



Orange Tree School

Allergy Safety Policy

Independent School Standards: paragraphs 7, 11, 13, 16 and 34, where relevant



DOCUMENT DETAILS

Applies To:	• All Staff • External suppliers or visitors • Regulatory / Legal bodies/LEAs • Other (e.g. Parents / Carers) • Hospital School Staff • Catering providers and relevant external providers
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Named Allergy Lead: Taraneh Tadbiri – Medical Officer

Policy Summary

Purpose

Orange Tree School is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and supportive environment for pupils with allergies. Allergies can range from mild reactions to severe and potentially life-threatening anaphylaxis. Effective allergy management therefore requires a whole-school approach involving staff, pupils, parents/carers, healthcare professionals, catering providers and other relevant partners.

This policy sets out the school's approach to allergy safety, including the identification and support of pupils with allergies, staff training, prevention of exposure to known allergens, emergency medication, the recognition and treatment of anaphylaxis, educational visits and the recording and review of allergy-related incidents and near misses.

The policy reflects Orange Tree School's commitment to safeguarding, inclusion, pupil wellbeing and effective risk management.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- Orange Tree School Main Site;
- Ridgeway Hospital School Provision;
- all employees, including teaching and support staff;
- agency, temporary and supply staff;
- regular volunteers and students on placement where appropriate;
- catering staff and catering providers;
- external providers delivering pupil activities where allergy risks may arise; and
- members of the Senior Leadership Team and Advisory Board responsible for oversight of pupil health, safety and welfare.

Whilst the principles of this policy apply across both school sites, additional arrangements are in place at the Ridgeway Hospital school Provision in recognition of the shared responsibilities between education and clinical services.

Our Principles

Orange Tree School believes that:

- pupils with allergies should be able to participate safely and fully in school life;
- allergy safety is a whole-school responsibility;
- prevention and effective planning are central to reducing risk;
- staff must be able to recognise an allergic reaction and respond appropriately;
- adrenaline should be administered without delay where anaphylaxis is suspected;
- emergency medication must be readily accessible;
- individual needs must be understood and appropriate reasonable adjustments made;
- pupils should not be unnecessarily isolated because of their allergy;
- incidents and near misses should be used as opportunities for learning and improvement; and



- effective communication between school, parents/carers, pupils, healthcare professionals and catering providers is essential.

Key Expectations

At Orange Tree School:

- all relevant staff complete allergy-awareness and emergency-response training at least annually;
- pupils with known allergies are identified and their needs are appropriately recorded;
- Individual Healthcare Plans and Allergy Action Plans are used where required;
- staff know how to access relevant allergy information;
- emergency medication, including adrenaline auto-injectors, is readily accessible;
- spare adrenaline auto-injectors are maintained in the Medical Room on the ground floor;
- reasonable measures are taken to minimise exposure to known allergens;
- allergy risks are considered when planning lessons, food activities, trips, events and off-site provision;
- all significant allergic reactions and near misses are recorded and reviewed; and
- leaders monitor allergy-safety arrangements and ensure learning informs future practice.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner following a significant allergic reaction or near miss, changes to legislation or guidance, changes to school provision, or concerns regarding the effectiveness of allergy-safety arrangements.

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1. Introduction

Orange Tree School is committed to providing a safe, supportive and inclusive environment in which pupils with allergies can access education and participate fully in school life.

The school recognises that allergic reactions can vary significantly in severity and that anaphylaxis is a medical emergency requiring immediate action.

Effective allergy management depends on prevention, appropriate planning, accessible emergency medication, staff awareness and effective communication between pupils, parents/carers, school staff, healthcare professionals and other relevant providers.

Orange Tree School adopts a whole-school approach to allergy safety. Staff are expected to understand their responsibilities, familiarise themselves with relevant information about pupils in their care and take reasonable steps to minimise known risks.

