

CAMBOURNE VILLAGE COLLEGE ALLERGY AWARENESS POLICY	
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1. Introduction

The purpose of this policy is

- To provide a safe learning environment for all members of the Cambourne Village College community
- To raise the awareness of all members of the school community regarding severe allergies

This is also to be read in conjunction with the school's Managing Illness and Medicines Policy.

An allergy is a reaction of 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 serious reaction called anaphylaxis.

Anaphylaxis is a serious, life-threatening 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 can include foods, insect stings, and drugs.

Most healthcare professionals consider an allergic reaction to be anaphylaxis when it involves difficulty breathing or affects the heart rhythm or blood pressure. Anaphylaxis symptoms are often referred to as the ABC symptoms (Airway, Breathing, Circulation). 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 are not limited to):-

- Peanuts
- Tree Nuts
- Sesame
- Milk
- Egg
- Fish
- Latex
- Insect venom (bites & stings)
- Pollen
- Animal dander.

This policy sets out how Cambourne Village College will support pupils with allergies, to ensure they are safe and are not disadvantaged in any way whilst taking part in school life.

It also reflects the following legislation:

Supporting students with medical conditions at school. Ref DFE-003393 2014. Published 1st September 2014. Last updated 16 August 2017. [Link](#)

First aid in Schools. Ref DFEE-20025-2000. Published 15th August 2000. Last updated 14th February 2022. [Link](#)

Emergency asthma inhalers for use in schools (published 4th September 2014) [Link](#)

Using emergency adrenaline auto injectors in school (published 20th September 2017) [Link](#)

2. Roles and responsibilities

Parental Responsibilities

- On entry to the school, it is the parent's responsibility to inform admissions staff/first aid team of any allergies. This information should include all previous serious allergic reactions, history of anaphylaxis, and details of all prescribed medication
- Parents are to supply a copy of their child's Allergy Action Plan (BSACI plans preferred) 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
- Where pupils are responsible for their own medication, parents will ensure that this is carried by the pupil on all off-site activities and excursions. For their own safety, pupils unable to produce their required medication will not be able to attend
- 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
- All parents are requested not to include items containing nuts in their child's bag or lunchbox
- Any parents providing food for an extra-curricular event or activity are requested not to provide home-made goods. Only pre-packaged food items, which meet the labelling requirements of the UK Food Information Amendment legislation ("Natasha's Law") can be accepted

Staff Responsibilities

- All staff will complete emergency anaphylaxis training. Training is provided for all staff on a yearly basis and on an ad-hoc basis for any new members of staff
- Additional training will be undertaken by the school's first aiders, and offered to all staff, to achieve the AllergyWise® certificate in allergy awareness
- 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 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
- Staff leading school trips will ensure that all relevant emergency supplies for the pupils in their care is carried
- 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
- First aid support co-ordinator will ensure that the up-to-date Allergy Action Plan is kept with the pupil's medication
- It is the parent's responsibility to ensure all medication is in date, however the first aid team medication kept at school on a termly basis and send a reminder to parents if medication is approaching expiry
- The first aid team keeps a register of pupils who have been prescribed an adrenaline auto-injector (AAI) and a record of use of any AAI(s) and emergency treatment given
- The first aid team keep a record of all pupils for whom parental consent has been given to use the school's inhaler or autoinjector in an emergency

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 and confident to administer their own AAls will be encouraged to take responsibility for carrying them on their person at all times
- Pupils should ensure that they do not share food with their friends or classmates
- Pupils should ensure that they wash their hands before and after consuming food to avoid cross-contact with other pupils

3. Allergy Action Plans

Allergy action plans are designed to function as 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 autoinjector.

Cambourne Village College recommends using the British Society of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (BSACI) Allergy Action Plans to ensure continuity. This is a national plan that has been agreed by the BSACI, Anaphylaxis UK 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.

This will form the basis of an Individual Healthcare Plan (IHCP) which will be drawn up by the school to reflect any additional considerations which may need to be made. For further information about IHCPs, please see the school's Managing Illness and Medications policy which is available on the website.

4. Emergency Treatment and Management of Anaphylaxis

What to look for

Symptoms usually come on quickly, within minutes of exposure to the allergen.

Mild to moderate allergic reaction symptoms may include:

- a red raised rash (known as hives or urticaria) anywhere on the body
- a tingling or itchy feeling in the mouth
- swelling of lips, face or eyes
- stomach pain or vomiting.

More serious symptoms are often referred to as the ABC symptoms and can include:

- AIRWAY** - swelling in the throat, tongue or upper airways (tightening of the throat, hoarse voice, difficulty swallowing)
- BREATHING** - sudden onset wheezing, breathing difficulty, noisy breathing
- CIRCULATION** - dizziness, feeling faint, sudden sleepiness, tiredness, confusion, pale clammy skin, loss of consciousness.

