

VICTORIA PRIMARY SCHOOL BALLYHALBERT **ALLERGY POLICY**

An inclusive, imaginative and inspiring Learning Community where everyone can be safe, healthy, happy and successful together.



This policy is concerned with a whole school approach to the health care and management of those members of our school community suffering from specific allergies.

Victoria Primary School are aware that our children may suffer from food, bee/wasp sting, animal or nut allergies and we believe that all allergies should be taken seriously and dealt with in a professional and appropriate way.

Victoria Primary School's position is not to guarantee a completely allergen free environment, rather: to minimise the risk of exposure, encourage self-responsibility, and plan for effective response to possible emergencies.

Victoria Primary School is committed to no food and drink sharing.

The Educational Providers are obliged to obtain information about any dietary requirements/allergy. As such families are asked to provide details of allergies in the child's School Admissions Forms, which are submitted before starting school and to update these as required.

Aim

The intent of this policy is to minimize the risk of any child suffering allergy-induced anaphylaxis whilst at school.

An allergic reaction to nuts is the most common high risk allergy, and as such demands more rigorous controls throughout the policy.

The underlying principles of this policy include:

The establishment of effective risk management practices to minimise the child, staff, family members and visitor exposure to known trigger foods and insects. Staff training and education to ensure effective emergency response to any allergic reaction situation.

This policy applies to all members of the school community:

- School staff
- Families
- Volunteers
- Supply Staff
- Children
- Students

Definitions

Allergy – A condition in which the body has an exaggerated response to a substance (eg food and drug) also known as hypersensitivity.

Allergen – A normal harmless substance that triggers an allergic reaction in the immune system of a susceptible person.

Anaphylaxis – Anaphylaxis, or anaphylactic shock, is a sudden, severe and potentially life-threatening allergic reaction to food, stings, bites, or medicines.

Epipen – Brand name for syringe style device containing the drug Adrenalin, which is ready for immediate inter-muscular administration.

Minimized Risk Environment – An environment where risk management practices (eg Risk Assessment Forms) have minimised the risk of (allergen) exposure.

Health Care Plan or Individual Risk Assessment – A detailed document outlining an individual child's condition treatment, and action plan for location of Epipen.

Procedures and Responsibilities for Allergy Management:

- The involvement of families, Health Care professionals and staff in establishing individual Health Care Plans or Risk Assessments.
- The establishment and maintenance of practices for effectively communicating a child's healthcare plans or risk assessments to all relevant staff.
- Staff training in anaphylaxis management, including awareness of triggers and first aid procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency.
- Age appropriate education of the children with severe food allergies.

Medical Information

- The school will seek updated information via Data Collection form at the commencement of each calendar year.
- Furthermore, any change in a child's medical condition during the year must be reported to the school.
- For a child with an allergic condition, the school requires families to provide written advice from a doctor (GP), which explains the condition, defines the allergy triggers and any required medication.
- The Principal will ensure that a Health Care Plan (from medical professionals) or Risk Assessment (from school staff) is established and updated for each child with a known allergy. Risk Assessments are completed by a member of the Leadership Team.
- All members of staff are required to review and familiarise themselves with the medical information.
- Children with allergies will have a recent photograph and information regarding their medical needs posted in relevant rooms with parental permission.
- Where children with known allergies are participating in school excursions, the risk assessments must include this information.
- The wearing of a medic alert bracelet is allowed by the school.

Medical Information (Epipens)

Where Epipens (Adrenalin) are required in the Health Care Plan:

- Families are responsible for the provision and timely replacement of the Epipens.
- The Epipens are located securely in relevant locations approved by the Principal.
- Epipens will be located so that all adults involved with the child know where they are at all times.

The Role of Families

Families are responsible for providing in writing, on-going accurate and current medical information to the school.

Families are to send a letter or meet with a member of the Leadership Team to confirm and detail the nature of the allergy; including:

- The allergen (the substance the child is allergic to).
- The nature of the allergic reaction (from rash, breathing problems to anaphylactic shock).
- What to do in the case of allergic reaction, including any medication to be used and how it is to be used.
- Control measures – such as how the child can be prevented from getting into contact with the allergen.
- If a child has an allergy requiring an Epipen, a Health Care Plan or Risk Assessment must be completed and signed by the families.
- It is the responsibility of the families to provide the school with up to date medication/equipment clearly labelled in the original packaging.
- In the case of life saving medication like Epipens the child will not be allowed to attend without it.
- Families are also required to provide up to date emergency contact information.
- Snacks and lunches brought into school are provided by each child's parent.
- It is their responsibility to ensure that the contents are safe for the child to consume.
- Families should liaise with staff about appropriateness of snacks and any food related activities (eg. cooking).

We realise as a school that some families may share information about allergies that have not been medically identified. However, we will treat this information in the same way.

The Role of Staff

Staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with the policy and to adhere to health & safety regulations regarding food and drink.

- If a child's School Data Collection Form states that they have an allergy then a Health Care Plan or Risk Assessment is needed. A risk assessment should be carried out and any actions identified to be put in place. The Assessment should be stored with the child's Health Care Plan.
- Be mindful of resources eg. play area.
- The teacher will ensure the child feels secure by keeping in contact with the parents throughout the year.
- Any activity which may involve allergens needs to be risk assessed separately and courtesy calls to parents should be given to reduce risk further.
- Upon determining that a child attending school has a severe allergy, a team meeting will be set up as soon as possible where all staff concerned attend to update knowledge and awareness of child's needs.

- All staff who come into contact with the child will be made aware of what treatment/medication is required and where any medication is stored.
- All staff are to promote hand washing before and after eating.
- Snack time foods are monitored by staff and are peanut/nut free and other allergens depending on the children attending. All staff should know the procedures at snack and lunch time to ensure the safety of children with allergies. Parents are informed and asked to be mindful.
- All tables are cleaned with an approved solution.
- Children are not permitted to share food.
- The South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust provide Anaphylaxis/Epipen use training. Staff will attend training as necessary.
- We may ask families for a list of food products and food derivatives the child must not come into contact with.
- Emergency medication should be easily accessible, especially at times of high risk.
- Staff should liaise with families about snacks and food related activities.
- In case of allergy staff will follow the Action Plan.
- However staff cannot guarantee that foods will not contain traces of allergens but will encourage handwashing.

The Role of other Families

Snacks and lunches brought into school by other families should be peanut and nut free. The school will ensure that families are regularly reminded.

Glastry College Kitchen

Glastry College Kitchen is our current school lunch provider and hence have their own policy for food allergies. Families are required to make an appointment with the school cook and provide a current medical letter stating the allergy of their child.

Evaluation and Review

This policy is a working document and is kept under constant review.

This document is freely available to the entire school community and will be reviewed regularly.

Signed – Chair of Governors: _____



Signed – Principal: _____



Date: 13th April 2021