



## ALLERGY AND ANAPHYLAXIS POLICY

This policy establishes the Royal Grammar School's (RGS) and RGS Prep's (*the School*) approach to allergy management, setting out the procedures and responsibilities in place to manage allergies within the school environment and to support students with allergies. The policy applies to all staff, students, parents and visitors and should be read alongside other relevant policies.

### Introduction

An allergy is a reaction by the body's immune system to a substance that is usually harmless. This can cause minor symptoms such as itching or sneezing, or a more severe reaction known as anaphylaxis. Anaphylaxis is a severe systemic reaction affecting the whole body, often within minutes of exposure to the allergen. It is characterised by rapidly developing life-threatening problems. Anaphylaxis is a MEDICAL EMERGENCY.

The School takes a whole school approach to allergy management.

### Information and Documentation

Parents of all students with allergies are expected to provide details of their child's allergies, any treatment required, and the form in which these allergies present themselves, on the medical form on admission to the school.

Staff are made aware of all students with allergies via an alert on the school database, a list kept in the staff working common room (RGS)/ the medical room (RGS Prep) and a note being made in class registers. This information is for all allergies, both students for whom an adrenaline auto-injector (AAI) has been prescribed and those who do not have these.

Each student who is prescribed an adrenaline auto-injector will have an allergy care plan which will include:

- Students full name
- Allergen(s)
- Details of medication used in the case of an allergic reaction including AAI's

Parents will also be asked to give consent to use of the school spare AAI's on the admission medical form.

## Catering

The school is committed to providing a safe meal for all students, including those with food allergies. All staff preparing food for students will receive relevant and appropriate allergy awareness training. Any staff preparing food will follow good hygiene practices and food safety procedures.

The catering team will endeavour to get to know pupils with allergies but will also have documentation including photographs of those students with allergies and dietary restrictions in order to be able to identify them.

Allergens are clearly displayed for students to read during meal service at the special diets counter where ALL those with allergies, intolerance and dietary preferences should go for their meals.

## School Meals

There are choices available to those students with food allergies as per the catering form parents are asked to complete. At RGS Prep, on entering the dining hall, all students with a food allergy or intolerance collect and wear a coloured lanyard with details of their allergy/ intolerance.

Students with severe allergies are offered a plated meal option but the school is aware that many students find this option very restrictive. We therefore provide a special diets counter for all those students with allergies (as well as other dietary restrictions). If a student has an allergy, they **MUST** use this counter for meal service, here they will be given a copy of the allergen list for the meals on offer and can choose those which are safe for them. They will not be told by staff what they can have but allergy trained staff are available to answer any questions. It is **ESSENTIAL** that students with allergies use this counter for their own safety. This choice promotes independence in allergy management in line with advice from Allergy UK® and the Anaphylaxis Campaign®.

Although our caterers do not use nuts in our kitchens, some products are classed as those which 'may contain' nuts or other allergens, parents are asked to indicate on the allergy form if their child can have 'may contain' products.

Students are responsible for checking allergies when purchasing any food at break or from charity sales in school.

## Food Brought into School

It is important to remember that the RGS is **NOT** a **NUT FREE** school due to older students having the privilege of going off site to purchase food. Nuts are discouraged from being brought onto the school site and from being used in any baking competitions, on-site activities and trip packed lunches, however it is not possible to guarantee. Therefore, it is essential that students who are prescribed AAIs carry them on their person at all times. RGS Prep, however, **IS** a **NUT FREE**

**SCHOOL.** As such, students are not permitted to bring anything into school that may contain nuts. This includes snacks and baked goods brought in for birthdays.

### **Inclusion and Mental Health**

Allergies can have a significant impact on mental health and wellbeing. Pupils with allergies may experience anxiety and depression, they may also experience bullying.

Pupils with allergies may require additional pastoral support (e.g. regular tutor or (where appropriate, Head of Wellbeing at RGS Prep) check in).

Bullying will be treated in line with the school anti-bullying policy.

Every effort will be made for all students with allergies to participate fully in every aspect of school life, including all trips. In rare cases, participation may not be possible if the student's safety is thought to be at risk (for example, some overseas expeditions). In these cases, a decision will be made alongside the student, their parents, the tour operator and the school.

### **Adrenaline Auto-Injectors (AAIs)**

The Anaphylaxis campaign recommend that two AAIs must be carried by those for whom they are prescribed. At RGS, two AAIs must therefore be **carried at all times** by those for whom they are prescribed, regardless of if they have ever been required. This includes to lunch (where bags are not permitted) and to all offsite activities and school trips. At RGS Prep, students' AAIs are kept in clearly labelled bags in a Year Group box on a shelf in the medical room. Each Year Group box contains copies of the student's IHCPs.

