

SEVENOAKS SCHOOL

<i>reference</i>	AA5
<i>Category</i>	A Student and Parent Facing
<i>Name</i>	Allergy Policy
<i>Purpose</i>	To minimise the risk of any student suffering a severe allergic reaction whilst at school or attending any school related activity. To ensure staff are properly prepared to recognise and manage severe allergic reactions should they arise. To promote the mental health and wellbeing of students with allergies and ensure they are fully included in school life.
<i>Scope</i>	Students, Staff, Parents Sevenoaks School (Senior)
<i>Regulatory or legal requirement addressed by policy</i>	Health and Safety Regulations Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) Children and Families Act 2014 (Section 100) Equality Act 2010 DfE Statutory Guidance: Supporting children and young people with medical conditions and allergy (March 2026 / Benedict's Law)
<i>Policies referred to</i>	Sevenoaks School Medical Provision Policy. Sevenoaks School First Aid Policy.
<i>Policy owned by</i>	Named Governor: Roger Best Designated Allergy Lead: Jon Lidiard, Deputy Head Pastoral The Lead Nurses and the Deputy Head Pastoral are responsible for the review and updating of the policy, as well as coordinating staff anaphylaxis training.
<i>Date effective from</i>	September 2026
<i>Published on website</i>	Yes
<i>Date for Review</i>	1 year, or immediately following any serious incident or near miss

1. Approach

- 1.1. Sevenoaks School supports the approach advocated by The Anaphylaxis Campaign and Allergy UK towards nut bans/nut free schools. They would not necessarily support a blanket ban on any particular allergen in any establishment, including in schools. This is because nuts are only one of many allergens that could affect students, and no school can guarantee a truly allergen free environment for a child living with a food allergy. They advocate instead for schools to adopt a culture of allergy awareness and education.
- 1.2. Sevenoaks School therefore promotes a whole school awareness of allergies, as it ensures students and all staff are aware of what allergies are, the importance of avoiding the students' allergens, the signs & symptoms, how to deal with allergic reactions and to ensure policies and procedures are in place to minimise risk.
- 1.3. The school will not wait for a formal diagnosis of a medical condition before providing support. Whenever it is clear that arrangements are needed to support a student with an allergy, they will be put in place to ensure they can engage effectively in education and be fully included in school life.

2. Introduction

- 2.1. An allergy is a reaction by the body's immune system to substances that are usually harmless. The reaction can cause minor symptoms such as itching, sneezing or rashes but sometimes causes a much more severe reaction called anaphylaxis.
- 2.2. Anaphylaxis is a severe systemic allergic reaction. It is at the extreme end of the allergic spectrum. The whole body is affected, often within minutes of exposure to the allergen, but sometimes it can be hours later. Causes include foods, insect stings, or drugs.
- 2.3. Definition: Anaphylaxis is a severe life threatening generalised or systemic hypersensitivity reaction. This is characterised by rapidly developing life-threatening airway / breathing / circulatory problems usually associated with skin or mucosal changes.
- 2.4. It is possible to be allergic to anything which contains a protein, however most people will react to a fairly small group of potent allergens.
- 2.5. Common UK Allergens include (but are not limited to): Peanuts, Tree Nuts, Sesame, Milk, Egg, Fish, Latex, Insect venom, Pollen and Animal Dander.
- 2.6. This policy sets out how Sevenoaks School will support students with allergies, promote safety and ensure students are not disadvantaged in any way whilst taking part in school life.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1. Parent responsibilities:

- Before admission to the school, it is the parents' responsibility to complete the school medical history and consent form on Parent Portal. This informs the Health Centre of any history of allergies.
- Parents are to supply a copy of their child's Allergy Action Plan to school (BSACI plans). If they do not currently have an Allergy Action Plan this is to be completed as soon as possible in collaboration with the School Nurses and updated annually.

- Parents are responsible for ensuring any required medication is supplied and in date on admission to school.
- It is the responsibility of day students' parents to ensure their child's medication is in date and their child brings it to school and on trips.
- Parents are requested to keep the school up to date with any changes in their child's allergy management. The Allergy Action Plan will be updated accordingly.
- Parents of students with severe allergies are invited to come to school to meet with a member of the Health Centre team and a member of the Catering team to discuss their child's dietary needs. Parents are expected to attend and share information sufficient to keep their child safe.
- Parents complete an annual medical history and consent form for the school. This form reminds parents to update the school of any changes in medical conditions.

