



Exeter School

Allergy and Anaphylaxis Policy

Status:	Approved
Approver:	SLT
Source (author):	LJB
Last review date:	August 2024
Next review date:	August 2025



This policy outlines Exeter Schools approach to allergy management, including how the whole school community works to reduce the risk of an allergic reaction happening and the procedures in place to respond if one does. It also sets out how we support our pupils with allergies to ensure their wellbeing and inclusion, as well as demonstrating our commitment to being an Allergy Aware School.

This policy applies to all staff, pupils, parents, and visitors to the school and should be read alongside these other policies:

- First Aid policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures
- Healthy Eating policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Offsite Trips and Visits Policy

1. Introduction and Definitions

Around 5-8% of children in the UK live with a food allergy (Food Standards Agency 2016), and most school classrooms will have at least one allergic pupil. These pupils are at risk of anaphylaxis, a potentially life-threatening reaction which requires an immediate emergency response. 20% of severe allergic reactions to food happen whilst a child is at school, and these reactions can occur in children with no prior history of food allergies (Muraro et al 2010).

Allergy occurs when a person reacts to a substance that is usually considered harmless. It is an immune response and instead of ignoring the substance, the body produces histamine which triggers an allergic reaction. This can be relatively minor, such as localised itching, skin redness, rashes, and sneezing, but can sometimes cause a much more severe reaction called anaphylaxis.

Anaphylaxis is a severe systemic allergic reaction needing immediate medical attention. It is at the extreme end of the allergic spectrum and is a life-threatening emergency. The whole body is affected often within minutes of exposure to the allergen, but sometimes it can be hours later.

Symptoms of anaphylaxis include one or more of the following:

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 faint or dizzy
- Collapse
- Loss of consciousness (unresponsive)



It is vital to realise that a child can show many or one of these symptoms at one time and that every child's reaction is different. Any reports of feeling unwell from a child with an allergy history must be taken seriously. Care must be taken with very young children who often have difficulty describing how they feel.

An **Allergen** is a normally harmless substance that, for some triggers an allergic reaction. You can be allergic to anything. The most common allergens are food, medication, animal dander (skin cells shed by animals with fur or feathers) and pollen. Latex and wasp and bee stings are less common allergens.

Most severe allergic reactions to food are caused by just 9 foods. These are eggs, milk, peanuts, tree nuts (which include nuts such as hazelnut, cashew nut, pistachio, almond, walnut, pecan, Brazil nut, macadamia nut etc), sesame, fish, shellfish, soya, and wheat.

There are 14 allergens required by law to be highlighted on pre-packed food. These allergens are celery, cereals containing gluten, crustaceans, eggs, fish, lupin, milk, molluscs, mustard, peanuts, tree nuts, soya, sulphites (or sulphur dioxide), and sesame.

Adrenaline Auto-Injector (AAI) is a single-use device which carries a pre-measured dose of adrenaline. Adrenaline auto-injectors are used to treat anaphylaxis by injecting adrenaline directly into the upper, outer thigh muscle. Adrenaline auto-injectors are commonly referred to as AAI's, adrenaline pens or by the brand name EpiPen. There are three brands licensed for use in the UK: EpiPen, Jext Pen and Emerade. For the purpose of this policy, we will refer to them as AAI's.

An **Allergy Action Plan** is a document filled out by a healthcare professional, detailing a person's allergy and their treatment plan.

A **Risk Assessment** is a detailed document outlining an activity, the risks it poses, and any actions taken to mitigate those risks. Allergy should be included on all risk assessments for events on and off the school site.

Spare AAI's, from 2017 schools have been able to purchase generic adrenaline auto-injectors. Exeter school currently have x7 spare AAI kits containing both adult and paediatric (junior) doses of adrenaline. These are held as back-ups in case pupils own AAIs are not available. Adrenaline auto-injector's can also be used to treat any individual who may be experiencing symptoms of anaphylaxis but who has not been prescribed their own adrenaline auto-injector. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1148583/AAI_HMR238_Clarification_Dr_P_Turner.pdf

2. Roles and responsibilities

Parent responsibilities

- On entry to the school, it is the parent's responsibility to inform the admissions staff/school nurse of any allergies. This information should include all previous severe allergic reactions, history of anaphylaxis and details of all prescribed medication.
- Parents are to supply a copy of their child's Allergy Action Plan to the school nurse. If they do not have an Allergy Action Plan, this will be developed as soon as possible by the school nurse in collaboration with the child's parents.
- Parents are responsible for ensuring any prescribed medication is supplied, in date and replaced as necessary.
- Parents are requested to keep the school up to date with any changes in allergy management.



