St Mary’s Primary School Dechomet

Allergies Policy including Nut and Food Allergies



**This policy was ratified by our Board of Governors on**

## *OUR VISION : St Mary’s Primary School is committed to providing a happy, caring environment where all are valued and every child matters and where children are prepared for the challenges of education, work and life.*

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

St. Mary’s Primary School, Dechomet are aware that children who attend 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.

Our position is not to guarantee a completely allergen free environment but rather to minimise the risk of exposure, encourage self-responsibility and plan for effective responses to possible emergencies. Parents are asked to provide details of allergies in the child’s Health Form which is submitted at the start of the school year.

**Aim:**

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

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

This policy applies to all members of the school community including:

School Staff

Parents/Guardians

Volunteers

Supply Staff

Students

**Definitions:**

Allergy- A condition in which the body has an exaggerated response to a substance (e.g. food) also known as hypersensitivity.

Allergen- A normally 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 device containing the drug adrenalin which is ready for immediate inter-muscular administration.

Minimized Risk Environment-An environment where management practices have minimised the risk of allergen exposure.

Health Care Plan- A detailed document outlining an individual student’s condition and action plan.

**Procedures and Responsibilities for Allergy Management:**

General

* Both parents and staff should be involved in establishing individual Health Care Plans.
* Effective communication regarding a child’s healthcare plan should be established and involve all relevant staff.
* Annual staff training in anaphylaxis management if needed, including awareness of triggers and first aid procedures, including Epipen training/use of piriton.
* Age appropriate education of the children with severe food allergies should be established by school and parents.
* Substitute Teachers will be informed of allergies and procedures.

Natasha’s Law

* From 1st October 2021, the requirements for prepacked for direct sale (PPDS) food labelling was changed in Wales, England and Northern Ireland because of a new rule passed in September 2019 known as Natasha’s Law. According to the Food Standards Agency, the new labelling requirements will help protect consumers by providing potentially life-saving allergen information on the packaging of the food.

Medical Information

* Parents/Guardians must report any change in a child’s medical condition during the year to the school.
* For pupils with an allergic condition, the school requires parents/guardians to meet with the school and school nurse to write the Health Care Plan.
* Action Plans with a recent photograph for any students with allergies will be posted in relevant locations with parental permission.
* Where pupils with known allergies are participating in school excursions, the risk assessments must address children with allergies.
* Where Epipens are required in the Health Care Plan, parents/guardians are responsible for the provision and timely replacement of them.

Parent’s Role

Parents are responsible for providing up to date, accurate and current medical information to the school. Parents are to notify the school on:

* The allergen
* The nature of the allergic reaction
* What to do in 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.

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide the school with up to date medication/equipment clearly labelled in a suitable container. In the case of life saving medication like Epipens the child will not be allowed to attend without it. Parents are required to provide up to date emergency contact information

Staff’s Role

Staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with the policy. All staff who come into contact with the child will be made aware of what treatment/medication is required and where the medication is stored.

**Role of Other Parents in assisting with Nut Allergies**

Since this condition can be life threatening, all parents are asked to minimise the risk to children with nut allergies by:

* Avoiding giving children nuts e.g. peanuts, almonds, walnuts, cashew nuts etc. in school lunches and break.
* Do not give peanut butter or Nutella sandwiches and other spreads and snack bars containing nuts or labelled ‘may contain nuts’ in school lunches and break.
* Asking children NOT to share or swap food.

We want to try and ensure nuts are not in our school however we cannot guarantee this as staff cannot check all food brought in by pupils. We appreciate your help in checking foods sent in for lunch and break for nuts or traces of nuts.

What to do in an Emergency

* Assess the situation
* Administer appropriate medication
* Follow the child’s Care Plan instructions.
* If symptoms suggest it is a severe reaction give the pupil their Epipen and note the time it was given and call for the ambulance.
* Call the parents of the pupil
* If there is no improvement after 5 minutes give the second Epipen.
* Continue to assess the pupil’s condition.
* After the emergency carry out a debriefing session with all members of staff involved.

Date: 18/10/22

Review Date: 18/10/25

Principal: Oonagh McNally

Governors: Eamonn Kennedy