A named spare AAI can be kept in the (RGS) medical room for a student if parents wish. This does not negate the need for the student to carry two on their person at all times.

### **School Spare AAIs**

Schools are now allowed to stock spare AAIs for use in an emergency to prevent a delay in treatment. At RGS, the school has chosen to stock EpiPen® (300mcg). Consent for the school's EpiPen® can be given by parents via the medical form on admission. School spare EpiPens® will be stored in the dining hall, at Bradstone Brook, in the medical room and in the Art block.

Expiry dates of school spare EpiPens® and other auto injectors stored on school premises will be checked each term by the school nurse and parents will be advised when replacements are needed. Parents are expected to do this in a timely manner.

### **Trips and Fixtures**

Students **MUST** carry two AAIs to all sports practices and fixtures, whether they are at home or away and on all trips.

AAIs must be carried close to the student, not stored in hold luggage or left on coaches / in changing rooms.

Staff on trips and sporting events will be aware of those boys participating who have allergies but students must take responsibility for ensuring they check for allergens when eating match teas or eating out on trips.

If a student who is prescribed an AAI is involved in a school activity off the school premises (e.g. educational visit, trip or sporting fixture), it is the responsibility of the student's parent(s) to ensure that emergency medication is taken by their child to the activity. The school reserves the right to refuse permission to attend or take part in an activity or trip, if that student does not have the required emergency medication.

For RGS Prep trips and fixtures, the named bags identified previously are signed out and back in again by a member of staff when leaving or returning to the school site. Copies of the students' IHCPs are transported along with the AAIs in a clearly labelled rucksack.

### **Responding to an Allergic Reaction / Anaphylaxis**

If a student has an allergic reaction they will be treated in accordance with their Allergy Response Care Plan. If this is not immediately to hand, they will be treated in accordance with first aid guidelines for the management of anaphylaxis or as directed by 999.

A student's own AAI will be used where possible but if not available and the school spare EpiPen® is readily available, this may be used first.

A student will be encouraged to self-administer if they are able to do so but a member of staff will assist where required.

Any student or staff member who has received an AAI must go to hospital to be seen by a medical professional to be thoroughly checked. Students will be accompanied by a member of staff, usually the school nurse if they are available.

### **Emergency Treatment and Management of Anaphylaxis**

What to look for:

- swelling of the mouth or throat
- difficulty swallowing or speaking
- difficulty breathing
- sudden collapse / unconsciousness
- hives, rash anywhere on the body
- abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting
- sudden feeling of weakness
- strong feelings of impending doom.

Anaphylaxis is likely if all of the following 3 things happen:

- sudden onset (a reaction can start within minutes) and rapid progression of symptoms

- life threatening airway and/or breathing difficulties and/or circulation problems (e.g. alteration in heart rate, sudden drop in blood pressure, feeling of weakness)
- changes to the skin e.g. flushing, urticaria (an itchy, red, swollen skin eruption showing markings like nettle rash or hives), angioedema (swelling or puffing of the deeper layers of skin and/or soft tissues, often lips, mouth, face etc.).

Note: skin changes on their own are not a sign of an anaphylactic reaction, and in some cases don't occur at all.

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. Adrenaline should be administered by an injection into the muscle (intramuscular injection)

- Adrenaline must be administered with the minimum of delay as it is more effective in preventing an allergic reaction from progressing to anaphylaxis than in reversing it once the symptoms have become severe.

#### **ACTION**

- Stay with the person and call for help. DO NOT MOVE THE PERSON OR LEAVE THEM UNATTENDED
- Remove trigger if possible (e.g. insect stinger)
- Lie the person flat (with or without legs elevated) – if short of breath allow a sitting position, do not force the casualty to lie down
- USE ADRENALINE WITHOUT DELAY and note time given. (inject at upper, outer thigh - through clothing if necessary)
- CALL 999 and state ANAPHYLAXIS
- If no improvement after 5 minutes, administer second adrenaline auto-injector
- If no signs of life, commence CPR
- Phone parent/carer as soon as possible
- All pupils must go to hospital for observation after anaphylaxis even if they appear to have recovered as a reaction can reoccur after treatment.

