



# PATTERSON LAKES PRIMARY SCHOOL

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## ALLERGY MANAGEMENT POLICY

### RATIONALE

Patterson Lakes Primary School recognises that a number of community members (students and staff) suffer from potentially life threatening allergies to certain foods or toxins from insects. The intent of this policy is to minimise the risk of any student suffering allergy-induced anaphylaxis whilst at school or attending any school related activity, and to ensure staff are properly prepared to manage such emergencies should they arise.

The common causes of allergies relevant to this policy are nuts, (in particular peanuts), dairy products, eggs, wasps, bees and ants. The allergy to nuts is the most common high-risk allergy, and as such demands more rigorous controls throughout the policy than the controls for other allergies.

### AIMS

This policy is in place to minimise the risk of exposure to allergens and triggers to allergic reactions and to ensure that staff are trained to provide appropriate first aid should a child or adult have an allergic reaction. Guided by this policy, we aim to:

- Safely support, within the school environment, students with severe allergies and anaphylaxis.
- Raising awareness about allergies and anaphylaxis in the school community.
- Actively involving the parents/carers of each student at risk of anaphylaxis in assessing risks, developing risk minimisation strategies and management strategies for the student.
- Ensuring each staff member has adequate knowledge of allergies, anaphylaxis and emergency procedures.
- Develop and maintain a school action and implementation plan when dealing with students who have critical life-threatening allergies.

### IMPLEMENTATION

- Advise school community to avoid sending peanut butter or nut products on sandwiches and peanut and tree nut products in school lunches.
- Removal of peanut and tree nut products, e.g. peanut butter, cashews, hazelnuts, macadamia, etc. from school canteen and classrooms.
- Ensure that every class who has a student with food allergies, issues a letter to every student on that class roll requesting any foods containing the food allergen be avoided in lunches and in any food brought into class.
- At school camps it be requested that foods containing nuts are not taken or supplied and that camp staff be aware of all students with food allergies.
- Bullying by provoking children with food allergies to which they are allergic should be recognised as a risk factor and be addressed by the anti-bullying policy.
- Prevention strategies for in-school and out-of-school settings.
- At staff meetings and via school newsletters, regular communication to raise staff, student and school community awareness about severe allergies and the school policies.
- Twice yearly training and updates for school staff in recognising and responding appropriately to an anaphylactic reaction, including competently administering an EpiPen®.
- Parents/carers of the student to provide an ASCIA (Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy) Action Plan that has been signed by the student's medical practitioner and has an up to date photograph of the student.
- First Aid Officer to keep an up to date register of students at risk of anaphylaxis.
- First Aid Officer to provide information to all staff [including canteen and office staff, and volunteers] so that they are aware of students who are at risk of anaphylaxis, the student's allergies, the school's management strategies and first aid procedures.
- Ensure that there are procedures in place for informing casual relief teachers of students at risk of anaphylaxis and the steps required for prevention and emergency response.

- Ensure our external lunch order provider can demonstrate satisfactory training in the area of anaphylaxis and its implications on food handling practices.
- Review the student's Allergy and Anaphylaxis Management Plans annually or if the student's circumstances change in consultation with parents/carers.
- Teachers to work with parents/carers to provide appropriate food for special class activities, special occasions such as excursions, incursions, sport days, camps and parties.
- Raise student awareness about severe allergies and importance of their role in fostering a school environment that is safe and supportive to their peers. This can be done by having regular discussions with students about the importance of washing hands, eating their own food and not sharing food.

## DEFINITION

An Allergy occurs when a person's immune system reacts to substances in the environment that are harmless for most people. These substances are known as allergens and are found in foods, insects, some medicines, house dust mites, pets and pollen.

This policy applies to a student with a diagnosed food, insect or medication allergy who has a mild to moderate allergic reaction to an allergen. A student with a known food or insect sting allergy who has had a previous severe reaction is usually diagnosed as being at risk of having a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis). Children with allergies who are not considered to have anaphylaxis should be provided with an ASCIA Action Plan for Allergic Reactions (green plan).