The term for this more serious reaction is anaphylaxis. In extreme cases there could be a dramatic fall in blood pressure. The person may become weak and floppy and may have a sense of something terrible happening. This may lead to collapse and unconsciousness and, on rare occasions, can be fatal.

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.

What does adrenaline do?

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

As soon as anaphylaxis is suspected, adrenaline must be administered without delay.

Emergency first aid response to be taken

- Keep the child where they are, call for help and do not leave them unattended.
- LIE CHILD FLAT WITH LEGS RAISED – they can be propped up if struggling to breathe but this should be for as short a time as possible
- USE ADRENALINE AUTO-INJECTOR WITHOUT DELAY and note the time given
- AAI's should be given into the muscle in the outer thigh. Specific instructions vary by brand – always follow the instructions on the device
- CALL 999 and state ANAPHYLAXIS (ana-fil-axis)
- If no improvement after 5 minutes, administer second AAI
- If no signs of life commence CPR
- Call parent/carer as soon as possible

Whilst waiting for the ambulance, keep the child where they are. Do not stand them up, or sit them in a chair, even if they are feeling better. This could lower their blood pressure drastically, causing their heart to stop.

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

Depending on their level of understanding and competence, pupils will be encouraged to take responsibility for, and to carry, their own two adrenaline autoinjectors (AAIs) on them at all times (in a suitable bag/container).

For younger children or those not ready to take responsibility for their own medication, they should have an emergency box containing their anaphylaxis kit which is kept safely, not locked away, and accessible to all staff. At Cambourne Village College, these kits are kept in a marked, unlocked cupboard in the servery in the office behind reception. Posters are displayed around the school to remind pupils and staff where they can locate the emergency boxes. These boxes will accompany the pupil on all off-site activities.

Parents are welcome to ask the school to hold an emergency box for their child, as well as the child carrying their own supplies.

The school's consent form for autoinjectors can be found here: [Autoinjector consent form](#)

If additional medications are required to support the pupil's Allergy Action Plan, please complete the relevant consent form(s) [Medication consent forms](#)

Whether held by the school or carried by the pupil, medication should be stored in a suitable container and clearly labelled with the pupil's name. The pupil's medication storage container should contain:

- Two AAls i.e.. EpiPen® or Jext® (or Emerade® if/when re-licensed)
- An up-to-date allergy action plan
- Antihistamine as tablets or syrup (if included on allergy action plan)
- Spoon or syringe for antihistamine syrup (if required)
- Asthma inhaler (if included on allergy action 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 first aider will maintain a record of medication kept at school and send a reminder to parents if medication is approaching expiry.

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

In order to avoid any uncertainty, parents must complete the appropriate consent form for their child to hold and/or carry any medication related to their allergy. These forms are available on the school's website [Link](#) or from the reception or first aid teams.

Older children and medication

Older children and teenagers should, whenever possible, assume responsibility for their emergency kit under the guidance 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

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

Disposal

AAls are single use only and must be disposed of as sharps. Used AAls will be given to ambulance paramedics on arrival or will be disposed of in the sharps bin held in the first aid room. Sharps bins will be disposed of by a /specialist collection service.

Expired, unused pens will be returned to the pupil's parents or taken to a local pharmacy for disposal.

6. 'Spare' emergency medication in school

Adrenaline auto-injectors

Cambourne Village College has purchased spare AAls for emergency use in children who are risk of anaphylaxis, but whose own devices are not available or not working (e.g. because they are out of date) when an emergency arises, or if a second dose of adrenaline is required whilst waiting for emergency services. This is in accordance with government guidance **Using emergency adrenaline auto injectors in school** (Published 20th September 2017)

These are stored in a clear container, labelled 'Anaphylaxis Kit', kept safely, not locked away and accessible and known to all staff.

Cambourne Village College holds 2 spare pens which are kept in a marked, unlocked cabinet in the servery behind the reception office. An additional pen will be held in the new 6th Form block. The whereabouts of these pens is displayed on posters around the school.

The first aid team are responsible for checking the spare medication is in date and replacing as needed when used or approaching expiry.

Written parental permission for use of the spare AAI is included in the pupil's allergy action plan if the BSACI template is used. If this template is not used, or a copy not supplied to the school, signed parental permission is required to avoid delay in the event of an emergency [Autoinjector consent form](#).

In a [letter from MHRA](#) in response to queries on this issue, it clarified that the legal exemption under Regulation 238 of the Human Medicines Regulations 2012 permits a school's spare adrenaline auto-injector(s) to be used for any pupil or other person not known by the school to be at risk of anaphylaxis in an emergency. Written permission is not required. However, the MHRA highlighted that this was for exceptional circumstances only where the reaction could not have been foreseen.

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.

Salbutamol inhalers

Cambourne Village College has purchased spare salbutamol inhalers for emergency use in children who are risk of severe allergy, but whose own devices are not available or not working (e.g. because they are out of date) when an emergency arises. This is in accordance with government guidance **Emergency asthma inhalers for use in schools** (Published 4th September 2014) and can be administered when indicated in a pupil's Allergy Action Plan, subject to prior written parental consent.

These are stored in a clear container, labelled 'Asthma Kit', kept safely, not locked away and accessible and known to all staff.

Cambourne Village College holds 2 spare inhalers which are kept in a marked, unlocked cabinet in the servery behind the reception office. An additional inhaler will be held in the new 6th Form block. The whereabouts of these pens is displayed on posters around the school.

The first aid team are responsible for checking the spare medication is in date and replacing as needed when used or approaching expiry.

7. Staff Training

The named staff members (at least 2) responsible for co-ordinating staff anaphylaxis training and the upkeep of the school's anaphylaxis policy are:-

Jenni Goldsmith
James Russen

All staff will complete emergency anaphylaxis training. Training is provided for all staff on a yearly basis and on an ad-hoc basis for any new members of staff.

Training includes:

- CAM VC's allergy policy and procedures

- 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
- A practical session using trainer devices

8. Inclusion and safeguarding

Cambourne Village College 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 in advance on the school website at [Cam VC menus](#). This includes details of the allergens contained in each of the dishes on offer. Pupils with allergies are expected to ask catering staff if they are unsure if any of the freshly prepared dishes being served contain any of their known allergens.

Pre-packaged items will be marked with their potential allergens in accordance with current legislation.

Although the responsibility for checking for their known allergens lies with the pupil, the first aid support co-ordinator will inform the Catering Manager of pupils with food allergies in case the pupil should look to purchase anything containing an allergen that has been previously notified to the school. This will involve the sharing of limited, specific information relating to their allergen and response.

Parents/carers are encouraged to meet with the first aid support co-ordinator 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, parents can 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 who will share relevant information with the first aid team so it can be recorded and accessed by the trip co-ordinator in the event of the pupil going offsite

- 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.

In addition, Cambourne Village College specifically requests that no items or foodstuffs which contain nuts are brought onto the college premises. Our caterers do not include nuts in any of their dishes and nuts will not be included in the ingredients of any dishes prepared by pupils in our food tech lessons.

Any parents providing food for an extra-curricular event or activity are specifically requested not to provide home-made goods. Only pre-packaged food items, which meet the labelling requirements of the UK Food Information Amendment legislation (“Natasha’s Law”) can be accepted.

10. School trips

Staff leading school trips will ensure that all relevant emergency supplies are available. The trip co-ordinator will liaise with the first aid team to ensure that the trip leader is aware of the medical conditions affecting all pupils attending the trip.

Trip leaders will check that all pupils with medical conditions, including allergies, carry their medication if parents have confirmed that the pupil is responsible for carrying their own 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.

If parents have requested their child’s medication be held by the school in an emergency box for the pupil, the trip co-ordinator will ensure that this is collected and kept by the trip leader.

Overnight school trips should be possible with careful planning and, if necessary, a meeting/discussion 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

Children with allergies should have every opportunity to attend sports trips to other schools. The school will ensure that the PE teacher(s)/coach(es) are fully aware of the situation. If the school/venue being visited is providing catering for the team, they will be notified that a member of the team has an allergy when arranging the fixture. A member of staff trained in administering adrenaline will accompany the team. If another school/venue feels that they are not equipped to cater for any food-allergic child, Cam VC 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 and nut bans

Cambourne Village College supports the approach advocated by Anaphylaxis 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 are 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.

We do, however, request that parents do not include nuts in their children's lunch boxes and to express to their children the importance of not sharing foodstuffs with other pupils. Any parents providing food for an extra-curricular event or activity are requested not to provide home-made goods. Only pre-packaged food items, which meet the labelling requirements of the UK Food Information Amendment legislation ("Natasha's Law") can be accepted.

12. Useful Links

- Anaphylaxis UK - <https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/>
- Safer Schools Programme - <https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/education/saferschools-programme/>
- AllergyWise for Schools online training - <https://www.allergywise.org.uk/p/allergywise-for-schools1>
- Allergy UK - <https://www.allergyuk.org>
- Resources for managing allergies at school -
 - BSACI Allergy Action Plans - <https://www.bsaci.org/professionalresources/resources/paediatric-allergy-action-plans>
 - Spare Pens in Schools - <http://www.sparepensinschools.uk>
 - Department for Education Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/803956/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions.pdf
 - Department of Health Guidance on the use of adrenaline auto-injectors in schools - [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/645476/Adrenaline auto injectors in schools.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/645476/Adrenaline_auto_injectors_in_schools.pdf)
 - Food allergy quality standards (The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, March 2016) <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/gs118>
 - 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>