Cothill Policy Documents

Allergy & Anaphylaxis Management Policy

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Author: April Bailey

Links to other policies: Medical and First Aid Policy / Safeguarding Policy

Responsible for co-ordinating staff Anaphylaxis training and the upkeep of the school's Allergy & Anaphylaxis policy: Health Team (in collaboration with the Catering Manager)

1. Introduction

An allergy is a reaction of 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 serious reaction called Anaphylaxis.

Anaphylaxis is a serious, life-threatening 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 can include foods, insect stings, and drugs.

Most healthcare professionals consider an allergic reaction to be anaphylaxis when it involves difficulty breathing or affects the heart rhythm or blood pressure. Anaphylaxis symptoms are often referred to as the ABC symptoms (Airway, Breathing, Circulation).

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.

Common UK Allergens include (but are not limited to):- Peanuts, Tree Nuts, Sesame, Milk, Egg, Fish, Latex, Insect venom (wasp and bee stings), Pollen and Animal Dander, house dust mites and Some drugs / medicines.

This policy sets out how Cothill will support pupils with allergies, to ensure they are safe and are not disadvantaged in any way whilst taking part in school life.

2. Roles & Responsibilities

Parental Responsibilities

- On entry to the school, it is the parent's responsibility to: inform the Health Centre and Catering department, via the Admissions department and medical/dietary forms sent out, of any allergies their child may suffer from. This information should include all previous serious

allergic reactions, intolerances, history of anaphylaxis and details of all prescribed medication.

• Parents are to consent to their child's allergy medications being administered in school and for the use of the school's emergency Adrenaline Auto Injectors in an emergency. • Parents are to supply a copy of their child's Allergy Action Plan (BSACI plans preferred) to school. If they do not currently have an Allergy Action Plan this should be developed as soon as possible in collaboration with a healthcare professional e.g. GP/allergy specialist. • Parents are responsible for ensuring any required medication is supplied on entry to the school

• Parents are requested to inform the school if their child suffers a severe allergic reaction or an episode of anaphylaxis outside of school, and keep the school up to date with any changes in allergy management. The Allergy Action Plan will be kept updated accordingly.

Staff Responsibilities

• Staff will complete online Anaphylaxis training. Training is provided for staff on a yearly basis and on an ad-hoc basis for any new members of staff.

• Staff must have access to information of the pupils in their care (regular or cover classes) who have known allergies as an allergic reaction could occur at any time and not just at mealtimes. They must take appropriate steps to reduce pupil's exposure to their allergens, and the importance of taking immediate action in the event of signs of an allergic reaction. Any food-related activities must be supervised with due caution.

• Staff leading school trips / off-site activities including sports fixtures will ensure they carry all relevant emergency medication for pupils with allergies. This information must be checked with the Health Team in a timely manner

• The Health Team will ensure that the up-to-date Allergy Action Plan is available

• The Health Team will keep a list of expiry dates of AAIs that pupils hold

• The Health Centre keeps a register of pupils who have been prescribed an adrenaline auto-injector (AAI) and a record of use of any AAI(s) and emergency treatment given in school

• The Health Centre will ensure that information regarding each pupil's allergies and food intolerances is updated annually, and more frequently if the school becomes aware that a pupil has developed a new condition.

• The Health Centre will meet with the Catering Manager in a timely manner to fully inform them of any changes in individual pupil's food allergies / special dietary needs.

• The Admissions Team will obtain allergy / food intolerance information for any child visiting the school, e.g. for Open Days, Taster days or Assessment days and communicate this information to the relevant staff e.g. School Nurse, Catering Manager.

Pupil Responsibilities

• Pupils are encouraged to liaise with the Catering Team when selecting their meals

• Pupils are encouraged to have a good awareness of their symptoms and to let an adult know as soon as they suspect they are having an allergic reaction.

• Pupils with allergies are responsible for knowing what their allergies are, mitigating personal risk and avoiding their allergen as best as they can, depending on their age.

3. Allergy Action Plans

Allergy action plans are designed to function as individual healthcare plans for children with food allergies, providing medical and parental consent for schools to administer medicines in the event of an allergic reaction, including consent to administer a spare adrenaline autoinjector.

Cothill recommends using the British Society of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (BSACI) Allergy Action Plans to ensure continuity. This is a national plan that has been agreed by the BSACI, Anaphylaxis UK and Allergy UK.

