



## **WATSONIA HEIGHTS PRIMARY SCHOOL ANAPHYLAXIS MANAGEMENT POLICY**

### **RATIONALE:**

At Watsonia Heights Primary it is the school's responsibility to consider the Health and Wellbeing of all its students. It is important that school staff and parents are confident of the school's capacity to appropriately manage students who have been identified by a medical practitioner as being at risk of an anaphylactic reaction. It is the school's responsibility to, where possible, minimise allergic reactions, recognise the symptoms and treat the symptoms quickly.

### **PURPOSE:**

Anaphylaxis is a severe and sudden allergic reaction. It occurs when a person is exposed to an allergen. The most common causes in school age children are eggs, peanuts, nuts, cow's milk, bee or other insect stings and some drugs. Reactions usually begin within minutes of exposure and can progress rapidly over a period of up to two hours or more. Anaphylaxis is potentially life threatening and always requires an emergency response.

In order for the school to effectively manage anaphylactic reactions in children at risk, the following steps need to be considered:

- Obtaining medical information about children at risk.
- Education of those responsible for the care of children at risk.
- Implementation of practical strategies to avoid exposure to known triggers.
- Age appropriate education for children with severe allergies.

### **IMPLEMENTATION:**

1. It is the responsibility of the parent to notify the school that their child is at risk of an anaphylactic reaction either at the time of enrolment, or as soon after diagnosis as possible.
2. Parents must provide written documentation in the form of an Anaphylaxis Management Plan for Anaphylaxis, from the family doctor or specialist outlining the details of the allergy concerned and what medical treatment should be undertaken in case of a reaction. Photo identification of the child concerned will be included on the Action Plan. Copies of the Action Plan will be given to the class teacher to be placed in the roll, displayed in the Sick Bay, the Staff Room, OSHC Office (if appropriate) and the Canteen (with parental permission).
3. As allergies may change over time, the Action Plan must be updated annually, or if the child's condition alters during the year.
4. All staff at the school, including casual relief teachers, will be made familiar with the details of students who may be at risk of an anaphylactic reaction, and the appropriate emergency response.
5. Training and information for staff will be provided by appropriately qualified professionals.
6. Relevant staff will meet with the parents to conduct an assessment of potential exposure to allergens in the student's routine and classroom environment, and the development of appropriate strategies to ensure the student's safety. The avoidance of specific triggers (risk minimisation) is the basis for anaphylaxis prevention.
7. The school will educate students and parents about anaphylactic issues via newsletter articles and specific classroom sessions.

8. Parents will be informed if their child is in the same class as a child at risk of a severe allergic reaction (with parental consent), and all families will be informed of the relevant classroom strategies to be employed to ensure the wellbeing of the child concerned.
9. In the case of a child with severe food allergies attending a camp, excursion or special school activity, parents must supply any special food requirements. Staff will liaise with campsite personnel to ensure adequate precautions and safety measures are implemented.
10. In the event that a student suffers an anaphylactic reaction, an ambulance will be called and the student transported to a hospital.

**In preventing allergic reactions the following guidelines should generally be followed:**

- There should be no trading and sharing of food, food utensils and food containers.
- Drink bottles and lunch boxes should be clearly named.
- Children with severe food allergies should only eat lunches and snacks provided by the parent/guardian.
- Parents of classmates will be asked not to send peanut butter on sandwiches, and items containing nuts, if a class member has a peanut allergy.
- Food products containing nuts as an ingredient will not be available through the school's lunch ordering service, or sold at the school as part of special activities.
- Boxes and packages which have contained nuts (including tree nuts) are not to be used in classroom activities.
- The use of food in crafts, cooking and science experiments may need to be restricted depending on the allergies of particular children. Ingredients lists must be checked carefully, and approved by the student's parents.
- If unsure, the Visual Arts teacher should request that art/craft products be checked by parents of students with severe allergies for 'hidden' ingredients which may cause a reaction.
- Food preparation areas and cooking utensils should be cleaned carefully after use to prevent the risk of cross contamination.
- The students known to have severe allergic reactions should be known by sight to all staff.
- Children with severe food allergies will not be required to pick up papers in the school grounds.
- Routine hygiene practices should be reinforced in all classrooms.

**Use of the Epipen**

- If an Epipen is required by a student, it will be stored safely (but be easily accessible) in the classroom, and must be taken on all excursions.
- The Epipen should be kept at room temperature.
- The Epipen is to be clearly labelled with the student's name, and be kept in the original packaging.
- Parents must provide the Epipen, written authority to administer the Epipen and it is their responsibility to ensure that it is not out of date.
- The school will keep an Epipen for emergency use in the Sick Bay and in the excursion First Aid backpack, with the expiry date being checked each term.
- If a child requires an Epipen of a higher dose, parents will be asked to provide an extra Epipen to be kept in the sick bay.
- While on yard duty, all teachers will carry an emergency yellow card in the 'bumbag' which will be sent immediately to the Office in the event of an Epipen being required in the playground. All staff will be trained on how to use the Epipen in an emergency.

**PARENTS' ROLE:**

The parents of students at risk of a severe allergic reaction are expected to fulfil the requirements of this policy to ensure that the student is able to participate safely in classroom and school activities. They have an important role to play in the development and implementation of the individual student's Medical Action Plan, and are expected to liaise with staff at the school to ensure that the guidelines in this policy are implemented. All parents of the school are expected to support the policy in the interests of student safety and wellbeing, and that they familiarise themselves with information conveyed from the school to home regarding Anaphylaxis Management.

**DOCUMENTS IN SUPPORT OF THIS POLICY:**

Guidelines for prevention of food anaphylactic reaction in schools, preschools and childcare centres (Published by Australian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy Inc. ASCIA)

Action Plan for Anaphylaxis (ASCIA)

Anaphylaxis Guidelines for Schools (NSW Health)

Anaphylaxis in Schools (The Children's Allergy Centre, RCH, Parkville)

Watsonia Heights Primary School. Emergency Action Plan for Anaphylaxis Management

Websites:

[www.allergy.org.au/pospapers/anaphylaxis.htm](http://www.allergy.org.au/pospapers/anaphylaxis.htm)

[www.allergyfacts.org.au](http://www.allergyfacts.org.au)

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