Common allergens include:

- peanuts
- tree nuts such as cashews
- eggs
- cow's milk
- wheat
- soy
- fish and shellfish
- sesame
- insect stings and bites
- medications

Signs of a mild to moderate allergic reaction include:

- hives or welts
- swelling of the lips, face and eyes
- tingling mouth

Children with allergies may still progress to having a severe reaction or anaphylaxis. As this cannot be predicted, children with mild to moderate allergic reactions should be monitored carefully after any reaction.

Signs of anaphylaxis (severe allergic reaction) include **any one** of the following:

- difficult/noisy breathing
- swelling of tongue
- swelling/tightness in throat
- difficulty talking and/or hoarse voice
- wheeze or persistent cough
- persistent dizziness or collapse
- pale and floppy (young children)
- abdominal pain and/or vomiting (these are signs of a severe allergic reaction to insects)

Mild to moderate allergic reactions (such as hives or swelling) may not always occur before anaphylaxis.

If a student appears to be having a severe allergic reaction, but has not been previously diagnosed with an allergy or being at risk of anaphylaxis, the school staff should follow the school's anaphylaxis first aid procedures and administer an adrenaline auto injector for general use.

## **STRATEGIES**

Students diagnosed with food, insect or medication allergies should be given an ASCIA Action Plan for Allergic Reactions (green), by their medical practitioner. Schools need to develop an Individual Allergic Reaction Management Plan for these students.

The following describes how schools manage students with an allergy.

### **ASCIA Action Plan for Allergic Reactions**

- An ASCIA Action Plan for Allergic Reactions (green plan) should be completed by the student's medical practitioner and a colour copy provided to the school by the student's parents or guardians.
- The ASCIA Action Plan for Allergic Reactions (green plan) outlines the student's known mild to moderate food, insect or medication allergies and the emergency procedures to be taken in the event of an allergic reaction.

### **Individual Allergic Reactions Management Plan**

- An Individual Allergic Reactions Management Plan for each student with a diagnosed food, insect or medication allergy should be developed in consultation with the student's parents or guardians.
- These plans include the ASCIA Action Plan for Allergic Reactions (green plan).
- The plan must also include strategies to prevent exposure to the student's known allergens. If parents indicate their child has an allergy but do not have an ASCIA Action Plan for Allergic Reactions (green plan), the school may consider developing a Student Health Support Plan in place of an Individual Allergic Reactions Management Plan.

### **Prevention strategies**

- The Individual Allergic Reactions Management Plan that the school completes in consultation with the parent/guardian must include prevention strategies used by the school to minimise the risk of exposure to known food, insect and medication allergens.

### **Communication Plan**

- A communication plan developed by the school which provides information to all school staff, students and parents about the school's response to students with a confirmed food, insect or medication allergy

### **Emergency response**

- Procedures, which each school develops for emergency responses to allergic reactions for all in-school and out-of-school activities, including for school camps.

### **Staff response**

- All school staff with a duty of care responsibility for the wellbeing of students with a confirmed allergy need to recognise and respond to an allergic reaction. They should be aware of their student's Individual Allergic Reactions Management Plans and consult with parents or guardians regarding in-school and out-of-school activities that may pose a risk to the student.

### **Encouraging camps and special event participation**

- Schools should ask the parents or guardians to complete the Department's Confidential Medical Information for School Council Approved School Excursions form and consult with them on relevant strategies to facilitate participation. Note: Consideration should be given to the food provided.

## Communicating with parents or guardians

- Regularly communicate with the student's parents or guardians about the student's successes, development, changes and any health and education concerns.

## 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 Action Plan information and a photo in the students file.
- Individual classes may need to develop class specific measures.
- New families are informed of this policy when starting at the school, with reminders published regularly in the newsletter.

### Students

- Students are encouraged to wash hands after eating and soap dispensers are provided.
- If any potentially harmful food is brought to school by mistake students are encouraged to inform the classroom or duty teacher so that risks may be minimised.
- All students are reminded that it is best not to share or swap food.

*Note: This school acknowledges that due to food processing practices it is impractical to eliminate nuts or nut products entirely from an environment where there is food.*

## EVALUATION

Guidelines are updates annually and/or as per DET recommendations.

## CERTIFICATION

This policy was ratified at the School Council meeting held at Patterson Lakes Primary School, November 2018.

Signed.....  
School Council President

Signed.....  
Principal