Allergies & Anaphylaxis Policy

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1. Introduction

Supporting pupils with medical conditions, including allergies, is an important part of ensuring their safety, wellbeing and inclusion at Meadows School. Meadows welcomes pupils with allergies and those at risk of anaphylaxis and is committed to ensuring that they can participate fully and safely in school life.

Following the introduction of the allergy safety provisions commonly known as Benedict's Law, within the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026, and the publication of the DfE *Allergy Safety in Schools* guidance, Meadows has adopted these principles in its approach to allergy safety.

This policy should be read alongside Barnardo's Allergies & Anaphylaxis Guidance (Guidance/Safety/08) and Meadows' relevant policies and procedures for supporting pupils with medical conditions and medication, health and safety, educational visits, behaviour and food/catering.

2. Allergies

An allergy is the response of the body's immune system to a normally harmless substance. Allergens can include foods, pollen, house dust mites, mould, animals, insect stings, medicines and latex.

Allergic reactions can range from mild symptoms such as itching, rash, swelling or sneezing to anaphylaxis, which is a severe and potentially life-threatening allergic reaction requiring immediate emergency treatment.

Common signs of an allergic reaction can include:

- Rash, hives, itching or swelling;
- Swelling of the lips, face, tongue or throat;
- Wheezing, coughing, noisy or difficult breathing;
- Sickness, vomiting or diarrhoea; and
- Dizziness, confusion, collapse or loss of consciousness.

Anaphylaxis is a medical emergency. Adrenaline must be given promptly when anaphylaxis is suspected, and an ambulance must be called.

3. Staff training

All staff, including relevant agency and temporary staff, will receive allergy awareness and anaphylaxis training and will refresh this at least annually. Training will include recognising allergic reactions and anaphylaxis, emergency response, where adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs) are kept and how to administer them.

Practical AAI refresher training will take place at least annually. Staff working with food will also receive appropriate food-allergen training. Training will form part of induction for new staff.

The school will maintain a record of allergy and anaphylaxis training.

4. Wellbeing and independence

Pupils with allergies may experience anxiety about managing their condition. Staff will help pupils understand what the school is doing to keep them safe and, where appropriate, support them to develop the skills and independence needed to manage their own allergy.

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Any bullying, targeting or deliberate exposure connected with a pupil's allergy will be addressed through Meadows' behaviour and anti-bullying arrangements.

5. Allergy safety and minimising risk

Meadows will take reasonable and proportionate steps to minimise the risk of pupils, staff and visitors encountering allergens that the school is aware may present a risk. It is not possible to guarantee an allergen-free environment, so controls will be based on known individual needs and the risks presented.

Any suspected allergic reaction, including where there is no previously known allergy, will be treated promptly in accordance with the school's emergency procedures.

Pupil allergy information will be collected as part of admission and updated whenever the school is informed of a change. Meadows will maintain a pupil allergy register, which is available to relevant staff. The pupil allergy register will be kept up to date whenever allergy information changes and reviewed regularly.

Relevant staff will know the allergies of pupils in their care. Individual risk assessments will be used where necessary, including for food technology, science or sensory activities, animals, insect-sting risks, trips and other activities involving potential allergens.

6. Staff allergies

Staff are responsible for informing the school of any allergy that may require support or emergency action at work. Where necessary, an individual risk assessment and appropriate emergency arrangements will be agreed with the member of staff, in line with Barnardo's Allergies & Anaphylaxis Guidance.

7. Food allergies

Relevant allergy information will be available to staff responsible for preparing and serving food.

Catering staff will follow appropriate food hygiene and allergen controls to reduce the risk of cross-contamination. Ingredients and allergen information will be checked and, where there is doubt about whether food is safe for a pupil with a known allergy, it will not be served to that pupil. Food brought into school or shared as part of school activities must be managed in accordance with the school's allergy arrangements and the needs of individual pupils.

Food allergen information and labelling will comply with applicable food information requirements, including requirements for food prepacked for direct sale where relevant.

8. Individual children and young people

8a. Identification and individual planning

Parents/carers are responsible for providing the school with details of their child's known allergies, previous reactions, medication and any relevant medical advice when a place is accepted, and for informing the school of any subsequent changes.

Where a pupil attends a taster or transition session and is in the care of the school, parents/carers will be asked to provide any allergy information necessary to keep them safe during that session.

Pupils with allergies will be added to the allergy register.

Individual allergy arrangements will be recorded in the pupil's Individual Healthcare/Care Plan and, where appropriate, an Allergy Action Plan and individual risk assessment.

8b. Prescribed adrenaline

Where a pupil has been prescribed AAIs, such as EpiPen, Jext or other prescribed equivalent devices, this will be clearly recorded in their individual plan and on the allergy register.

Where a pupil can safely carry and use their own AAIs without risk to themselves or others, the school will support this. If this is not safe or appropriate, because of the pupil's needs or those of others, their AAIs will be stored securely to prevent unauthorised access but remain immediately available to staff in an emergency. These arrangements will be recorded in the pupil's individual plan or risk assessment. Staff will also support pupils to develop greater independence in managing their allergy, where appropriate to their needs and abilities.

