
SUPPORTING PUPILS AT SCHOOL WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS

Allergen Lead

The Allergen Lead for Balcarras School is:

Mr D Burke

Governor

Mr Pak Wai Hung

Related Policies

The following policies should be read alongside this policy:

Medical Policy

Educational Visits Policy

This policy follows the latest guidance from

Benedicts Law

Natasha's Law

1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Set out our school's approach to allergy management, including reducing the risk of exposure and the procedures in place in case of allergic reaction
- Make clear how our school supports pupils with allergies to ensure their wellbeing and inclusion
- Promote and maintain allergy awareness among the school community

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education (DfE)'s guidance on allergies in schools and supporting pupils with medical conditions at school, the Department of Health and Social Care's guidance on using emergency adrenaline auto-injectors in schools, and the following legislation:

- The Food Information Regulations 2014
- The Food Information (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2019

3. Roles and responsibilities

We take a whole-school approach to allergy awareness.

3.1 Medical and Allergy Administrator

The Allergy Lead is named at the top of this policy.

They're responsible for:

- Promoting and maintaining allergy awareness across our school community
- Recording and collating allergy and special dietary information for all relevant pupils

Ensuring:

- All allergy information is up to date and readily available to relevant members of staff
- All pupils with allergies have an HCP (Health Care Plan) that details all allergies, symptoms and treatment.
- All staff receive an appropriate level of allergy training
- All staff are aware of the school's policy and procedures regarding allergies
- Relevant staff are aware of what activities need an allergy risk assessment
- Keeping stock of the school's adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs)
- Regularly reviewing and updating the allergy policy
- Co-ordinating the paperwork and information from families
- Co-ordinating medication with families
- Checking spare AAIs (adrenaline auto-injectors) are in date
- Any other appropriate tasks relevant to medical and allergies at Balcarras

3.3 Teaching and support staff

All teaching and support staff are responsible for:

- Promoting and maintaining allergy awareness among pupils
- Maintaining awareness of our allergy policy and procedures
- Being able to recognise the signs of severe allergic reactions and anaphylaxis
- Attending appropriate allergy training as required
- Being aware of specific pupils with allergies in their care
- Carefully considering the use of food or other potential allergens in lesson and activity planning
- Ensuring the wellbeing and inclusion of pupils with allergies

3.4 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are responsible for:

- Being aware of the school's Medical and Allergy policy
- Providing the school with up-to-date details of their child's medical needs, dietary requirements, and any history of allergies, reactions and anaphylaxis
- If required, providing their child with 2 in-date adrenaline auto-injectors and any other medication, including inhalers, antihistamine etc., and making sure these are replaced in a timely manner, before the expiry date.
- Carefully considering the food they provide to their child as packed lunches and snacks, and trying to limit the number of allergens included
- Updating the school on any changes to their child's condition

3.5 Pupils with allergies

These pupils are responsible for:

- Being aware of their allergens and the risks they pose
- Understanding how and when to use their adrenaline auto-injector
- Carrying their adrenaline auto-injector on their person and only using it for its intended purpose
- Making sure they bring their adrenaline auto-injector with them on any school trips or activities.

3.6 Pupils without allergies

These pupils are responsible for:

- Being aware of allergens and the risk they pose to their peers
- Supporting their peers and staff in the case of an emergency.

4. Assessing risk

The school will conduct a risk assessment for any pupil at risk of anaphylaxis taking part in:

- a. Lessons such as food technology
 - b. Science experiments involving foods
 - c. Crafts using food packaging
 - d. Off-site events and school trips
 - e. Any other activities involving animals or food, such as animal handling experiences or baking
- A risk assessment for any pupil at risk of an allergic reaction will also be carried out where a visitor requires a guide dog.

5. Managing risk

5.1 Hygiene procedures

All pupils are encouraged to always wash their hands after using the toilets or before and after eating food. The school ensures that all bathroom facilities are in good working order and well-spaced around the school site.

5.2 Catering

The school is committed to providing safe food options to meet the dietary needs of pupils with allergies.