Staff responsibilities

- Ali Dunning Deputy Head (Pupil development, welfare, and wellbeing) is the schools Designated Allergy Lead (DAL) with the overarching responsibility for allergy management.
- The school nurse will ensure that a Confidential Health Questionnaire and Special Dietary Needs form is completed for all new pupils. If a food allergy is stated and the pupil requires a school meal, the school nurse will ensure the schools catering manager is aware. The Special Dietary Needs Form will be shared with the catering manager and with our catering partners Sodexo.
- To ensure there is a whole school approach to allergy and anaphylaxis, all Exeter School staff will have a responsibility to keep pupils with allergies safe in school.
- Each term the school nurse will provide the catering manager with an updated Diet Summary Sheet with any changes to pupils with allergies who require a school meal.
- The school nurse will update pupil health records and ensure house staff, form tutors, reception staff, sports staff, the catering manager and the dining hall staff are made aware of all pupils with food allergies and those who have been prescribed an adrenaline auto-injector.
- The school nurse will keep a record of all pupils with food related allergies. As well as being shared with the catering staff, this is also shared with the sports staff for sport teas and with any staff requesting pupil food allergy information (i.e., in case of food experiments in lessons, treat days or school trips).
- Staff must be aware of the pupils in their care who have known allergies as an allergic reaction could occur at any time. Any food related activities must be supervised with due caution.
- Pupil facing staff will complete anaphylaxis training. Training is provided on a yearly basis during inset at the start of the school year and on an ad-hoc basis for any new members of staff as required.
- Staff leading school trips/off site fixtures will ensure they carry all relevant emergency supplies. Trip leaders and sports staff will check that all pupils with medical conditions, including allergies, have their medication with them. **Pupils unable to produce their prescribed AAIs for treatment of anaphylaxis may not be able to attend the trip.** The school nurse will regularly write to parents of pupils prescribed an AAI, reminding them of the importance of bringing in their medication and the potential consequence of not being allowed off the school site if they do not.
- The school nurse will ensure that an up-to-date Allergy Action Plan is kept with the pupil's medication.
- It is the parents' responsibility to ensure all medication is in date however the school nurse will check medication kept at school on a termly basis and will send a reminder to parents if medication is approaching expiry.
- The school nurse will keep a register of pupils who have been prescribed an AAI and will distribute this list of pupils to all staff at the beginning of term and on a regular basis. Additional copies, also provided by the school nurse, will be kept in the head's reception, reception in the junior school, the music department, the sports office, staff common rooms and the offices of the Assistant Head (Character) and Deputy Head (Junior School).
- The school nurse and any member of the senior school staff can carry out spot checks to ask pupils known to be prescribed an AAI if they are carrying their spare AAI with them. Advice and guidance will be given if pupils are found not to be carrying their prescribed AAIs on them.



Pupils with allergies responsibilities

- Pupils with allergies will know what they are allergic to and how to mitigate personal risk (age dependent).
- Pupils with allergies will avoid their allergen as best they can.
- They will notify a member of staff as soon as possible if they are not feeling well or suspect they may be having an allergic reaction.
- If age-appropriate, pupils prescribed an AAI will always carry this with them and will only use them for their intended purpose.
- Pupils prescribed an AAI will understand how and when to use their adrenaline auto-injector.
- Pupils with allergies will be supported and should feel comfortable raising a concern to a member of staff if they experience any inappropriate behaviour in relation to their allergies.