3.2. Staff Responsibilities:

- School Nurses will ensure allergy information is collated and saved on ISAMS Health Centre manager and Student Manager. This is held securely and shared with relevant school staff and the catering team. This information is updated annually and as required.
- Sevenoaks School tutors have access to their tutees' relevant medical records. Those students with a severe allergy have a red flag on ISAMS, alerting all relevant staff to their condition.
- Health Centre staff share an allergy list each term with Catering, The Director of Sport, Assistant Director of Sport and PEadmin containing a list of all students with severe allergies and critical medical conditions. This lists all students with food allergies and intolerances. This list is shared by PE and Catering with their relevant staff.
- Health Centre staff will update PEadmin, Director of Sport and Assistant Director of Sport and Catering when alerted of any change of allergy status.
- Director of Sport and Assistant Director of Sport and PE admin will check team sheets to ensure coaches are aware of students with allergies on fixtures.
- For those with a severe allergy and critical medical condition, a photo board is produced by the Health Centre Administration team. It is made available to relevant members of staff. This is updated as required and available only to relevant members of staff and contractors (e.g. Caterers) and is held discreetly.
- School Nurses work in partnership with parents, health care professionals and students to ensure a BASCI allergy action plan is completed. This is saved to the ISAMS health Record and Student Manager under documentation.
- A number of Sevenoaks School staff hold the First Aid at Work qualification, which includes anaphylaxis training.
- All staff (including teaching, support and catering staff) receive whole-school allergy awareness training at least annually. This covers identifying main allergens, the difference between allergy/intolerance/coeliac disease, recognising anaphylaxis, emergency response (including use of prescribed and spare adrenaline devices), and the impact of allergy on wellbeing.
- Extra training is offered for all Tutors and their tutees with known anaphylactic students on an annual basis. Training is offered to all trip leaders with a known anaphylactic student on their trip when collecting the first aid kit.

- Any food-related activities must be supervised with due caution. Consideration is given to the potential presence of allergens within food brought in from outside even when stipulated that products should be allergen free. Each such event will be risk assessed to consider the potential audience and risk posed by allergens. Staff and volunteers handling food at events such as bake sales and fundraisers must follow basic food hygiene and cross-contamination prevention principles.
- Sevenoaks School staff leading residential or day trips will ensure the student carries all relevant medication and emergency supplies. This will include two adrenaline devices and a care plan for known anaphylactic students. Students unable to produce their required medication and allergy action card will not be able to attend the trip.
- On residential trips, trip staff should always double check at departure that a student has their adrenaline devices on them. The student must at this point give one of their two devices to an appropriate trip leader or supervisor, retaining the other for themselves. This minimises the risk of both devices being lost in one go and means that at most times on a trip at least one adrenaline device will be available immediately, and the second within a few minutes. If once established at the trip destination there are extended periods of time when students are unsupervised, the staff member should on each occasion return the second adrenaline device to the student temporarily, taking it back in once the student returns.
- All the activities on a school trip will be risk assessed to see if they pose a threat to allergic students and where necessary alternative activities planned to ensure inclusion.
- For boarding students, the Health Centre staff and Matrons will liaise with the student to ensure their medication is in date and present for all school trips.

3.3. Student Responsibilities:

- Students are encouraged to have a good awareness of their symptoms and to get help as soon as they suspect they are having an allergic reaction.
- Students are expected to know how to administer their own auto-injector. Health Centre staff offer to go into tutor groups on an annual basis to deliver a session on anaphylaxis recognition and how to use an adrenaline device.
- The student must carry a copy of their allergy action card along with their medication at all times at school and on trips. Students are encouraged to share their allergy action plan with their friends.
- The student must inform their sports coach of their allergy and hand their emergency medication to them so it is easily accessible during a training session or match. This will include their two adrenaline devices, care plan and other relevant medication.
- Students with food allergies are expected to make themselves known to catering staff on arrival at the school and attend a meeting with a member of the catering team. Tutors will assist in this process.

4. Allergy Action Plans

Allergy action plans are designed to function as Individual Healthcare Plans (IHCPs) for children with allergies, providing medical and parental consent for schools to administer medicines in the event of an allergic reaction, including consent to administer a generic adrenaline device. Sevenoaks School uses the nationally recognised British Society of Allergy and Clinical Immunology plans, recognised by the Anaphylaxis Campaign and Allergy UK.