- a. Catering staff receive appropriate training and are able to identify pupils with allergies
- b. School menus are available for parents/carers to view with ingredients clearly labelled
- c. Where changes are made to school menus, we will make sure these continue to meet any special dietary needs of pupils
- d. Food allergen information relating to the 'top 14' allergens is displayed on the packaging of all food products, allowing pupils and staff to make safer choices. Allergen information labelling will follow all legal requirements that apply to naming the food and listing ingredients, as outlined by the Food Standards Agency (FSA)
- e. Catering staff follow hygiene and allergy procedures when preparing food to avoid cross-contamination

5.3 Food restrictions

We acknowledge that it is impractical to enforce an allergen-free school. We will always make clear to parents and pupils that we cannot totally restrict allergens coming in to school. We will work with all pupils with allergies to help them minimise the risk. Pupils and parents must recognise that there may be nuts, sesame,

shellfish, dairy and other allergens present in Balcarras School (as well as the school dog).

Staff are strongly discouraged from giving out food in classes as rewards.

Alternatives to food rewards should be sourced and used to reward children as a safe alternative to food. The same protocols of not handing out food should be followed for whole school events, such as Open Evening, Sponsored Walk, Parents Evenings etc. Staff should discourage pupils from bringing in shared treats (covering homemade and shop bought).

5.4 Insect bites/stings, Asthma, skin allergy

In the event of an insect bite, the member of staff dealing with the pupil will monitor effects closely and ensure appropriate medical advice is sought if in any doubt about the severity.

5.5 Other allergies: Asthma, skin allergy, etc

Some pupils will have asthma. This will be detailed on their Medical Health Care Plan. Pupils will always carry their asthma pump with them, and there is always a spare asthma pump available at main reception.

For all other allergies, details will be carefully recorded on the pupil's Medical Health Care Plan. Where any pupil needs additional specialist care as a result of their allergy, a bespoke Medical Health Care Plan will be written, and all staff will be made aware of the plan.

5.6 Animals

- All pupils will always wash hands after interacting with animals to avoid putting pupils with allergies at risk through later contact
- Pupils with animal allergies will not interact with animals

5.7 Support for mental health

Pupils with allergies will be supported by their tutors and Heads of House. Tutors will know the pupils in their groups with an allergy and be able to offer them support in school when needed.

5.8 Events and school trips

No pupils with allergies will be excluded from taking part in a school trip or event. All trips will have a risk assessment written by the trip leader and this will include any allergy requirements. Further details are made clear in the school's Educational Trips Policy.

Pupils are required to bring any allergy medication with them on a school trip. Pupils who forget their allergy medication will not be allowed to leave on the bus and have to remain in school. Trip leaders will check the pupil's medication before the trip departs. Letters will be sent home before the trip departs to ensure parents can pack their child's allergy medication in their bag the night before the trip.

6. Procedures for handling an allergic reaction

6.1 Register of pupils with AAls

For all pupils with an allergy, details will be recorded in the pupil's Health Care Plan.

The Health Care Plan records:

- Known allergens and risk factors for anaphylaxis
- Whether a pupil has been prescribed AAI(s) (and if so, what type and dose)
- Where a pupil has been prescribed an AAI, whether parental consent has been given for use of the spare AAI, which may be different to the personal AAI (Adrenaline-Auto Injector) prescribed for the pupil
- Bromcom also has a photograph of each pupil to allow a visual check to be made.

All Health Care Plans are stored on Bromcom. All members of staff teachers are able to access a pupils Health Care Plan when necessary.