3. Allergy Action Plans

Allergy Action Plans are designed to function as Individual Healthcare Plans for children with allergies, providing medical and parental consent for schools to administer medicines in the event of an allergic reaction, including consent to administer a spare AAI. Exeter School uses British Society of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (BSACI) Allergy Action Plans to ensure continuity. <https://www.bsaci.org/new-bsaci-allergy-actions-plans-for-children-available/>

This is a national plan that has been agreed by the BSACI, the Anaphylaxis Campaign and Allergy UK.

It is the parents' responsibility to complete the Allergy Action Plan with help from a healthcare professional (e.g., GP, Allergy Specialist, School Nurse) and provide this to the school.

4. Emergency treatment of anaphylaxis

Immediate action

1. Administer antihistamine medication such as Cetirizine or Loratadine if the pupil has a rash/hives or any other symptoms of a mild reaction.
2. Administer the pupil's AAI (if they have one) or assist the pupil in self-administration, if any of the symptoms of anaphylaxis are present (i.e., affecting their airway, breathing or circulation - swelling of the tongue/lips, difficulty in breathing or feeling faint). Note the time given.
3. Call 999 telling the operator that this is anaphylaxis.
4. Lie the pupil down flat and raise their legs or sit them up if having breathing difficulties and avoid moving the pupil.
5. Contact parent/carer.
6. If symptoms do not improve within five minutes of a first dose of adrenaline, give a second dose using another AAI.
7. Perform emergency first aid (CPR) if pupil stops breathing.
8. All pupils must go to hospital for observation after anaphylaxis even if they appear to have recovered as a secondary reaction can occur.

For a pupil, member of staff or visitor who you suspect may be having an anaphylactic reaction but who doesn't have a prescribed AAI

1. Lie the individual down flat with their legs raised or sit them up if having breathing difficulties and avoid moving them.



2. Call 999 telling the operator you suspect this is anaphylaxis and tell the operator you have access to a generic AAI (adult and paediatric doses).
3. Send another person/member of staff to locate the generic adrenaline auto-injector.
4. With agreement from the operator administer the generic AAI if any swelling of the tongue/lips, difficulty in breathing or feeling faint is present. Note the time given.
5. If symptoms do not improve within five minutes of a first dose of adrenaline, give a second dose using another generic AAI.
6. Perform emergency first aid (CPR) if the individual stops breathing.
7. Stay with the individual until the emergency services arrive.

Post emergency

The priority should always be the individual. When the emergency has been dealt with and the individual is safe, the incident needs to be further investigated.

- Where did it happen?
- Why did it happen?
- Have they recovered?
- Where are they?
- Are they comfortable?
- Who treated the individual?
- Did they self-administer?

The school nurse will review any significant event as soon as possible and an incident form will be completed if necessary. A replacement AAI(s) will be necessary as soon as possible.

The catering manager will be notified if the allergic reaction was due to food eaten in the dining hall and the ingredients in the food will be requested.

5. Supply, storage and care of medication

Antihistamine medication and AAI's

- The school nurse stocks Cetirizine and Loratadine 10mg tablets and Cetirizine 1mg/ml oral solution in the medical room.
- Pupils who have been prescribed an AAI should always have **two in date devices available**.
- For junior school pupils, two AAI's will be kept in the junior school office.
- For senior school pupils, one (or two if supplied) AAI's will be kept in the medical room, the other can be carried by the pupil in their blazer pocket or school bag.
- Where AAIs are not supplied for pupils to be kept as spares in school (some allergy consultants and GPs are not prescribing spares to be kept in schools), pupils and parents need to be reminded that pupils should be always carrying x2 spare AAIs with them and especially when leaving the school site.
- Parents of pupils with prescribed AAI's will be reminded regularly by the school nurse that without x2 in date AAI's pupils may not be allowed off the school site on school trips and activities.



- All AAI's will be kept in an easily accessible, clearly labelled and non-locked cupboard (medical room in the bursary and junior school office).
- All AAI'S will be clearly labelled with the pupil's name and expiry dates will be checked regularly by the school nurse.
- Parents will be contacted by the school nurse to replace any out of date or used AAI's.
- AAI's are single use only and will be disposed of as sharps after use by either the school nurse or given to the ambulance paramedic. Out of date AAI's will either be disposed of as sharps by the school nurse or given to parents to dispose of.