This policy should be read alongside the school's First Aid and Medical Policy and the individual healthcare arrangements for pupils with medical needs.

1.1 Orange Tree school's Approach

Orange Tree School recognises that pupils with allergies should not be unnecessarily restricted or excluded from school activities. Risk cannot always be entirely eliminated; the school therefore manages allergy risks effectively and proportionately whilst supporting pupils to participate fully in school life.

Our approach is based on understanding each pupil's individual needs, reducing avoidable exposure to known allergens, ensuring appropriate emergency arrangements are in place, supporting age-appropriate independence, making reasonable adjustments, ensuring staff have the knowledge and confidence to respond appropriately, and learning from incidents and near misses.

2. Legal and Regulatory Framework

This policy has been developed with regard to relevant legislation and national guidance, including:

- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026;
- Children and Families Act 2014;
- Equality Act 2010;
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974;
- Human Medicines Regulations and provisions relating to emergency adrenaline auto-injectors in schools;
- UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018;
- Department for Education guidance on Allergy Safety in Schools;
- Department for Education guidance on Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education - current edition;
- relevant food information and allergen requirements; and
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.



This policy should be read alongside the school's First Aid and Medical Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Risk Assessment Policy, SEND Policy, Educational Visits Policy, Relationship and Regulation Policy and Data Protection Policy.

3. Definitions

Allergy

An allergy is an immune-system response to a substance that would normally be harmless. Substances that trigger an allergic response are known as allergens.

Common allergens include peanuts and tree nuts, milk, eggs, fish and shellfish, wheat, sesame, soya, certain fruits, insect stings, medicines and latex.

Allergic Reaction

An allergic reaction occurs when a person is exposed to an allergen to which they are sensitive. Symptoms may range from mild to severe and may affect the skin, digestive system, respiratory system or cardiovascular system.

Anaphylaxis

Anaphylaxis is a severe and potentially life-threatening allergic reaction. It is a medical emergency requiring immediate treatment with adrenaline and urgent medical assistance.

Adrenaline Auto-Injector

An adrenaline auto-injector (AAI) is a device containing a measured dose of adrenaline for emergency treatment of anaphylaxis. Examples include EpiPen and Jext devices.

Individual Healthcare Plan

An Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP) records the arrangements required to safely support a pupil with a medical condition while at school.

Allergy Action Plan

An Allergy Action Plan provides specific information about an individual pupil's allergy, symptoms and emergency treatment.

4. Our Approach at Orange Tree School

Orange Tree School takes a preventative and proportionate approach to allergy safety.

The school seeks to minimise risk through:

- accurate medical information;
- effective communication;
- appropriate individual planning;
- staff training;
- accessible emergency medication;
- appropriate cleaning and hygiene arrangements;

- effective catering controls;
- reasonable adjustments;
- appropriate risk assessments; and
- regular review of practice.

The school does not rely solely upon blanket allergen bans as a means of keeping pupils safe. Where an individual pupil's allergy requires specific restrictions, these will be considered through an individual risk assessment, healthcare plan and consultation with parents/carers and relevant healthcare professionals.

5. Identifying and Supporting Pupils with Allergies

The school will maintain accurate and up-to-date information about pupils with known allergies. Information may be obtained when a pupil joins the school, from parents/carers, previous settings, healthcare information, following a new diagnosis, or when a pupil's condition or treatment changes.

Parents/carers must inform the school promptly of:

- known or suspected allergies;
- identified allergens;
- previous allergic reactions;
- medication prescribed;
- changes to medication or dosage;
- updated Allergy Action Plans; and
- any significant change in their child's condition.

Relevant staff will be informed of pupils' allergy needs on a need-to-know basis, with due regard to confidentiality and data-protection requirements.

6. Individual Healthcare Plans and Allergy Action Plans

An Individual Healthcare Plan will be developed where a pupil's allergy requires arrangements additional to or different from the school's general allergy-safety arrangements.

