Appendix – The Folkestone School for Girls Allergy Guidance

Assistant principal (Student development and pastoral care) is the named staff members responsible for co-ordinating staff anaphylaxis training and the upkeep of the school's anaphylaxis policy.

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1. Introduction

An allergy is a reaction by the body's immune system to substances that are usually harmless. The reaction can cause minor symptoms such as itching, sneezing or rashes but sometimes causes a much more severe reaction called anaphylaxis.

Anaphylaxis is a severe systemic allergic reaction. It is at the extreme end of the allergic spectrum. The whole body is affected often within minutes of exposure to the allergen, but sometimes it can be hours later. Causes often include foods, insect stings, or drugs.

Definition: *Anaphylaxis is a severe life threatening generalised or systemic hypersensitivity reaction.*

This is characterised by rapidly developing life-threatening airway / breathing / circulatory problems usually associated with skin or mucosal changes.

It is possible to be allergic to anything which contains a protein, however most people will react to a fairly small group of potent allergens.

Common UK Allergens include (but not limited to):-
Peanuts, Tree Nuts, Sesame, Milk, Egg, Fish, Latex, Insect venom, Pollen and Animal Dander.

This policy sets out how The Folkestone School for Girls will support pupils with allergies, to ensure they are safe and are not disadvantaged in any way whilst taking part in school life.

2. Role and Responsibilities

Parent responsibilities

- On entry to the school, it is the parent's responsibility to inform the school 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 school. If they do not currently have an Allergy Action Plan this should be developed as soon as possible in collaboration with a healthcare professional e.g. GP/allergy specialist.
- Parents are responsible for ensuring any required 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. The Allergy Action Plan will be kept updated accordingly.

Staff Responsibilities

- All staff will complete anaphylaxis training. Training is provided for all staff on a yearly basis and on an ad-hoc basis for any new members of staff.
- Staff must be aware of the pupils in their care (regular or cover classes) who have known allergies as an allergic reaction could occur at any time and not just at mealtimes. Any food-related activities must be supervised with due caution.
- Staff leading school trips will ensure the student carries all relevant emergency supplies. Trip leaders will check that all pupils with medical conditions, including allergies, carry their medication. Pupils unable to produce their required medication will not be able to attend the excursion.
- The school will ensure that the up-to-date Allergy Action Plan or Health Care Plan is kept with the pupil's medication if kept by the school.
- It is the parent's responsibility to ensure all medication is in date however the school will check medication kept at school on a termly basis and send a reminder to parents if medication is approaching expiry.
- The school keeps a register of pupils who have been prescribed an AAI and a record of use of any AAI(s) and emergency treatment given.

Pupil Responsibilities

- Pupils are encouraged to have a good awareness of their symptoms and to let an adult know as soon as they suspect they are having an allergic reaction.
- Pupils who are trained to administer their own auto-injectors will be encouraged to take responsibility for carrying them on their person at all times.

3. Allergy Action Plans

Allergy action plans will be used to inform and work in conjunction with Individual Healthcare Plans for children with food allergies, providing medical and parental consent for schools to administer medicines in the event of an allergic reaction, including consent to administer a spare adrenaline auto-injector.

The Folkestone School for Girls recommends using the British Society of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (BSACI) Allergy Action Plan to ensure continuity. This is a national plan that has been agreed by the BSACI, the Anaphylaxis Campaign and Allergy UK.

It is the parent/carer's responsibility to complete the allergy action plan with help from a healthcare professional (e.g. GP/Allergy Specialist) and provide this to the school.

4. Emergency Treatment and Management of Anaphylaxis

What to look for:

- swelling of the mouth or throat
- difficulty swallowing or speaking
- difficulty breathing
- sudden collapse / unconsciousness
- hives, rash anywhere on the body
- abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting
- sudden feeling of weakness
- strong feelings of impending doom

Anaphylaxis is likely if all of the following 3 things happen**:**

- **sudden onset** (a reaction can start within minutes) and **rapid progression of symptoms**
- **life threatening airway and/or breathing difficulties** and/or **circulation problems** (e.g. alteration in heart rate, sudden drop in blood pressure, feeling of weakness)
- **changes to the skin** e.g. flushing, urticaria (an itchy, red, swollen skin eruption showing markings like nettle rash or hives), angioedema (swelling or puffing of the deeper layers of skin and/or soft tissues, often lips, mouth, face etc.) Note: skin changes on their own are not a sign of an anaphylactic reaction, and in some cases don't occur at all

If the pupil has been **exposed to something they are known to be allergic to,** then it is more likely to be an anaphylactic reaction.