Generic adrenaline auto-injectors

The school holds spare generic AAI's, these can be found in the dining hall (on the wall to the left as you enter through the dining hall foyer), in the swimming pool reception, and in the PE office. These are clearly labelled in easily identifiable green boxes. There is also a spare generic AAI in the medical room.

Government guidance for the use of generic adrenaline auto-injectors is that children aged 6 and over should use an adult dose AAI and those under the age of 6 years should use a junior dose AAI. Therefore, our generic adrenaline auto-injector boxes each contain two doses of EpiPen junior (150mcg) AAI's for pupils under 6 years and EpiPen adult (300mcg) for pupils over the age of 6 years https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a829e3940f0b6230269bcf4/Adrenaline_auto_injectors_in_schools.pdf

The box will also contain an up-to-date list of pupils who can be given the generic EpiPens, but please remember that these AAI's can be given to any individual having symptoms of anaphylaxis even if they have not been prescribed an AAI.

The school nurse is responsible for checking the generic AAI's are in date and the pupil lists are updated regularly.

6. Staff training

All staff will complete allergy and anaphylaxis awareness training at the start of every new academic year. Training is also available on an ad-hoc basis for any new members of staff.

Training will include –

- Knowing common allergens and triggers of allergy.
- Spotting the signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction and anaphylaxis. Early recognition is key, including knowing when to call for emergency services.
- Administering emergency treatment including AAI's in the event of anaphylaxis – knowing how and when to administer these.
- Measures to reduce the risk of a child having an allergic reaction e.g., allergen avoidance.
- Pupil wellbeing and mental health impact.
- A practical session using trainer devices.

7. Inclusion and mental health

- Exeter School is committed to ensuring that all children with medical conditions, including allergies, in terms of both physical and mental health are properly supported in school so that



they can play a full and active role in school life, remain healthy and achieve their academic potential.

- Allergies can have a significant impact on mental health and wellbeing. Pupils may experience anxiety and depression and are more susceptible to bullying.
- No child with an allergy will be excluded from taking part in a school activity.
- All attempts will be made to ensure children with allergies can take part in school trips and off-site activities, i.e., generic AAI's will be given to trip leaders if the pupil forgets to bring their AAI with them.
- Pupils with allergies may require additional pastoral support including regular check ins with their form tutor/head of year.
- Pupils with allergies will be given consideration in advance of wider school discussions about allergy and school allergy awareness initiatives.
- Bullying related to allergies will be treated in line with the schools anti-bullying policy.

8. Catering

The school menu is available for parents to view on the school intranet three weekly in advance. The school's catering is delivered by Sodexo. The unit adheres to the Sodexo UK&I Corporate Allergen Management Policy and is subject to an annual audit. The latest Sodexo allergen policy is available on request.

- The school catering manager and dining hall staff will be made aware of and supported to identify any pupils with food allergies.
- Photographs of pupils with food allergies and intolerances will be issued to the catering team and updated by the school nurse as required.
- At least one member of the catering staff is an Allergen Champion who is key to ensuring the safety of pupils in school with food allergies and intolerances.
- The school catering department will not use whole peanuts, tree nuts, or kiwi fruit as ingredients but may inadvertently use some ingredients that include a trace of peanuts or tree nuts. While the catering department cannot claim to be nut free, it must make every effort to ensure a safe environment for severely allergic pupils and seek to label foods which may contain nuts.
- The school nurse will make the catering manager and kitchen staff aware of all pupils at risk. Parents of pupils with any food allergy must complete a Sodexo Special Dietary Needs Form provided by the school nurse. A copy of this will be kept by the catering manager and by the school nurse.
- Once a term the school nurse will provide the catering manager with an up-to-date Diet Summary Sheet listing all the pupils with food allergies who have a school meal.
- The school nurse will update the catering manager throughout the term if there are any changes or additions regarding pupils with allergies who have a school meal.
- Prepacked food for direct sale (PPDE) which clearly labels all ingredients and allergens will be used for packed teas and for pupils needing lunch off site.

Cross contamination

It is possible to contaminate a food object/item which was previously considered safe, by placing it alongside an item which contains allergens.