The plan should identify, where relevant:

- the pupil's known allergen or allergens;
- signs and symptoms of a reaction;
- emergency treatment required;
- prescribed medication and its location;
- whether the pupil carries their own medication;
- arrangements relating to food and environmental risks;
- educational visit arrangements;
- reasonable adjustments;

- emergency contact information; and
- any other individual requirements.

Where an Allergy Action Plan has been provided by an appropriate healthcare professional, this will form part of or be referenced within the pupil's healthcare arrangements.

Plans will be reviewed at least annually and whenever there is a significant change in the pupil's medical needs, a significant allergic reaction, or a relevant near miss.

7. Reducing the Risk of Allergen Exposure

All staff are expected to take reasonable steps to reduce exposure to known allergens.

Measures may include:

- appropriate handwashing;
- cleaning food preparation and eating surfaces;
- avoiding unnecessary sharing of food or drinks;
- managing cross-contamination risks;
- checking ingredients and product changes;
- considering seating or supervision arrangements where appropriate;
- identifying potential allergens within classroom activities; and
- following individual risk assessments and healthcare plans.

Staff must consider allergy risks when planning activities involving cooking, food technology, science, art and craft, sensory materials, gardening, animals, celebrations, rewards, fundraising and external workshops or visitors. Where a risk is identified, appropriate adjustments must be made.

8. Food, Catering and Food Brought into School

The school will work with catering providers to ensure that pupils' dietary and allergy requirements are appropriately managed.

Arrangements will include communication of dietary information, appropriate allergen information, ingredient checking, procedures for menu or product changes, controls to reduce cross-contamination, appropriate food preparation and serving arrangements, and communication between catering staff, school staff and parents/carers.

Food must not be assumed to be safe solely because a pupil has eaten the same product previously. Ingredient and product changes must be checked.

The school will communicate appropriate expectations regarding packed lunches, snacks, celebration food, fundraising events, food used as rewards and food used in curriculum activities. Staff must not provide food to a pupil with a known food allergy where they cannot reasonably establish that it is safe.

9. Emergency Medication and Adrenaline Auto-Injectors

Emergency medication must be clearly identified, stored appropriately, readily accessible, within its expiry date and available without unnecessary delay.

Where a pupil has been prescribed an adrenaline auto-injector, arrangements will be made to ensure rapid access to adrenaline in an emergency. Parents/carers are responsible for providing prescribed medication in accordance with the school's medication procedures and ensuring replacement medication is supplied when required.

Where appropriate, pupils may carry their own emergency medication as agreed through their healthcare arrangements. This does not remove the school's responsibility to ensure appropriate emergency arrangements are in place.

Orange Tree School maintains spare adrenaline auto-injectors for emergency use. These are stored in the Medical Room on the ground floor and must remain readily accessible in an emergency.

The spare AAI's will be:

- clearly identified;
- stored appropriately and in accordance with manufacturer instructions;
- readily accessible without unnecessary delay;
- regularly checked for condition and expiry;
- replaced promptly following use or expiry; and
- available in appropriate doses in accordance with current guidance.

The Medical Officer and Named Allergy Lead, Taraneh Tadbiri, will oversee routine checks and ensure that required replacements are arranged promptly.

10. Recognising and Responding to Allergic Reactions

Allergic reactions may present differently between individuals. Possible symptoms include itching, hives or rash, swelling of the lips, face or eyes, abdominal discomfort, vomiting, coughing, wheezing, breathing difficulties, changes in voice, dizziness, collapse or sudden significant deterioration.

Staff must follow an individual pupil's Allergy Action Plan where one is available.

Suspected Anaphylaxis

Where anaphylaxis is suspected:

- adrenaline must be administered without delay;
- 999 must be called and anaphylaxis clearly stated;
- a member of staff must remain with the pupil;
- emergency-service instructions must be followed;
- a second adrenaline dose should be administered if required in accordance with current emergency guidance;

- parents/carers must be informed;
- the pupil must receive appropriate medical assessment; and
- the incident must be recorded and reviewed.

