



ALLERGY AWARE POLICY

Review: 2019

ALLERGY AWARE POLICY

Our aim is to provide a safe learning environment for all people in our school Community. To support this, St Thomas' Catholic Primary School is an 'Allergy Aware School'. This policy aims to increase our community awareness in order to minimise the risk of children with documented severe allergies. Our school has developed and will maintain a whole-school action and implementation plan when dealing with students who have life-threatening allergies.

Background:

Anaphylaxis is a severe form of allergic reaction which is potentially life threatening. It can be fatal within minutes; either through swelling that shuts off airways or through a dramatic drop in blood pressure. There are many causative agents for anaphylaxis with food often being the precipitative factor.

Anaphylaxis is preventable. Avoidance of specific triggers is by far the best option. Management is via immediate injection of adrenaline and emergency transfer to hospital.

Food allergies affect approximately 1 in 50 children and it is likely that at school children will encounter and may accidentally ingest one of the many products which causes an allergic reaction. Students with a food allergy may react to tactile (touch) exposure or inhalation exposure. Not every ingestion exposure will result in anaphylaxis but the potential always exists. This means we encourage parents, children and staff to avoid bringing foods that contain documented allergens to school. These include:

- Nuts
- Peanut butter
- Nut spreads such as Nutella
- Some fruit and nut bars and muesli bars
- Some biscuits and cakes
- Some legumes
- Chocolates and any other products that have nuts listed in the ingredients

Prevention Strategies:

School Community Responsibilities

- All parents/guardians of students in the school to be notified that there is a student/s with a life-threatening food allergy and the foods which cause this allergy. Notification sent home with a list of foods that should not be brought to school.
- Reinforce appropriate avoidance and management strategies
- Keep updated Health Care Plan information and a photo on SEQTA and in staff room.
- Individual classes may need to develop class specific measures
- Ensure that Parents and Friends lunch orders are sensitive of the Allergy Aware Policy
- Provide additional information to classes with children who have had previous anaphylaxis



reactions

- Ensure any donated food items for fun days and 'treats' are labeled with ingredients
- New families are informed of this policy when starting at the school with reminders published regularly in the newsletter, at our Orientation Day and at Parent Information Nights
- Keep an Epi-pen in an agreed area and delegate a staff member (First Aid Officer) to be responsible for checking expiry date of Epi-pen

Parent Responsibilities:

Parents/Caregivers of children with previous Anaphylaxis:

- Prior to entry into school (or, for a student who is already in school, immediately after the diagnosis of a life-threatening allergic condition), the parent/guardian should meet with the school to develop an Individualised Anaphylaxis Plan
- Provide the school with a Health Care Plan with a documented plan for first aid response
- Provide an Epi-pen to the school for use with their child. They will need to ensure that the Epi-pen is clearly labelled and not out of date, and replace it when it expires or after it has been used. It must be kept in a clearly defined location agreed to by parents and school
- Provide written authorisation for the school to administer the Epi-pen or other medication or to assist a child to administer the medication
- Name and contact details of the doctor who signed the Health Care Plan
- Support the class teacher/s and other staff in implementing the Health Care Plan
- Teach and encourage children to self-manage allergy

All parents are asked to support the Allergy Aware Policy by:

- Being sensitive and supportive to the needs of students with a history of Anaphylaxis
- Providing children with healthy food options that do not contain nuts
- Encouraging children to wash their hands before and after eating
- Considering the Allergy Aware Policy when sending food to school for shared functions

Staff Responsibilities:

All staff are asked to support the Allergy Aware Policy by:

- Incorporating it as part of the class health and hygiene program
- Wash hands before and after eating
- Teaching children the importance of washing their hands before and after eating
- Maintain food aware supervision, especially nuts at eating times and discourage students from sharing food
- Consider the policy when catering for camps and excursions.
- Take Epi-pen, medications and Medical Plans on camps, excursions and swimming lessons. If the classroom teacher is not attending the event it is their responsibility to relay relevant information and medication to the attending staff member
- Reminding students and parents of the Allergy Aware Policy prior to school events where food is available for sharing
- Have up to date training in:
 - What is an allergy?
 - What is anaphylaxis?



- What are the triggers for allergy and anaphylaxis?
- How is anaphylaxis recognised?
- How can anaphylaxis be prevented?
- What should be done in the event of a child having a severe allergic reaction?
- Epi-pen use

Promoting the Allergy Aware Policy

The policy will be promoted by:

- Parents and caregivers being informed via the school newsletter
- New families to the school community being informed via the Enrolment Information Package
- Staff being informed and provided with training opportunities
- The following treatment information poster will be displayed in the first aid and staffroom outlining the treatment system:

1. Lie child down and reassure
2. Pull off grey cap, place tip of pen on outer thigh at right angle to leg
3. Press hard into thigh until auto injector functions, it will click. Hold for 3 seconds
4. Remove Epi-pen and place in container (avoid needlestick injuries)
5. Cover injection site with band-aid (avoid contact with blood)
6. Reassure child, keep calm and warm
7. Note the time Epi-pen was given and send with child to hospital

IN CONCLUSION

At St Thomas' Catholic School Claremont we seek to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all members of our school community. We believe an effective partnership between home and school will ensure the successful inclusion of students with life-threatening allergies. We are committed to responsible and achievable management practices in reducing foreseeable risks associated with the support of students with anaphylaxis within the school environment.