It is the parent/carer's responsibility to complete the Allergy Action Plan with help from a healthcare professional (e.g. GP/Allergy Specialist) and provide this to the school.

4. Emergency Treatment and Management of Anaphylaxis

What to look for:

Symptoms usually come on quickly, within minutes of exposure to the allergen. Serious symptoms can occur without mild or moderate symptoms occurring first.

Mild to moderate allergic reaction symptoms may include:

• a red raised rash (known as hives or urticaria) anywhere on the body
• a tingling or itchy feeling in the mouth
• swelling of lips, face or eyes
• stomach pain and/or vomiting

Treatment

Where available follow the pupil's Allergy Action Plan, otherwise:

· Administer antihistamine medication e.g. Cetirizine or Loratadine
· Monitor the pupil to ensure that the symptoms improve within 30 minutes. · Be

prepared to administer the Adrenaline Auto-Injector if pupil's condition deteriorates

· Ensure the pupil rests under supervision for at least one hour after the reaction has resolved to ensure no further symptoms

· Parents should be informed of the reaction and treatment given.

· The incident should be recorded on iSams.

· In the event of an allergy incident that could have been prevented an investigation should take place in order to identify any steps that could be taken to prevent this happening in the future.

More serious symptoms are often referred to as the ABC symptoms and can include:

• **AIRWAY** - swelling in the throat, tongue or upper airways (tightening of the throat, hoarse voice, difficulty swallowing).

• **BREATHING** - sudden onset wheezing, breathing difficulty, noisy breathing.

• **CIRCULATION** - dizziness, feeling faint, sudden sleepiness, tiredness, confusion, pale clammy skin, loss of consciousness.

The term for this more serious reaction is anaphylaxis. In extreme cases there could be a dramatic fall in blood pressure. The person may become weak and floppy and may have a sense of something terrible happening. This may lead to collapse and unconsciousness and, on rare occasions, can be fatal.

If the pupil has been exposed to something they are known to be allergic to, then it is more likely to be an Anaphylactic reaction. 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.

What does adrenaline do?

• It opens the airways up
• It stops swelling
• It raises the blood pressure

How to use an Adrenaline Auto-Injector

· http://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/what-to-do-in-an-emergency/

· Using an Adrenaline Pen to Treat Anaphylaxis

· EpiPen

- JEXT

As soon as Anaphylaxis is suspected, adrenaline must be administered without delay.

Action:

• Keep the child where they are, call for help and do not leave them unattended.

• LIE CHILD FLAT WITH LEGS RAISED – they can be propped up if struggling to breathe but this should be for as short a time as possible.

• USE ADRENALINE AUTO-INJECTOR WITHOUT DELAY and note the time given. AAIs should be given into the muscle in the outer thigh. Specific instructions vary by brand – always follow the instructions on the device. Note the time given and write this on the auto-injector itself or on the back of the pupil's hand.

• CALL 999 and state ANAPHYLAXIS (ana-fil-axis).

• CALL Health Centre for medical support while awaiting Ambulance.

• If no improvement after 5 minutes, administer a second AAI.

• If no signs of life commence CPR.

• Call parent/carer as soon as possible.

Whilst you are waiting for the ambulance, keep the child where they are and keep them as calm as possible. Do not stand them up, or sit them in a chair, even if they are feeling better. This could lower their blood pressure drastically, causing their heart to stop.

All pupils must go to hospital for observation after Anaphylaxis even if they appear to have recovered as a reaction can reoccur after treatment.

The incident should be recorded on the Cothill Accident / Incident Form.

An investigation should take place in order to identify any steps that could be taken to prevent this happening in the future.

If anaphylactic symptoms occur in a person who has not been prescribed an Adrenaline Auto-Injector, or who has not previously had allergic symptoms, the school's Emergency Adrenaline Auto-Injectors can be administered. (Ref. updated guidance from the MHRA). If there is any doubt call 999 and follow the Emergency Services advice re whether or not to administer the school's Emergency Adrenaline Auto-Injectors.

5. Supply, storage and care of medication

Pupils prescribed with Adrenaline Auto-Injectors will have easy access to two, in-date devices at all times when they are at school.

Due to the age of pupils at Cothill, all emergency AAI's are stored centrally in the Main Building.

Each pupil's AAI's are stored in individual containers, clearly labelled and accessible at all times in Surgery.