See “Health Care Plans” section of the medial policy

6.2 Allergic reaction procedures

As part of the whole-school awareness approach to allergies, all staff are trained in the school’s allergic reaction procedure, and to recognise the signs of anaphylaxis and respond appropriately. Staff are trained in the administration of AAIs (Adrenaline-Auto Injectors) to minimise delays in pupils receiving adrenaline in an emergency. If a pupil has an allergic reaction, the staff member will put into place the training they have received:

- If an AAI (Adrenaline-Auto Injector) needs to be administered, a member of staff will use the pupil's own AAI, or if it is not available, a school one

If a pupil needs to be taken to hospital, staff will stay with the pupil until the parent/carer arrives, or accompany the pupil to hospital by ambulance. If the allergic reaction is mild (e.g. skin rash, itching or sneezing), the pupil will be monitored and the parents/carers informed

7. Adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs)

7.1 Purchasing of spare AAIs (Adrenaline-Auto Injectors)

The allergy lead is responsible for buying AAIs and ensuring they are stored according to the guidance.

7.2 Storage (of both spare and prescribed AAIs (Adrenaline-Auto Injectors))

Balcarras has three locations for storing spare AAIs:

- Food Technology (in the cupboard in 2A2)
- Canteen (inside the finance office)
- Main Reception

All spare AAIs are stored in pairs.

All storage locations are

- At room temperature
- Not locked, but accessible
- Spread out around the school site

7.3 Maintenance of spare AAls (Adrenaline-Auto Injectors)

The Medical and Allergy Administrator will check regularly that the AAls are all in date and still in their location.

7.4 Disposal

AAls (Adrenaline-Auto Injectors) can only be used once. Once a AAI (Adrenaline-Auto Injector) has been used, it will be disposed of in line with the manufacturer's instructions (for example, in a sharps bin for collection by the local council). The sharps bin is located in the main office, in main reception.

7.5 Use of AAls (Adrenaline-Auto Injectors) off school premises

Pupils at risk of anaphylaxis who are able to administer their own AAls should carry their own AAI (Adrenaline-Auto Injector) with them on school trips and off-site events. The Educational Trips Policy details how trip leaders will ensure that all medication is being carried by the pupils before a trip departs.

8. Training

The school is committed to training all staff in allergy response. This includes:

- How to reduce and prevent the risk of allergic reactions
- How to spot the signs of allergic reactions (including anaphylaxis)
- The importance of acting quickly in the case of anaphylaxis
- Where AAls are kept on the school site, and how to access them
- How to administer AAls
- The wellbeing and inclusion implications of allergies

9. Mental Health Support

Balcarras understands that pupils with allergies may have their mental health affected. All pupils with allergies who feel they need support with their mental health will be supported through the pastoral system, in line with the school's mental health support protocols. Pupils should not feel worried about asking for support with their mental health.

Appendix 1 – Science Department

We recognise that science lessons represent a unique opportunity to experience different chemical and biological materials in a controlled setting and thus come with a different set of risks.

Planning lessons:

- Understand that practicals involving chemicals, biological materials, latex, animal specimens, powders or fumes that present a medical or allergy risk.
- Adapt the practical where possible or use alternative materials/methods to allow safe participation for all.
- Technicians will help to highlight any relevant medical/allergy considerations when in practical activities.

During lessons:

- Be alert to risks from inhalation, skin contact or exposure to substances used during practical work. Ventilate the lab when necessary.
- If an unexpected medical or allergic reaction occurs, stop the activity and follow the school's existing emergency procedures.

After an incident:

- Report any new or unidentified risk due to a practical activity.
- Where appropriate, ensure the practical method/risk assessment is amended to prevent the same issue occurring again.

Appendix 2 – Canteen

Balcarras Trust Canteen Food Allergy & Safety Policy

Approved by: Ian Cole (Catering Manager)

1. Purpose and Scope

This policy applies specifically to the school canteen, catering staff, kitchen operations, servery areas, and all food prepared, packaged, or served on-site. The objective is to establish a rigorous, risk-managed environment that safeguards pupils with food allergies, intolerances, and coeliac disease, ensuring full compliance with food information regulations, Natasha's Law, and Department for Education statutory guidelines on school allergy safety.

2. Legislative and Regulatory Compliance

The school canteen operates under strict adherence to current UK food safety legislation:

- **Food Information Regulations & Natasha's Law:** Full ingredient lists with the 14 major allergens clearly emphasized (e.g., bolded) must be provided for all Prepacked for Direct Sale (PPDS) items (such as sandwiches, wraps, or baked goods packed on-site prior to selection).
- **Allergen Matrices:** Accurate, up-to-date allergen matrices covering all 14 mandatory allergens must be maintained and made readily accessible for every menu cycle.
- **Cross-Contamination Controls:** Robust segregation, cleaning, and preparation protocols to prevent allergen cross-contact.