**NB: In a life threatening emergency, where parental permission has not been given, an auto injector may be used 'in the best interests' of the child.**

#### **Training**

Training in the recognition and treatment of anaphylaxis will be offered annually to staff. The organisation of this training is the responsibility of the School Nurse in liaison with the Deputy Head(s) (RGS)/ Head (RGS Prep). Action plans for the management of anaphylaxis are also available in relevant areas of school and on the school database.

- Understanding what an allergy is
- How to reduce the risk of an allergic reaction occurring

- How to recognise and treat an allergic reaction, including anaphylaxis. Early recognition of symptoms is key, including knowing when to call for emergency services
- Where adrenaline pens are kept (both prescribed pens and spare pens) and how to access them
- The importance of inclusion of pupils with food allergies, the impact of allergy on mental health and wellbeing and the risk of allergy related bullying.

### **Allergen Awareness/ Avoidance**

The RGS encourages all students to be independent in the management of all long term medical conditions, including allergies, to prepare them for life beyond school. We ask each student with an allergy (especially food related) to be proactive in the care and management of their food allergy/ allergies and reactions in particular:

### **Responsibility of Students with Allergies**

- To know their allergies and how to mitigate risk
- Avoid their allergen as best they can (for example by not sharing food with others / checking food labels)
- Be aware of other people eating around them and use handwashing to prevent contamination with allergens
- To **ALWAYS** carry their emergency medication (2 x AAls) with them,
- To ensure their friends are aware of their allergy and know what to do to summon help
- To notify an appropriate adult if they eat something they believe may contain the substance they are allergic to
- To notify an adult immediately if they think they are having a reaction
- To understand when and how to administer their AAI or seek training from the School Nurse on admission to the RGS if they are unsure
- to be aware of what to do if they experience an allergic reaction when away from the school site (those students in middle and upper school who are allowed into the town centre).

### **Responsibility of Parents of Students with Allergies**

- To be aware and have understood the school's allergy policy
- To provide the School Nurse (RGS)/ school office (RGS Prep) with details of their child's medical needs, dietary requirements and allergies including previous reactions, related conditions and any prescribed treatment
- To complete the dietary requirement form on admission to school indicating all allergies including whether their child can tolerate items classed as 'may contain'
- To update the School Nurse (RGS)/ First Aid Lead (RGS Prep) of any changes to the above throughout their child's time at the school
- To ensure their child **ALWAYS** carries two 'in date' AAls on their person and confirm this via the medical form on admission (RGS)

- to ensure that two 'in date' AAls are supplied to the medical room and replace any expired emergency medication in a timely manner (RGS Prep)
- To ensure all emergency medication including AAls is taken on school trips, fixtures and educational visits
- To supply an allergy care plan or return one sent to them by the School Nurse/ First Aid Lead
- To support their child in the understanding and management of their allergies, promoting independence as they begin senior school
- To replace any expired spare emergency medication in a timely manner, if choosing to keep this in school.

### **Responsibility of the School**

The School will seek to:

- Ensure the safety, inclusion and wellbeing of all students with allergies
- Keep current records of all students who have allergies
- Educate staff on the risks, prevention and responses to anaphylaxis
- Provide appropriate training to staff and ensuring they have good allergy awareness
- To make staff aware of those students in their care who have allergies
- Provide School Nurse provision (RGS) during the school day and in the absence of the School Nurse, a list of first aid trained staff is displayed at various locations throughout school
- Provide a written, available action plan for use in such an emergency
- Ensure that nuts are not used in science experiments or any aspects of classroom teaching
- Ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that RGS Prep remains nut free
- Advise staff that if they have any concerns regarding a student, even if presenting with a possible minor reaction, to send them accompanied to the School Nurse (RGS)/ school office (RGS Prep) or to summon assistance
- Record any near misses or severe allergic reactions via the school's accident reporting system
- Act accordingly if any allergy related bullying occurs.

### **Responsibility of the School Nurse/ Allergy Lead/ First Aid Lead**

The School Nurse (RGS)/ First Aid Lead (RGS Prep) will seek to:

- Along with the Head of Admissions/ Admissions Manager, collect and co-ordinate allergy information, including care plans, and add this to the school database when a student joins the school
- Review dietary forms and forward those with allergies, intolerances or dietary preferences to the school Catering Manager
- Check spare emergency medication once a term and inform parents when this needs replacing
- Maintain the supply of the school spare EpiPens®, ensuring these are in-date and ready to use

- Providing annual training refreshers to include administration of AAls and recognition of anaphylaxis.

**Reviewed by: Senior Deputy Head/ School Nurse/ Head (RGS Prep)**

**Last Review: 25 July 2024**

**Next review: Trinity 2025**