Each pupil's container has:

• TWO AAI's i.e. EpiPen® / Jext®
• An up-to-date Allergy Action Plan
• Anithisthamine (tablets or syrup, with spoon, depending on what is stated on Allergy Action Plan)
• Asthma Inhaler (if included on Allergy Action Plan)

It is the responsibility of the child's parents to ensure that the Anaphylaxis kit is up to date on admission to Cothill, and clearly labelled. However, the Health Centre Team will check medication kept at school and request a new prescription from the GP when necessary.

Storage

AAIs should be stored at room temperature, protected from direct sunlight and temperature extremes.

Disposal

AAIs are single use only and must be disposed of as sharps. Used AAIs can be given to ambulance paramedics on arrival or can be disposed of in a pre-ordered sharps bin, kept in Surgery.

6. 'Spare' Adrenaline Auto-Injectors

Cothill has purchased spare AAIs for emergency use in children who are at risk of Anaphylaxis, when their own devices are not available or not working (e.g. because they are out of date).

These are stored in a plastic case clearly labelled 'Emergency Anaphylaxis Adrenaline Pen', kept safely, not locked away and accessible and known to all staff.

Cothill holds 8 spare pens which are kept in the following locations:-

• Surgery (Main Building)
• AED Cabinet (outside the Maintenance Shed)
- Bowlers Changing Rooms
- Sports Centre (Staff Kitchen)

The Health Team is responsible for checking the spare medication is in date, and to replace as needed. There is an electronic register of expiry dates stored in the Medical Folder on the Staff Drive.

Written parental permission for use of the spare AAIs is documented on the pupil's medical form, which is completed during the admissions process, and should be included in the pupil's allergy action plan.

If Anaphylaxis is suspected in an undiagnosed individual, call the emergency services and state you suspect ANAPHYLAXIS. Follow advice from them as to whether administration of the spare AAI is appropriate.

7. Staff Training

All staff should complete Allergy Wise for Schools (Anaphylaxis UK), with specific Anaphylaxis training including administration of AAIs.

Training includes

• Knowing the common allergens and triggers of allergy

• Spotting the signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction and anaphylaxis. Early recognition of symptoms is key, including knowing when to call for emergency services

• Knowing where a pupil's personal emergency medication / Adrenaline Auto-Injectors are kept and where the school's emergency Adrenaline Auto-Injectors are kept.

• Administering emergency treatment (including AAIs) in the event of anaphylaxis – knowing how and when to administer the medication/device

• Measures to reduce the risk of a child having an allergic reaction e.g. allergen avoidance, knowing who is responsible for what

• Managing allergy action plans and ensuring these are up to date

• A practical session using trainer devices during INSET (these can be obtained from the manufacturers' websites: www.epipen.co.uk and www.jext.co.uk

• All training should be recorded.

8. **Medical Drill**

Cothill will organise regular medical drills, an exercise simulating an event where a pupil or member of staff has an allergic reaction that tests the school's response at least annually to ensure all staff know what action to take, where to find pupil's emergency medication and the school's Emergency Adrenaline Auto-Injectors, and to check that it only takes a very short time for the emergency medicine to be brought to them and for them to be treated correctly.

9. Inclusion and Safeguarding

Cothil is committed to ensuring that all children with medical conditions, including allergies, in terms of both physical and mental health, 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.

More information about Allergy Bullying and ways to help pupils who suffer from allergies can be found here:

· Bullying and food allergies

10. Catering

Cothill, including school caterers are committed to providing safe food for all pupils, staff and visitors that complies with the Food Information Regulations 2014 which requires allergen information relating to the 'Top 14' allergens must be available for all food products prepared, served and sold at school. The 'Top 14' allergens are:

- Peanuts
- Tree nuts e.g. walnuts, almonds, Brazil nuts, hazelnuts
- Milk
- Eggs
- Fish
- Molluscs e.g. mussels
- Crustaceans e.g. prawns
- Cereals containing gluten e.g. wheat and barley
- Soya / soybeans
- Sesame
- Celery
- Mustard
- Lupin
- Sulphur dioxide and sulphite

How the information is provided depends on how the food is served and includes:

- On a menu or chalkboard
- On a sign or label close to the food

- A label on the food packaging
- Verbal information – staff and pupils are encouraged to ask the catering staff for information about ingredients and allergies.