Staff must not delay emergency treatment while attempting to contact a parent/carer or locate additional paperwork. Where there is uncertainty about the seriousness of a reaction, staff should prioritise emergency medical assistance.

11. Educational Visits and Off-Site Activities

Having an allergy should not unnecessarily prevent a pupil from participating in educational visits or other school activities. Allergy risks must be considered when planning educational visits and off-site activities.

Where relevant, risk assessments should consider known allergens, food provision, transport, accommodation, access to emergency services, emergency medication, staff knowledge and training, communication with venues and providers, supervision arrangements and emergency contacts.

A pupil prescribed adrenaline must have appropriate emergency medication readily accessible throughout the visit. At least one accompanying member of staff must understand the pupil's emergency arrangements and be able to respond appropriately.

12. Staff Training and Professional Expectations

Orange Tree School is committed to ensuring that staff have the knowledge and confidence necessary to support pupils with allergies safely.

Staff Training

All relevant staff will receive allergy-awareness and emergency-response training at least annually. This includes permanent teaching and support staff and, where applicable, temporary, supply, agency and peripatetic staff, regular volunteers, catering staff and staff supervising clubs or other pupil provision.

Training will include:

- understanding allergies and anaphylaxis;
- common allergens;
- recognising allergic reactions and anaphylaxis;
- appropriate emergency response;
- how and when to call 999;
- the use of adrenaline auto-injectors;
- the location of emergency medication;
- understanding individual Allergy Action Plans;
- reducing allergen exposure;
- appropriate food-allergy precautions;
- incident and near-miss reporting; and
- the requirements of this policy.

Relevant allergy-safety information will be provided to new staff as part of induction. Appropriate information will also be given to supply, agency and temporary staff before they assume responsibility for pupils. Where an individual pupil has specific needs, additional pupil-specific information or training will be provided where necessary.

Training will be recorded centrally and monitored to ensure that it remains current.

Professional Expectations

All staff are expected to:

- understand and follow this policy;
- complete required allergy training;
- familiarise themselves with relevant pupil information;
- take reasonable precautions to minimise allergy risks;
- respond promptly to symptoms;
- know how to summon emergency assistance;
- know the location of emergency medication;
- follow individual healthcare and Allergy Action Plans;
- report concerns, incidents and near misses; and
- seek advice where they are uncertain.

13. Inclusion, Wellbeing and Bullying

Orange Tree School recognises that living with an allergy can have a significant emotional and psychological impact. Pupils with allergies should be supported to participate fully in school life and should not routinely be isolated from peers as a method of managing allergy risk.

Staff will make reasonable and proportionate adjustments to support safe participation and will be alert to anxiety around eating or allergen exposure, reluctance to participate in activities, embarrassment about carrying medication, social isolation, teasing and bullying.

Deliberately exposing, threatening to expose or pretending to expose a pupil to a known allergen will be treated seriously and may constitute a safeguarding concern.

14. Ridgeway Hospital Provision

Ellern Mede Hospital School Ridgeway operates within a hospital environment where pupils are inpatients and clinical care is provided by qualified hospital healthcare staff.

Responsibility for clinical assessment, prescribed medication and emergency clinical treatment rests with the hospital clinical team in accordance with hospital procedures and individual treatment plans.

School staff will nevertheless:

- complete appropriate allergy-awareness training;
- understand relevant allergy information required for safe education;
- consider known allergies when planning activities;
- immediately summon clinical support where a pupil shows signs of an allergic reaction;

- follow agreed school and hospital emergency procedures; and
- report relevant allergy incidents or near misses through appropriate channels.

School staff will not independently administer medication where this responsibility sits with hospital clinical staff unless specific arrangements have been formally agreed. Where clinical instructions concerning an individual inpatient differ from general school arrangements, the pupil's clinical treatment plan will take precedence in relation to clinical treatment.