Anaphylaxis can develop very rapidly, so a treatment is needed that works rapidly. **Adrenaline** is the mainstay of treatment and it starts to work within seconds. Adrenaline should be administered by an **injection into the muscle** (intramuscular injection)

What does adrenaline do?

- It opens up the airways
- It stops swelling
- It raises the blood pressure

Adrenaline must be administered with the **minimum of delay** as it is more effective in preventing an allergic reaction from progressing to anaphylaxis than in reversing it once the symptoms have become severe.

ACTION:

- Stay with the child and call for help. **DO NOT MOVE CHILD OR LEAVE UNATTENDED**
- Remove trigger if possible (e.g. Insect stinger)
- Lie child flat (with or without legs elevated) – A sitting position may make breathing easier
- **USE ADRENALINE WITHOUT DELAY** and note time given. (inject at upper, outer thigh - through clothing if necessary)
- CALL **999** and state **ANAPHYLAXIS**
- If no improvement after 5 minutes, administer second adrenaline auto-injector
- If no signs of life commence CPR
- Phone parent/carer as soon as possible

All pupils must go to hospital for observation after anaphylaxis even if they appear to have recovered as a reaction can reoccur after treatment.

5. Supply, storage and care of medication

Pupils will be encouraged to take responsibility for and to carry their own two adrenaline injectors on them at all times (in a suitable bag/ container).

Medication should be stored own container and clearly labelled with the pupil's name.

The pupil's medication container should contain:

- adrenaline injectors i.e. EpiPen® or Jext® or Emerade® (two of the same type being prescribed)
- an up-to-date allergy action plan/health care plan
- antihistamine as tablets or syrup (if included on plan)
- spoon if required
- asthma inhaler (if included on plan).

It is the responsibility of the child's parents to ensure that the anaphylaxis kit is up-to-date and clearly labelled, however the school will check medication kept at school on a termly basis and send a reminder to parents if medication is approaching expiry.

Parents can subscribe to expiry alerts for the relevant adrenaline auto-injectors their child is prescribed, to make sure they can get replacement devices in good time.

Older children and medication
Older children and teenagers should, whenever possible, assume complete responsibility for their emergency kit under the responsibility of their parents.

However, symptoms of anaphylaxis can come on **very suddenly**, so school staff need to be prepared to administer medication if the young person cannot.

Storage
AAIs should be stored at room temperature, protected from direct sunlight and temperature extremes.

Disposal
AAIs are single use only and must be disposed of as sharps. Used AAIs can be given to ambulance paramedics on arrival or can be disposed of in a pre-ordered sharps bin. Sharps bins to be obtained from and disposed of by a specialist collection service. The sharps bin is kept in the main admin office.

6. ‘Spare’ adrenaline auto injectors in school

The Folkstone School for Girls has purchased spare **adrenaline auto-injector (AAI) devices for emergency use in children who are risk of anaphylaxis,** but their own devices are not available or not working (e.g. because they are out of date).

These are stored in a wall mounted rigid box, clearly labelled ‘Emergency Anaphylaxis Adrenaline Pen’, kept safely, not locked away and **accessible and known to all staff.**

The Folkeston School for Girls holds 3 spare pens which are kept in the following location/s:-

Admin Office
Staff room
Penfold Copier room

The school is responsible for checking the spare medication is in date on a quarterly basis and to replace as needed.

Written parental permission for use of the spare AAIs is included in the pupil’s Allergy Action Plan.

If anaphylaxis is suspected **in an undiagnosed individual** call the emergency services and state you suspect ANAPHYLAXIS. Follow advice from them as to whether administration of the spare AAI is appropriate.

7. Staff Training

Assistant principal (Student development and pastoral care) is the named staff members responsible for co-ordinating all staff anaphylaxis training and the upkeep of the school’s anaphylaxis policy.

The school will conduct a practical anaphylaxis training session at the start of every new academic year.