The school owns and creates the IHCP collaboratively with the student, parents/carers, and health professionals. The IHCP will include: the student's specific support needs (including for trips and extracurricular activities), the extent to which they can take responsibility for their own health needs, the impact of the allergy on their wellbeing, arrangements for maintaining educational progress during any absence caused by their medical condition, and emergency contact and medication details. The IHCP will be reviewed at least annually.

5. Emergency Treatment and Management of Anaphylaxis

- 5.1. In the event that an emergency response to anaphylaxis is required, the guidelines on the student's individual BASCI allergy action plan will be followed.
- 5.2. For a student or member of staff displaying symptoms of anaphylaxis that does not have an individual plan, the guidelines of the BASCI allergy action plan will be followed. This includes the potential for an adrenaline device to be used in an emergency, even if an individual plan is not available.
- 5.3. In all cases of suspected anaphylaxis, an ambulance (999) must be called immediately, without delay. Parents/carers will be notified as soon as possible following any emergency.

6. Supply, storage and care of medication

- 6.1. Students will always carry their own two adrenaline devices on them (in a suitable bag/container). The school ensures that students prescribed adrenaline devices have rapid access to them at all times.
- 6.2. Medication should be kept in the original rigid cover to protect from direct sunlight, at room temperature and clearly labelled with the student's name.
- 6.3. The student's medication pack should contain:
 - Two adrenaline devices, eg. EpiPen® or Jext® (Two of the same type) or prescribed nasal adrenaline device.
 - An up-to-date allergy action plan.
 - Antihistamine as tablets or syrup (if included on plan).
 - Spoon if required.
 - Asthma inhaler (if included on plan).
- 6.4. Disposal – adrenaline devices are single use only and must be disposed of as sharps in line with current disposal of medication guidelines. Used devices can be given to ambulance paramedics on arrival or can be disposed of in the Health Centre sharps bin.

7. Generic adrenaline devices in school

- 7.1. Sevenoaks School has purchased spare adrenaline devices for emergency use when anaphylaxis is suspected. These are stored in zipped yellow pouches clearly labelled 'Emergency Anaphylaxis Adrenaline Pen', kept safely, not locked away, and stored in pairs so that they are readily accessible within 5 minutes of where they may be needed, and known to all staff.
- 7.2. They can be found at the following locations:
 - Health Centre

- PAC (on wall next to reception desk)
- Dining Room (on wall opposite exit, next to tray drop-off)
- Sennocke Centre (on wall to the left of the reception desk)
- Each Boarding House (consult Matron or duty staff member)

- 7.3. The School Nurses are responsible for checking these spare devices are present and in date. The school has a clear process for replacing spare devices before they expire or immediately after use, to ensure continuous availability.
- 7.4. Written parental and Medical Practitioner permission for use of the spare adrenaline devices is included in the student's Allergy Action Plan.

8. Staff Training

- 8.1. The Deputy Head Pastoral and the Lead school Nurses along with the Health and Safety team are responsible for coordinating all staff anaphylaxis training.
- 8.2. The External First Aid trainer will deliver specialist anaphylaxis training for designated members of staff as part of the First Aid at Work course.
- 8.3. All staff will receive training on induction and at least annually thereafter to:
- recognise the signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction;
 - understand the rapidity with which anaphylaxis can progress to a life-threatening reaction, and that anaphylaxis may occur with or without prior mild (e.g. skin) symptoms;
 - administer adrenaline (using an adrenaline device or nasal adrenaline device) without delay as soon as anaphylaxis occurs, before the patient might reach a state of collapse;
 - be aware of the allergy policy;
 - be aware of how to access the adrenaline device.
 - understand the difference between food allergy, food intolerance and coeliac disease;
 - understand the impact which allergy can have on a student's mental health and wellbeing.

9. Inclusion, Wellbeing and Safeguarding

Sevenoaks School is committed to ensuring that all children with medical conditions are properly supported in school so that they can play a full and active role in school life, remain healthy and achieve their academic potential. This is true of those students with allergies.

The school recognises its duties under the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments where an allergy constitutes a disability. We are committed to promoting the mental health and wellbeing of students with allergies, including through peer education and awareness. Any form of bullying related to a student's allergy — including deliberate exposure to allergens — is treated as a serious safeguarding concern and will be addressed strictly in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying and Safeguarding policies. Support is also provided to ensure students with allergies are not disadvantaged during admissions, attendance, or in exams and assessments.

