing to anaphylaxis shock, which may include either/some of the following:

### Airway:

- Swelling of the mouth, throat or tongue, which can cause breathing and swallowing difficulties.
- 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, faint, or sleepy
- Collapse
- Loss of consciousness (unresponsive)
- For infants and younger pupils, becoming pale or floppy.

In the event that a pupil without a prescribed AAI, or who has not been medically diagnosed as being at risk of anaphylaxis, suffers an allergic reaction, a designated staff member will contact the emergency services and seek medical advice. Medication will not be administered in these situations without contacting the emergency services.

Should the reaction progress into anaphylaxis, the school will act in accordance with this policy.

The school will refer any pupil who has been administered an AAI to the hospital for further monitoring.

The headteacher will ensure that any designated staff member required to administer an AAI has appropriate cover in place, e.g. if they were teaching a class at the time of the reaction.

In the event of an anaphylaxis reaction, the following actions should be taken:

- The nearest adult will lay the pupil flat on the floor and try to ensure the pupil suffering an allergic reaction remains as still as possible.
- If the pupil is feeling weak, dizzy, appears pale and is sweating, their legs will be raised.
- A designated staff member will be called for help and **the AAI will be administered to the pupil without delay.**
- The emergency services should then be contacted immediately and the member of staff making the call should state 'anaphylaxis' immediately to the call operator.
- Where there is any delay in contacting designated staff members, the nearest staff member will administer the AAI.
- If necessary, other staff members may assist the designated staff members with administering AAIs.
- A member of staff will stay with the pupil until the emergency services arrive – the pupil will remain lying flat and still.
- If the pupil's condition deteriorates after initially contacting the emergency services, a second call will be made to ensure an ambulance has been dispatched.
- The headteacher will be contacted immediately, as well as a suitably trained individual, such as a first aider.
- If the pupil stops breathing, a suitably trained member of staff will administer CPR.
- If there is no improvement after five minutes, a further dose of adrenaline will be administered using another AAI, if available, to the child's other leg/a different location to the first one.

A designated staff member will contact the pupil's parents/carers as soon as is possible.

Upon arrival of the emergency services, the following information will be provided:

- Any known allergies the pupil has
- The possible causes of the reaction, e.g. certain food
- The symptoms present prior to administering the AAI
- The time the AAI was administered – including the time of the second dose, if this was administered
- Any other medication that has been taken, such as antihistamine

Any used AAI's will be given to paramedics.

Staff members will ensure that the pupil is given plenty of space, moving other pupils to a different room where necessary.

Staff members will remain calm, ensuring that the pupil feels comfortable and is appropriately supported.

A member of staff will accompany the pupil to hospital in the absence of their parents/carers.

If a pupil is taken to hospital by car, two members of staff will accompany them.

Following the occurrence of an allergic reaction, the SLT will review the adequacy of the school's response and will consider the need for any additional support, training, or other corrective action.

### **13. Monitoring and review**

The headteacher is responsible for reviewing this policy annually.

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored and evaluated by all members of staff. Any concerns will be reported to the headteacher immediately.

Medical Tracker will be used to review incidents if they were to occur, including near misses.

Following each occurrence of an allergic reaction this policy and pupils' HCPs will be updated and amended as necessary.