PENAIR SCHOOL

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Allergy Safety Policy

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1. Introduction

This policy has been developed with reference to the Department of Health Guidance on the Use of Adrenaline Auto-Injectors in Schools (2017), Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions, and the Department for Education Allergy Safety in Schools guidance associated with Benedict's Law.

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 Penair School will support pupils with allergies, to ensure they are safe and are not disadvantaged in any way whilst taking part in school life.

2. Roles and responsibilities

The School Business Manager is the designated Allergy Lead and is responsible for overseeing implementation of this policy, monitoring compliance, reviewing incidents and near misses, maintaining allergy records, and reporting annually to governors.

Governor Responsibilities

- The Governing Board will receive periodic assurance that allergy management arrangements are effective, including staff training compliance, medication audits and incident reporting.

Parent Responsibilities

- On entry to the school, it is the parent's responsibility to inform reception staff/Assistant First Aid Coordinator 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.
- 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 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.
- The Assistant First Aid Coordinator 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 School Assistant First Aid Coordinator will check medication kept at school on a termly basis and send a reminder to parents if medication is approaching expiry.
- The Assistant First Aid Coordinator 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.

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.

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.
Penair School 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.

4. Allergy Register

The Assistant First Aid Coordinator will maintain an Allergy Register containing:

- pupil name
- photograph
- allergens
- prescribed medication
- location of medication
- allergy action plan review date
- parental consent status for spare AAIs

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 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. AAIs 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.

Following administration, used adrenaline auto-injectors should be retained safely and handed to the attending ambulance crew wherever possible. Staff should advise paramedics of the time the device was administered and whether a second dose was given. If the used device cannot be handed to ambulance personnel, it must be disposed of as clinical sharps in accordance with the school's sharps disposal procedures.

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** 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, there should be an anaphylaxis kit which is kept safely, not locked away and **accessible to all staff.**

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 AAIs 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 Assistant First Aid Coordinator 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 AAIs 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 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

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 should 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 clinical waste contractor. The sharps bin is kept in the DT Technicians room.

6. 'Spare' adrenaline auto-injectors in school

Penair School has purchased spare **AAIs for emergency use in children who are at 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 green case, clearly labelled 'Emergency Anaphylaxis Kit', kept safely, not locked away and **accessible and known to all staff.**

Emergency anaphylaxis kits are strategically located in the following areas to enable access to an AAI within five minutes from any location on the school site.

- Reception – Case containing 4 pens
- School Canteen – Case containing 4 pens
- DT Technicians Room – Case containing 4 pens
- Science Technicians Room – Case containing 4 pens

The Assistant First Aid Coordinator 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 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

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

Gill Hakin	School Business Manager – First Aid Coordinator
Lorraine Young	Assistant Business Manager

All staff will complete online 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 (these can be obtained from the manufacturers' websites: www.epipen.co.uk and www.jext.co.uk and www.emerade-bausch.co.uk)

At the start of each academic year and whenever a pupil is newly diagnosed, relevant staff will be informed of the allergy, emergency procedures and location of medication.

8. Inclusion and safeguarding

Penair 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.

Bullying, teasing or inappropriate behaviour relating to a pupil's allergy will be treated as a safeguarding concern and managed in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy.

9. Catering

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 on the school website School Meals - Penair Secondary School in Truro and is changed termly. All ingredients and allergen information can be obtained from the Catering Manager or my emailing enquiries@penair.cornwall.sch.uk.

The Assistant First Aid Coordinator will inform the Catering Manager of pupils with food allergies.

Penair School operates a cashless catering system which incorporates allergy management controls. For pupils with recorded food allergies, the system displays the pupil's photograph and allergy information to catering staff at the point of purchase.

This assists staff in identifying pupils who may be at risk from specific allergens and provides an additional layer of protection when serving food. Allergy information is reviewed and updated as part of the school's medical information management processes to ensure records remain accurate and current.

Parents/carers are encouraged to meet with the Catering Manager 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 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 food-allergic children without first checking Individual Healthcare Plans (e.g. birthday parties, food treats).
- 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.

Visitors, contractors and external providers will be made aware of relevant allergy controls where their activities may involve contact with pupils or food.

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 should 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. The school being visited 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 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 and nut bans

Penair School 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.

12. Risk Assessment

Penair School will conduct a detailed individual 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.

13. Near miss and incident reporting

All allergy incidents and near misses will be documented on AssessNet and reviewed by the Allergy Lead. Lessons learned will be used to improve school procedures and reduce future risk.

14. Annual audit

The Allergy Lead will complete an annual allergy safety audit covering staff training, medication checks, individual healthcare plans, emergency response arrangements and policy compliance.

15. Useful Links

- Anaphylaxis UK - https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/
- Safer Schools Programme - https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/education/saferschools-programme/
- Allergy UK - https://www.allergyuk.org
- Resources for managing allergies at school - For Schools and Childcare Settings | Allergy UK | National Charity

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

Department for Education Allergy Safety in Schools Allergy safety in schools statutory guidance.

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