3. Roles and Responsibilities in the Canteen

Catering Manager

- Ensure all kitchen and servery staff are fully trained in allergen management and food hygiene.
- Maintain up-to-date allergen matrices and ingredient specification sheets for all supplied food items.
- Oversee the safe labelling of PPDS items in compliance with Natasha's Law.
- Conduct daily pre-service checks on kitchen segregation, preparation surfaces, and serving utensils.

Kitchen and Servery Staff

- Strictly adhere to recipes, ingredient lists, and substitution protocols—never substitute an ingredient without checking the allergen impact.
- Use designated equipment, color-coded boards, and isolated preparation zones to prevent cross-contamination.
- Proactively communicate with pupils and teachers regarding meal options, ensuring allergic children are never left to guess or self-select unsafe food.

Teaching Staff and Lunchtime Supervisors

- Support the canteen by ensuring pupils with severe allergies (identified via Individual Healthcare Plans / IHPs) are supported at the point of service.

- Monitor the dining hall environment to prevent food swapping, sharing, or allergen contamination among peers.

4. Kitchen Operations and Allergen Management

Ingredient Sourcing and Storage

- **Traceability:** All food products must be purchased from approved, audited suppliers who provide comprehensive allergen specifications.
- **Storage Protocols:** Allergen-containing ingredients must be stored safely (typically below or securely separated from free-from ingredients) in clearly labelled containers to prevent accidental cross-contamination.

Food Preparation and Cooking

- **Segregation:** Where possible, allergen-free meals should be prepared in dedicated zones or at the start of production cycles using thoroughly sanitized equipment.
- **Utensils:** Dedicated utensils, fryers, and pans must be used for special dietary requirements (such as gluten-free or dairy-free meals).
- **"May Contain" Warnings:** If an ingredient carries a precautionary "may contain" warning, it must be evaluated by the Catering Manager. High-risk ingredients should be avoided where catering for vulnerable pupils.

5. Servery, Labelling, and Communication

- **Prepacked for Direct Sale (PPDS) Labelling:** Any item packed on-site before being ordered or selected (e.g., grab-and-go lunch bags, boxed salads, or bakery items) must feature a clear label displaying the product name and a full ingredients list with allergenic ingredients emphasized in bold.
- **Open Counter Service:** Clear signage must be displayed at counters informing pupils and staff how to request allergen information. Counter staff must be trained to verify dietary requirements before serving.
- **Pupil Identification Systems:** The canteen team must have a discreet, effective method of identifying pupils with severe allergies at the till/servery point (such as profile systems or secure data accessible to cashiers) to prevent accidental sales of unsafe meals.

6. Dealing with Substitutions and Menu Changes

- If a scheduled ingredient is out of stock and a substitution is required, the substitution must be cleared by the Catering Manager.
- The allergen matrix must be updated immediately, and servery staff must be briefed on the change before service begins. If a safe alternative cannot be guaranteed, the dish must be withdrawn or flagged immediately.

7. Emergency Response in the Dining Hall

- Canteen and lunchtime supervisory staff must be trained to recognize the signs of an allergic reaction or anaphylaxis (e.g., swelling of the lips/tongue, difficulty breathing, hives, sudden distress).

Emergency protocols must align with the school's medical policy:

- Instantly secure assistance and retrieve the pupil's emergency medication (Adrenaline Auto-Injector) if required.
- Call emergency services (999) immediately in the event of systemic symptoms or suspected anaphylaxis.
- Ensure clear communication with paramedics regarding what the child consumed.

8. Monitoring and Review

- The canteen's allergen management protocols will be audited termly by the school leadership team or compliance officers.
- This policy will be reviewed annually or immediately following any significant regulatory updates or near-miss incidents.