



PATTERSON LAKES PRIMARY SCHOOL

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NUT AND FOOD ALLERGY POLICY

RATIONALE

Patterson Lakes Primary School is an **Allergy Aware School** where the health and safety of our students is paramount. Enrolled within our school are a number of students with life threatening food allergies. The basis of our approach is risk minimisation and education. We will provide, as far as practicable, a safe and supportive environment in which students at risk of anaphylaxis can participate equally in all aspects of the student's schooling.

AIMS

- 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 anti-bullying policies.
- Prevention strategies for in-school and out-of-school settings.
- At staff meetings once a term and via school newsletters, 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. This can be done by displaying or providing copies of the student's ASCIA Action Plan in canteens, classrooms and first aid room.
- 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 Anaphylaxis Management Plan annually or if the student's circumstances change in consultation with parents/carers.
- Teachers to work with parents/carers to provide appropriate food for student 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.

Last Updated: July 2016

Prevalence of food allergies

Food allergies affect approximately 1 in 50 children and it is likely that at school children will encounter and may accidentally ingest the 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. Whilst peanut allergy is the most likely to cause anaphylaxis and death, eight foods (peanut, tree nut, milk, egg, soy, wheat, fish and shellfish) account for the vast majority of total food allergies. When the symptoms to the allergic reaction are widespread and systemic, the reaction is termed "anaphylaxis". Anaphylaxis is the most severe and sudden form of allergic reaction and should be treated as a medical emergency.

Symptoms of food allergies

Symptoms and signs of anaphylaxis, usually but not always, occur within the first 20 minutes after exposure but can in some cases be delayed for two hours or more. Symptoms and signs may include one or more of the following:

- Difficulty and/or noisy breathing.
- Swelling of the tongue.
- Swelling or tightness in the throat.
- Difficulty talking or a hoarse voice.
- Wheeze or persistent cough.
- Dizzy/light headed.
- Loss of consciousness and/or collapse.
- Pale and floppy (young child).

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 children 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 on October 18, 2016.

Signed.....

School Council President

Signed.....

Principal