Other foods can also trigger serious allergic reactions in a small proportion of people e.g.:

· Legumes such as peas and chickpeas
· Fruits and vegetables e.g. onions, tomatoes and citrus fruits
· Seeds e.g. sunflower seeds, poppy seeds and pine nuts
· Herbs and spices e.g. cinnamon, garlic and chives

Anyone allergic to foods not in the 'top 14' should inform the school in order that the catering staff can be alerted.

The Health Team will inform the Catering Department of pupils with food allergies on admission to the school, with timely updates where applicable. Information will also be passed on when a diagnosis is made for an existing pupil.

Allergens are checked by the Catering team and the Allergy Champion on duty is responsible for serving every single meal and dish, and the matrix is displayed. Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the Catering Manager, where appropriate, to discuss their child's needs.

Cothill has implemented a system for staff to easily identify pupils who have food allergies / intolerances in the dining room / during activities where food is served. The system is:

• Red trays are provided to those with severe allergies, to ensure the safety of the child at risk of an allergic reaction.
• Catering Staff will check the meals provided and each dish is clearly labelled and allergen matrix displayed
• Photographs of pupils with food allergies are displayed behind the food service counter in the dining room

The school adheres to the following Department of Health guidance recommendations:

• Bottles, other drinks and lunch boxes provided by catering for pupils with food allergies should be clearly labelled with the name of the child for whom they are intended.

• 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; careful cleaning (using warm soapy water) of food preparation areas and utensils. For further information, parents/carers are encouraged to liaise with the Catering Manager.

•Under no circumstances should any food be brought into school (e.g. grub, snacks from parents on match days, food purchased on trips). Any food products found on site will be disposed of

11. Lessons, Clubs and Extra-Curricular Activities

Staff must consider the risk to pupils with allergies posed by any lessons or activities and assess whether the use of any allergen in an activity needs to be restricted, depending on the allergies of particular pupils.

Activities to be particularly aware of are:

- The use of food in lessons, science experiments, and activities
- The use of foods in special events, e.g. fetes, assemblies, cultural events, celebrations
- The use of materials that may have been in contact with allergens in craft activities, e.g. cereal boxes
- Activities including animals, e.g. school dogs, or hatching chick eggs.

12.School trips / Off Site Activities

Staff leading school trips / off site activities will ensure they carry all relevant emergency supplies. Trip leaders will check that all pupils with medical conditions, including allergies, have access to their medication, which will be carried by the appropriate member of staff on the trip. They must not be stored in the hold of the coach when travelling or left in changing rooms at sports fixtures.

All the activities on the school trip/ off site activity will be risk assessed to see if they pose a threat to allergic pupils and where necessary alternative activities will be planned to ensure inclusion. If any staff members accompanying school trips / off-site activities suffer from allergies, this must be included in the trip / activity risk assessment.

Residential / overnight school trips should be possible with careful planning and correspondence with parents, where required, with the lead member of staff planning the trip should be arranged. Staff at the venue for an overnight school trip should be briefed early to ensure precautions are in place.

Sporting Excursions

Allergic children should have every opportunity to attend sports trips to other schools. The Health Team will check the Medical / Allergy document and inform Coaches to ensure they are aware of any pupils with allergies in their team. Sports coaches will carry pupils emergency medication and are trained in administering an AAI.

The school being visited can be notified that a member of the team has an allergy when arranging the fixture. If another school feels that they are not equipped to cater for any food-allergic child, the school will arrange for the child to take alternative/their own food. Most parents are keen that their children should be included in the full life of the school where possible, and the school will need their co-operation with any special arrangements required.

13.Allergy awareness

Allergy awareness in schools involves a "whole-school approach" with clear policies, comprehensive staff training on recognising symptoms and using emergency tools like adrenaline auto-injectors, and an emphasis on pupil education and inclusion to foster a safe and supportive environment.

Cothill cannot guarantee an allergen free environment but will advocate instead to adopt a culture of Allergy Awareness. This approach ensures that all staff have an awareness of what allergies are, the importance of knowing pupils' allergies, and how to avoid them, the signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction and how to recognise and respond to this.

14. Risk Assessment

Cothill will carry out an individual risk assessment for all new joining pupils with allergies and any pupils newly diagnosed, to ensure the safest environment possible for pupils.

Template of Individual RA - Allergies & Anaphylaxis

AB - September 2026