All staff will complete online 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 includes:

- Knowing the common allergens and triggers of allergy
- Spotting the signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction and anaphylaxis. Early recognition of symptoms is key, including knowing when to call for emergency services
- Administering emergency treatment (including AAIs) in the event of anaphylaxis – knowing how and when to administer the medication/device
- Measures to reduce the risk of a child having an allergic reaction e.g. allergen avoidance Knowing who is responsible for what
- Associated conditions e.g. asthma
- Managing allergy action plans and ensuring these are up to date
- A practical session using trainer devices (these can be obtained from the manufacturers' websites www.epipen.co.uk and www.jext.co.uk and www.emerade-bausch.co.uk)

8. Inclusion and safeguarding

Folkestone School for Girls 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.

9. Catering

All food businesses (including school caterers) must follow the Food Information Regulations 2014 which states that allergen information relating to the 'Top 14' allergens must be available for all food products.

The school menu is available for parents to view termly in advance with all ingredients listed and allergens highlighted on the school website.

The School will inform the Catering Manager of pupils with food allergies.

Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the school to discuss their child's needs.

The school adheres to the following Department of Health guidance recommendations:

- Bottles, other drinks and lunch boxes provided by parents for pupils with food allergies should be clearly labelled with the name of the child for whom they are intended.
- If food is purchased from the school canteen/tuck shop, parents should check the appropriateness of foods by speaking directly to the catering manager.

- The pupil should be taught to also check with catering staff, before purchasing food or selecting their lunch choice.
- 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; careful cleaning (using warm soapy water) of food preparation areas and utensils. For further information, parents/carers are encouraged to liaise with the Catering Manager.
- Food should not be given to primary school age food-allergic children without parental engagement and permission (e.g. birthday parties, food treats).
- Foods containing nuts are discouraged from being brought in to school.
- Use of food in crafts, cooking classes, science experiments and special events (e.g. fetes, assemblies, cultural events) needs to be considered and may need to be restricted/risk assessed depending on the allergies of particular children and their age.

10. School trips

Staff leading school trips will ensure they carry all relevant emergency supplies. Trip leaders will check that all pupils with medical conditions, including allergies, carry their medication. Pupils unable to produce their required medication will not be able to attend the excursion.

All the activities on the school trip will be risk assessed to see if they pose a threat to allergic pupils and alternative activities planned to ensure inclusion.

Overnight school trips may be possible with careful planning and a meeting for parents with the lead member of staff planning the trip should be arranged. Staff at the venue for an overnight school trip should be briefed early on that an allergic child is attending and will need appropriate food (if provided by the venue).

Sporting Excursions

Allergic children should have every opportunity to attend sports trips to other schools. The school will ensure that the P.E. teacher/s are fully aware of the situation. A member of staff trained in administering adrenaline will accompany the team. If another school feels that they are not equipped to cater for any food-allergic child, the school will arrange for the child to take alternative/their own food.

Most parents are keen that their children should be included in the full life of the school where possible, and the school will need their co-operation with any special arrangements required.

11. Allergy awareness

The Folkestone School for Girls 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 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 aware of what allergies are, the importance of avoiding the pupils' allergens, the signs & symptoms, how to deal with allergic reactions and to ensure policies and procedures are in place to minimise risk.

12. Assessment of incoming pupils

Th Folkestone School for Girls will identify any gaps in our systems and processes for keeping allergic children safe for all new joining pupils with allergies and any pupils newly diagnosed.

13. Useful Links

Anaphylaxis Campaign- https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk

- AllergyWise training for schools - https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/information-training/allergywise-training/for-schools/

- AllergyWise training for Healthcare Professionals https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/information-training/allergywise-training/for-healthcare-professionals/

Allergy UK - https://www.allergyuk.org

- Whole school allergy and awareness management (Allergy UK) https://www.allergyuk.org/schools/whole-school-allergy-awareness-andmanagement

Spare Pens in Schools - http://www.sparepensinschools.uk

Official guidance relating to supporting pupils with medical needs in schools: http://medicalconditionsatschool.org.uk/documents/Legal-Situation-in-Schools.pdf

Education for Health http://www.educationforhealth.org

Food allergy quality standards (The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, March 2016) https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs118

Anaphylaxis: assessment and referral after emergency treatment (The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, 2020)
https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg134?unlid=22904150420167115834

Guidance on the use of adrenaline auto-injectors in schools (Department of Health, 2017)
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/645476/Adrenaline_auto_injectors_in_schools.pdf