10. Catering

- 10.1. All food businesses (including school caterers) must follow the Food Information Regulations 2014 which states that allergen information relating to the 'Top 14' allergens must be available for all food products.
- 10.2. The school menu is available for parents and students to view in advance on Firefly. Ingredients and allergens are available on request.
- 10.3. The School Nurses will inform the Head of Catering of students with food allergies on a termly basis and as required. The Head of Catering has access to a list of students with known severe allergies and critical medical conditions, which is managed by the Health Centre.
- 10.4. The catering team are given an up-to-date copy of the allergy/critical medical condition photoboard for display to the dining room staff. This is updated by the Health Centre.
- 10.5. Parents/guardians of, and students with severe food allergies are asked to meet with the Catering team to discuss their child's needs before the first day of term. The school caterers have their own processes for dealing with students with severe food allergies and/or requiring a medical diet.
- 10.6. Once parental permission is gained to share contact information, this is passed to the school catering company.
- 10.7. Sevenoaks School and the Catering Team adhere to the following Department of Health guidance recommendations:
 - Bottles, other drinks and lunch boxes provided by parents for students with food allergies should be clearly labelled with the name of the child for whom they are intended.
 - If food is purchased from the school café, the purchaser should check the appropriateness of foods by speaking directly to the café staff.
 - The students should be taught to check with catering staff, before purchasing food or selecting their lunch choice.
 - Where food is provided by the school, staff should be educated about how to read labels for food allergens and instructed about measures to prevent cross contamination during the handling, preparation and serving of food. Examples include preparing food for children with food allergies first and careful cleaning (using warm soapy water) of food preparation areas and utensils.
 - For further information, parents/carers are encouraged to liaise with the Catering Director.
 - Use of food in crafts, cooking classes, science experiments and special events (e.g. fetes, assemblies, cultural events) needs to be considered and may need to be restricted/risk assessed depending on the allergies of particular children and their age.

11. Risk Assessment

The School will conduct a biannual risk assessment to help identify any gaps in our systems and processes for keeping allergic children safe for all new joining students with allergies and any students newly diagnosed.

12. Recording Incidents and Near Misses

- 12.1. A serious incident is any event relating directly to an allergy in which a student, staff member or visitor is harmed or placed at immediate risk of harm (e.g. requiring emergency medication or an ambulance). A "near miss" is an event that did not result in harm but had the clear potential to do

so — for example, where an error, omission, or system failure could reasonably have led to a serious incident had circumstances been only slightly different.

- 12.2. Any serious incident or near miss must be recorded as soon as feasible by the staff member involved and reported to the Designated Allergy Lead (the Deputy Head Pastoral).
- 12.3. The report will be shared with the student's parents or the individual involved, who will be given the opportunity to discuss what happened and contribute their views to the lessons-learned review.
- 12.4. A lessons-learned review will be conducted involving the Designated Governor and Designated Allergy Lead to determine whether policies, training, or procedures need to be updated to prevent future occurrences. The Allergy Policy will be reviewed following any such incident.

13. Useful Links

- Anaphylaxis Campaign – <https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk>
- AllergyWise training for schools – <https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/informationtraining/allergywise-training/for-schools/>
- AllergyWise training for Healthcare Professionals – <https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/information-training/allergywise-training/forhealthcare-professionals/>
- Allergy UK – <https://www.allergyuk.org>
- Whole school allergy and awareness management (Allergy UK) – <https://www.allergyuk.org/schools/whole-school-allergy-awarenessandmanagement>
- Spare Pens in Schools – <http://www.sparepensinschools.uk>
- Official guidance relating to supporting students with medical needs in schools: <http://medicalconditionsatschool.org.uk/documents/Legal-Situation-in-Schools.pdf>
- Education for Health – <http://www.educationforhealth.org>
- Food allergy quality standards (NICE, March 2016) – <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs118>
- Anaphylaxis: assessment and referral after emergency treatment (NICE, 2020) – <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg134>
- Guidance on the use of adrenaline auto-injectors in schools (Department of Health, 2017) – https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/645476/Adrenaline_auto_injectors_in_schools.pdf
- DfE Draft Statutory Guidance: Supporting children and young people with medical conditions and allergy (March 2026) – <https://consult.education.gov.uk/medical-conditions-at-school/medical-conditions-at-school-statutory-guidance/>
- Natasha Allergy Research Foundation – Allergy School (free resources) – <https://www.allergyschool.org.uk>
- The Allergy Team – Benedict's Law guidance – <https://theallergyteam.com/benedicts-law-explained/>