All possible precautions will be taken to keep items that are considered safe, separate from other items. Separate utensils for use in preparing and serving allergen related foods and thorough sanitising is undertaken.

Safe treats

Pupils, teachers, and parents bringing food items into school on special occasions (e.g., birthday cakes or items for charity 'cake' sales) are to be aware that foods should be nut free. Cross contamination must not take place. All staff must be aware of these dangers. The school nurse includes regular reminders in parent newsletters and as part of staff training/during staff briefings/meetings.

Staff will ask the school nurse for an up-to-date list of pupils with allergies should they be organising to bring food into school for an event.

9. School trips and residential

All pupils have a right to go on school trips and residential providing the appropriate risk assessments have taken place; pupils with allergies should be able to enjoy off site activities like any other child.

- Parents will be contacted by the trip leader about the duration and type of trip/residential and where appropriate any risk assessment will be thoroughly discussed.
- Named pupils with food and other allergies must be identified on the school risk assessment form for each visit. The Assistant Head (Character) and Deputy Head (Junior School) will monitor that this is completed effectively.
- For residential trips, trip leaders will check with the company being used that there is adequate provision to accommodate pupils with special diets.
- For residential trips, the Assistant Head (Character), Deputy Head (Junior School) or individual trip leaders will notify the school nurse prior to the trip of pupils attending and the school nurse will identify any pupils with an allergy. Trip leaders will be informed if a pupil has an allergy and if pupils are prescribed an AAI.
- **Two** in date AAI's and appropriate antihistamine medication must always be carried. In some cases, senior school pupils may carry two AAI's themselves, however, it is the responsibility of the trip leader to ensure all pupils with allergies have access to two AAIs for the trip (this may include a generic AAI as outlined in section 5). Where necessary they must collect a second AAI (locations detailed above) and an Allergy Action Plan from the nurse's room (senior school) or from the office (junior school) prior to the trip and to return it afterwards.
If pupils do not have access to two AAI's they may not be allowed to go on the trip.
- Staff taking pupils in minibuses will complete the minibus checklist/mileage form which includes confirmation that any pupils with AAI's have two in date devices with them before travel.
- The registration secretary (senior school) and Head's PA (junior school) will also check with staff before departure of any trip that they have the required number of AAI's.
- **Pupil AAI's will be signed out to the trip leaders, and it is the responsibility of the trip leader to return the AAI back to the medical room/junior school reception.**



10. Sporting activities at school

- All children with allergies who have been prescribed an AAI should have this with them when taking part in sport.
- Junior school pupils will collect their AAI'S from the junior school office to take to sports and games with them.
- Senior school pupils who have been prescribed an AAI should carry a spare one in their school/sports bag.
- There are always in date generic AAI's in the swimming pool reception and PE office, which are easily accessible.

Sporting fixtures off-site

- Similar to off-site trips, **two** in date AAI's and appropriate antihistamine medication must always be carried. In some cases, senior school pupils may carry two AAI's themselves, however, it is the responsibility of the sports coach/team leader to ensure all pupils with allergies have access to two AAI's for the trip (this may include a generic AAI as outlined in section 5). Where necessary they must collect a second AAI (locations detailed above) and an Allergy Action Plan from the nurse's room (senior school) or from reception (junior school) prior to the trip and to return it afterwards.

If pupils do not have access to two AAI's they may not be allowed to travel.

- Staff taking pupils in minibuses will complete the minibus checklist/mileage form which includes confirmation that any pupils with AAI's have two in date devices with them before travel.
- Sports coaches/team leaders must notify the registration secretary (senior school) and Head's PA (junior school) of those pupils attending a fixture. They will check before departure for any fixture that they have the required number of AAI's.
- All sports coaches and team leaders will be informed if a pupil has an allergy and if pupils are prescribed AAI's. Lists are maintained by the school nurse and displayed prominently in the PE Office.

11. Managing insect sting allergy

Insect sting allergy causes a lot of anxiety and needs careful management. Pupils need to take special care outdoors.

- Pupils should always wear footwear on the school grounds and make sure any food or drink is kept covered.
- Adults supervising activities will know where to locate AAI's for the management of anaphylaxis.