15. Recording, Reporting and Learning from Incidents

All significant allergic reactions and allergy-related near misses must be recorded as soon as reasonably practicable. At Orange Tree School, incidents will be recorded through the school's Medical Tracker system, in line with existing medical reporting arrangements.

Records should include, where appropriate:

- date, time and location;
- pupil involved;
- known or suspected allergen;
- circumstances leading to exposure;
- symptoms;
- medication administered;
- whether adrenaline was used;
- whether 999 was called;
- whether hospital treatment was required;
- communication with parents/carers; and
- actions taken following the incident.

Near Misses

Near misses must also be recorded. Examples include a pupil being given or nearly being given food containing their allergen, emergency medication not being immediately available, expired medication, incorrect allergen information, cross-contamination, a pupil attending an activity without required medication, or a failure to follow an individual healthcare arrangement.

Learning from Incidents

Orange Tree School is committed to learning from significant incidents and near misses. Records will be reviewed to identify what happened and why, patterns or emerging risks, necessary changes to healthcare plans or risk assessments, additional staff training, changes to catering or medication arrangements, and any further reasonable adjustments required.

The focus of review will be improving safety, systems and practice and reducing the likelihood of recurrence.

16. Monitoring and Governance

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented consistently across the school.

Monitoring will include:

- staff training completion;
- pupil healthcare and Allergy Action Plans;
- availability and expiry of emergency medication;
- school-held adrenaline auto-injectors;
- incident and near-miss records;
- catering arrangements;
- educational visit arrangements;
- emerging patterns or risks; and
- compliance with relevant school procedures.

The Advisory Board will receive appropriate assurance that effective allergy-safety arrangements are in place. This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where required.

17. Roles and Responsibilities

Advisory Board

The Advisory Board is responsible for:

- providing appropriate governance and oversight;
- receiving assurance that allergy-safety arrangements are effective;
- ensuring appropriate resources and training are available; and
- monitoring significant risks where appropriate.

Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- implementing this policy;
- ensuring appropriate allergy-safety arrangements are maintained;
- ensuring staff understand their responsibilities;
- ensuring suitable training is provided;
- overseeing significant incident review; and
- ensuring learning informs future practice.

Medical Officer / Named Allergy Lead

The school's Named Allergy Lead is Taraneh Tadbiri, Medical Officer. The Allergy Lead is responsible for:

- coordinating implementation of this policy;
- overseeing staff allergy-awareness training;

- maintaining and monitoring appropriate allergy-related records;
- supporting the identification of pupils with allergies;
- ensuring relevant Individual Healthcare Plans and Allergy Action Plans are accessible and current;
- overseeing arrangements for prescribed and school-held emergency medication;
- monitoring the spare adrenaline auto-injectors stored in the Medical Room on the ground floor;
- checking medication expiry dates and arranging replacement where required;
- liaising with parents/carers, staff, healthcare professionals and relevant external providers as appropriate;
- reviewing significant allergy-related incidents and near misses;
- identifying emerging risks or areas requiring improvement; and
- ensuring lessons learned inform future practice and policy review.

All Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- following this policy;
- completing required training;
- understanding relevant pupil allergy information;
- taking reasonable precautions to reduce risk;
- acting promptly in an emergency;
- following individual healthcare arrangements;
- reporting incidents, concerns and near misses; and
- seeking support or advice where required.

Parents and Carers

Parents/carers are responsible for:

- providing accurate and current information;
- informing the school promptly of changes;
- supplying prescribed medication where required;
- ensuring replacement medication is provided before expiry;
- providing updated Allergy Action Plans where applicable; and
- working collaboratively with the school regarding their child's needs.

18. Related Policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- First Aid and Medical Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy
- SEND Policy



- Educational Visits Policy
- Relationship and Regulation Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct