



Founded 1125

Policy Number: E53

Reading School

Allergy Safety Policy

Responsibilities

Policy Owner: Lizzie Ayres, Deputy Headteacher

Governors Committee EXPC Committee

Audit Control

Policy created: 14/09/2026

Date of next review: September 2027

Version: 1.0

Statutory policy Yes

Document Control and Approval

Version Control

Version	Author	Summary of Changes	Reviewed By	Date
1.0	LAY	Policy developed with new requirements		August 2027

Responsibilities

Job title	Responsible for;
Deputy Headteacher	Policy Owner
First Aid Lead	Policy Overview
EXPC	Committee Responsible

Policies Linked

Policy name	File location
• Safeguarding and Child Protection • Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions • Educational Visits • First Aid • Health and Safety • Boarding Handbook • SEND Policy • Catering	

Contents

Introduction	3
Responsibilities	4
Allergy Action Plans / Individual Healthcare Plans	5
Emergency Treatment.....	6
Incident Reporting and Review	7
Supply, Storage and Care of Medication	8
Spare Autoinjectors in School	8
Staff Training.....	9
Inclusion and Safeguarding.....	9
Catering	10
Additional Staff	10
Boarding.....	10
School Trips and Sporting Fixtures.....	11
Allergy awareness and nut bans	11
Risk Assessment.....	11
Useful Links.....	12

Introduction

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, Pollen and Animal Dander.

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

This policy is published on the Reading School website and made available to pupils, parents, staff and governors.

Responsibilities

School Allergy Lead

The Designated Allergy Lead for Reading School is the Deputy Head/DSL (or nominated senior leader). Responsibilities include:

- policy oversight
- monitoring compliance
- incident review
- training assurance
- governor reporting
- oversight of healthcare plans
- annual policy review

Parent Responsibilities

- On entry to the school, it is the parent's responsibility to inform the Form Tutor and School First Aider 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 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 and Individual Healthcare 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 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.
- School First Aider will ensure that the up-to-date Allergy Action Plan/ Individual Healthcare Plan is kept with the pupil's medication.
- It is the parent's responsibility to ensure all medication is in date however the School First Aider will check medication kept at school on a termly basis and send a reminder to parents if medication is approaching expiry.
- School First Aider 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.
- Reading School will ensure that relevant information about pupils with allergies is communicated appropriately to staff while maintaining pupil confidentiality.
- Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis to ensure the safety and wellbeing of pupils.

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 AAIs will be encouraged to take responsibility for carrying them on their person at all times.

The EXPC Committee will receive an annual report on allergy safety which will include:

- staff training compliance
- allergy incidents and near misses
- review of healthcare plans
- review of risk assessments
- compliance with statutory guidance
- recommended policy amendments

Allergy Action Plans / Individual Healthcare 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 auto-injector.

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.

Every pupil identified as being at risk of anaphylaxis will have:

- an Allergy Action Plan/ Individual Healthcare Plan
- review following any allergic incident

The School First Aider maintains a live Allergy Register containing:

- student photograph
- allergens
- medication location
- healthcare plan status
- parent contact details

Emergency Treatment

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 swelling
- It raises the blood pressure

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

- 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. AAls 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 you are 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.

Incident Reporting and Review

Staff should report near misses involving allergens or allergy management failures even where no reaction occurred.

Following any allergic reaction:

- Incident recorded on Bromcom (safeguarding incident)
- Parents informed
- Healthcare plans reviewed
- Senior leader notified
- Lessons learned considered
- Findings shared with staff where appropriate

Serious incidents and near misses will be reviewed to identify improvements to school systems.

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** AAls on them at all times (in a suitable bag/container). The school will hold AAls for the student when they are provided by the parent.

Medication in school should be stored in a suitable container and clearly labelled with the pupil's name. The pupil's medication storage container should contain:

- One or two AAls i.e. EpiPen® or Jext® or Emerade®
- An up-to-date allergy action plan
- Antihistamine as tablets or syrup (if included on allergy action plan)
- Spoon 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 School First Aider 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 AAls their child is prescribed, to make sure they can get replacement devices in good time.

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 can be given to ambulance paramedics on arrival or can be disposed of in a pre-ordered sharps bin.

Spare Autoinjectors in School

Reading School has purchased spare AAls 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). Spare adrenaline auto-injectors should be accessible within five minutes from all routinely occupied areas of the school site.

These are stored in a green colour container, clearly labelled 'Emergency Anaphylaxis Adrenaline Pen', kept safely, not locked away and accessible and known to all staff.

Reading School holds 4 spare pens which are kept in the following locations:

- 1 in **Student Services**
- 1 in **The Refectory**
- 1 in **South House Matron's Office**
- 1 in **East Wing Matron's Office**

The School First Aider is responsible for checking the spare medication is in date on a monthly basis and to replace as needed.

Written parental permission for use of the spare AAI 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.

Staff Training

The named staff members responsible for co-ordinating staff anaphylaxis training and the upkeep of the school's anaphylaxis policy are the Deputy Headteacher, DSL, School First Aider and the First Aid Lead.

All staff will complete anaphylaxis 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
- Managing allergy action plans and ensuring these are up to date
- A practical session using trainer devices

Training records will be maintained by HR and reviewed annually by the Allergy Lead.

Inclusion and Safeguarding

Reading 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.

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 First Aider will inform the Catering Manager of pupils with food allergies and provide a list with photographs to ensure catering staff can identify those students.

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.
- 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.

Additional Staff

Supply staff, agency staff, contractors, sports coaches, volunteers and visiting staff who have responsibility for pupils will be provided with relevant allergy information, emergency procedures and details of how to obtain assistance in the event of an allergic reaction.

Boarding

Boarding allergy information forms part of house handover procedures.

Boarding staff must know the location of all prescribed medication and emergency equipment.

Healthcare plans for boarders are reviewed at the start of each academic year and following any significant allergic incident.

School Trips and Sporting Fixtures

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 should be possible with careful planning. 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. 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.

Allergy awareness and nut bans

Reading School supports the approach advocated by Anaphylaxis UK towards a nut free school. They would not necessarily support a blanket ban on any particular allergen. 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.

Risk Assessment

Reading School will conduct a risk assessment for all new joining pupils with allergies and any pupils newly diagnosed, to help identify any gaps in our systems and processes for keeping allergic children safe.

Useful Links

Anaphylaxis UK Safer Schools Programme -

<https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/education/safer-schools-programme/>

AllergyWise for Schools (including certificate) online training -

<https://www.allergywise.org.uk/p/allergywise-for-schools1>

BSACI Allergy Action Plans - <https://www.bsaci.org/professional-resources/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

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>