Parents/carers are responsible for providing the school with the pupils prescribed medication and ensuring it remains in date. Medication will be administered in accordance with the prescribed instructions; any discrepancy will be clarified before administration.

Pupils prescribed an AAI should have two devices available.

9. Emergency response to anaphylaxis - Adrenaline Auto-injectors (AAI) protocol

If anaphylaxis is suspected, staff must act immediately. Do not delay adrenaline while waiting for a first aider.

1.	Keep calm and reassure the pupil. Keep them as still as possible. Lie them flat with legs raised. If breathing is difficult, allow them to sit up or raise their shoulders; do not allow them to stand or walk.
2.	Use the pupil's own AAI immediately, allowing them to self-administer if they are able. If they cannot self-administer, a member of staff should administer it. Follow the instructions on the device.
3.	If the pupil's own AAI is not available or cannot be used, obtain and use the school emergency AAI without delay.
4.	Administer the AAI into the outer thigh and note the time.
5.	Call 999/112 immediately. If another adult is present, one person should administer the AAI while another calls the ambulance. Tell the call handler that anaphylaxis is suspected
6.	If symptoms persist after 5 minutes, administer a second AAI into the opposite thigh. If the first device fails to inject, use the second device immediately rather than waiting 5 minutes.
7.	If the pupil becomes unconscious, check airway and breathing. If breathing, place them in the recovery position where appropriate. If not breathing, start CPR and obtain the defibrillator.
8.	Contact parents/carers as soon as possible. A member of staff will accompany a pupil taken to hospital by ambulance and remain with them until a parent/carer arrives.
	Antihistamines are not a substitute for adrenaline in the treatment of anaphylaxis

10. Spare emergency adrenaline auto-injectors

Meadows will hold spare emergency AAIs in line with Barnardo's guidance and current national guidance. They are a back-up and not a replacement for a pupil's own prescribed AAIs.

Emergency AAIs will be clearly labelled and stored safely and securely, taking account of the needs of Meadows pupils, while remaining readily accessible to staff in an emergency. Storage arrangements must not cause delay in accessing or administering adrenaline.

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The Lead member of staff listed at the top of this document will be responsible for checking the school's emergency AAIs regularly, maintaining a record of those checks and ensuring replacement AAIs are obtained before they expire or following use. The school will maintain the information needed to support safe emergency use of its spare AAIs, including details of pupils at risk of anaphylaxis and relevant consent/medical information in accordance with current guidance.

The school will hold appropriate emergency AAIs in accordance with current guidance and the needs of pupils at the school.

11. Recording the use of medication and AAIs

Any allergy medication administered to a pupil will be recorded in accordance with Meadows' medication procedures.

Any use of an AAI will record where and when the reaction occurred, any known or suspected trigger, the medication/device and dose given, the time it was given, who administered it and the injection site.

Any person who has been given adrenaline for suspected anaphylaxis must be transferred to hospital for further assessment. Parents/carers will be contacted at the earliest opportunity.

12. Visits and trips

No pupil will be excluded from a visit or trip solely because they have an allergy. Allergy risks will be considered as part of visit planning and the pupil's individual risk assessment will be considered.

Pupils prescribed AAIs must have their own AAIs with them on visits and off-site activities. They must remain safe, secure and immediately accessible throughout the visit, in accordance with the pupil's individual plan. Staff on the visit will know the pupil's emergency arrangements and how to access and administer their AAIs.

13. Serious incidents and near misses

Serious allergy incidents and near misses will be recorded through the school's incident-reporting arrangements. Parents/carers will be informed as appropriate and, where relevant, on the same day.

Significant incidents will be reviewed by SLT and a lessons-learned exercise completed. Any required changes to individual plans, risk assessments, staff training, procedures or this policy will be made and communicated.

14. Information sharing

Allergy information will be shared with staff and others who need it to keep pupils safe, while respecting confidentiality and data protection requirements.

The allergy register will be accessible to relevant staff. New or changed allergy information will be communicated promptly to those who need it to keep pupils safe.

Information will not be displayed or discussed in ways that unnecessarily identify or embarrass a pupil.

15. Awareness and review of this policy

This policy will be published on the Meadows School website and made available to staff. Staff will be expected to understand the arrangements relevant to their role.

Pupils will be given allergy awareness information in a way appropriate to their age, understanding and needs.

The Allergy Lead will review this policy at least annually, and sooner following a serious incident or near miss, significant change in pupil need, or updated Barnardo's or national guidance.

16. Useful Links

Barnardo's Allergies & Anaphylaxis Guidance (Guidance/Safety/08)

Barnardos Guidance 08 - Allergies Anaphylaxis October 2026

How to use an Epi Pen

https://www.epipen.co.uk/en-GB/patients/your-epipen/how-to-use-your-epipen

When to use an Epi Pen

https://www.epipen.co.uk/en-GB/patients/your-epipen/when-to-use-your-epipen

How to use Jext

https://patients.jext.co.uk/resources/