Allergy Safety Policy

2026 – 2027

School	Larches High School
Date policy approved	This policy was approved by the School's Governing Body on:
Review frequency	This policy will be reviewed annually by the head teacher, staff and governors, or if any amendments occur in legislation or in consideration of changes in working practices which may stem from incidents or allegations.
Review date	1st September 2027
Headteacher	Christine Mitchell
Named Allergy Management Governor	Mr Damien Callagher

ALLERGY SAFETY POLICY

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1. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This policy outlines Larches High School approach to allergy management, in line with the Department for Education's statutory guidance published in 2026. It also anticipates the likelihood of Benedict's Law coming into force in 2027.

Benedict's Law will introduce a consistent national framework for allergy safety in schools, requiring whole-school allergy policies, mandatory staff training, access to adrenaline devices, and the creation of Individual Healthcare Plans for pupils with allergies.

This policy outlines how the whole-school community works to reduce the risk of an allergic reaction occurring, and the procedures in place to respond effectively if one does. It also sets out how we support our pupils with allergies to ensure their wellbeing and inclusion, as well as demonstrating our commitment to being an allergy-aware school.

This policy applies to all staff, pupils, parents and visitors to the school and should be read alongside the Medical Conditions Policy and other related policies: Safeguarding Policy

2. WHAT IS AN ALLERGY?

Allergy occurs when a person reacts to a substance that is usually considered harmless. It is an immune response and instead of ignoring the substance, the body produces histamine which triggers an allergic reaction.

Whilst most allergic reactions are mild, causing minor symptoms, some can be very serious and cause anaphylaxis, which is a life-threatening medical emergency.

People can be allergic to anything, but serious allergic reactions are most commonly caused by food, insect venom (such as a wasp or bee sting), latex and medication.

An allergy is different to an intolerance. Whilst an intolerance may cause uncomfortable symptoms it does not involve the immune system.

3. DEFINITIONS

ANAPHYLAXIS: Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction that can be life-threatening and must be treated as a medical emergency.

ALLERGEN: A normally harmless substance that, for some, triggers an allergic reaction. You can be allergic to anything. The most common allergens are food, medication, animal dander (skin cells shed by animals with fur or feathers) and pollen. Latex and wasp and bee stings are less common allergens.

Most severe allergic reactions to food are caused by just 9 foods. These are eggs, milk, peanuts, tree nuts (which includes nuts such as hazelnut, cashew nut, pistachio, almond, walnut, pecan, Brazil nut, macadamia etc), sesame, fish, shellfish, soya and wheat.

There are 14 allergens required by UK law to be highlighted on pre-packed food, referred to as the "main 14" in this template. These allergens are celery, cereals containing gluten, crustaceans, egg, fish, lupin, milk, molluscs, mustard, peanuts, tree nuts, soya, sulphites (or sulphur dioxide), and sesame.

ADRENALINE AUTO-INJECTOR: Single-use device which carries a pre-measured dose of adrenaline. Adrenaline auto-injectors are used to treat anaphylaxis by injecting adrenaline directly into the upper, outer thigh muscle. Adrenaline auto-injectors are commonly referred to as AAIs, adrenaline pens or by the brand name EpiPen. There are two brands licensed for use in the UK: EpiPen and Jext Pen. For the purposes of this Policy we will refer to them as Adrenaline Devices or ADs to include other adrenaline devices such as EURNeffy (see below).

ALLERGY ACTION PLAN: This is a document filled out by a healthcare professional, detailing a person's allergy and their treatment plan.

ASTHMA: Asthma is a common, long-term condition which effects the lungs. People with asthma have airways that are more sensitive and can become inflamed and narrow on exposure to certain triggers. This can lead to difficulty in breathing.

ASTHMA ACTION PLAN: This is a document filled out by a healthcare professional, detailing a person's asthma, information about triggers, symptoms, medicines to be used if they have asthma symptoms, and when to seek emergency help when they have an asthma attack.

DESIGNATED ALLERGY LEAD: The member of staff responsible for overseeing allergy and asthma management across the school and acting as the main point of contact for pupils, parents and staff. This is referred to as the named senior leader in the statutory guidance.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN: A document (also known as a Critical Incident Plan) that outlines a school's procedure for managing an emergency and should be fit for purpose to manage a serious allergic reaction (anaphylaxis).

EURNEFFY: EURNeffy (also known as Neffy) is a nasal spray which delivers adrenaline. It is a needle-free alternative to an adrenaline auto-injector.

INDIVIDUAL HEALTHCARE PLAN: A detailed document outlining an individual pupil's medical conditions, history, treatment, risks and action plan. This document should be created by schools in collaboration with parents/carers and, where appropriate, pupils. All pupils with an allergy that requires active management should have an Individual Healthcare Plan and it should be read in conjunction with their Allergy Action Plan.

RISK ASSESSMENT: A detailed document outlining an activity, the risks it poses and any actions taken or to be taken to mitigate those risks. Allergy should be included in all risk assessments for events on and off the school site.

SPARE ADRENALINE DEVICES: Schools are able to purchase spare adrenaline **devices**. These should be held as a back-up, in case pupils' prescribed adrenaline **devices** are not available. They can also be used to treat a person who experiences anaphylaxis but has not been prescribed their own adrenaline.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Larches High School takes a whole-school approach to allergy management.

4.1 Named Allergy Governor

The Named Allergy Governor is Damien Callagher at governing body level. They are responsible for:

- Ensuring allergy-related risks are included on the school's risk register and actively managed by the governing body;
- Providing strategic oversight of the school's Allergy Safety Policy, ensuring it is reviewed at least annually and published on the school's website;
- Acting as the governing body's named point of contact for allergy-related matters;
- Satisfying themselves that the school's allergy management arrangements meet legal and statutory requirements and reflect best practice;
- Receiving regular updates from the Designated Allergy Lead and ensuring the governing body is appropriately sighted on allergy compliance; and
- Reviewing records of allergic reaction incidents and near-misses and ensuring the school acts on any learnings to reduce the risk of future incidents.

4.2 Designated Allergy Lead

The Designated Allergy Lead is Eileen Lumsden. They report to Christine Mitchell. – Headteacher. They are responsible for:

- Jointly leading the publication and implementation of a school-wide Allergy Safety Policy with the Headteacher
- Ensuring the safety, inclusion and wellbeing of pupils, staff and visitors with an allergy;
- Taking decisions on allergy management across the school;
- Championing and practising allergy and asthma awareness across the school;
- Being the overarching point of contact for staff, pupils and parents with concerns or questions about allergy management;
- Ensuring allergy information is recorded, up-to-date and communicated to all staff[1];
- Making sure all staff are appropriately trained, have good allergy awareness and realise their role in allergy management (including what activities need an allergy risk assessment);
- Ensuring staff, pupils and parents have a good awareness of the school's Allergy Safety Policy, and other related procedures;
- Reviewing the school's stock of spare adrenaline devices (checking the school has an appropriate number for the setting, that they hold the correct dose, that spare adrenaline devices are stored appropriately) and ensuring staff know where they are;

- Keeping a record of any allergic reactions or near-misses, reporting these to the governing body and appropriate authority (e.g. Under RIDDOR) where necessary, investigating the incidents and ensuring that the findings of investigations into incidents are used to update relevant policies and procedures.
- Regularly reviewing and updating the Allergy Safety Policy; and
- Ensuring there is an anaphylaxis drill at least once a year and that lessons learned are used to update the allergy safety policy and school procedures as appropriate.

The Designated Allergy Lead will monitor implementation of this policy, review procedures at regular intervals and report to the senior leadership team and Named Allergy Governor as appropriate.

4.3 School nurse/ Healthcare team/ Medical Lead

Lancashire Nursing Services is responsible for:

- Collecting and coordinating the paperwork (including Allergy Action Plans, Asthma Action Plans and Individual Healthcare Plans) and information from families to ensure that arrangements are in place before the pupil starts.
- Supporting the Designated Allergy Lead with disseminating this information to all school staff
- Providing adrenaline device training for staff and pupils and refresher training as required.

4.4 Admissions Team

The admissions team is likely to be the first to learn of a pupil or visitor's allergy. They should work with the Designated Allergy Lead and school nursing services to ensure that:

- There is a clear structure in place to communicate this information to the relevant parties within school
- Parents and applicants are informed of catering arrangements during admission events;
- Plans are made for emergency medication if the child is to be left without parental supervision
- There is liaison with the child's previous school, or future school to ensure a smooth transition between settings.

4.5 All staff

All school staff, including teaching staff, support staff, occasional staff are responsible for:

- Championing and practising allergy and asthma awareness across the school;
- Reading, understanding and putting into practice the Allergy Safety Policy and related procedures, and asking for support if needed;
- Being aware of pupils (and staff, when necessary) with allergies and what they are allergic to;
- Considering the risk to pupils with allergies posed by any activities and assessing whether the use of any allergen in activity is necessary and/or appropriate;

- Ensuring pupils always have access to their medication
- Being able to recognise and respond to an allergic reaction, including anaphylaxis, after appropriate training;
- Taking part in training as required (at least once a year).
- Considering the safety, inclusion and wellbeing of pupils with allergies at all times. Preventing and responding to allergy-related bullying, in line with the school's anti-bullying policy;
- Forwarding any communication or information that comes directly to them from parents regarding allergens to Eileen Lumsden / Christine Mitchell / Sharon Romain;
- Ensuring that pupils have their medication and their Allergy Action Plan or Individual Health Care Plan with them when leaving the school site for a match or trip.

4.6 All parents

All parents and carers (whether their child has an allergy or not) are responsible for:

- Being aware of and understanding the school's Allergy Safety Policy and considering the safety, inclusion, and wellbeing of pupils with allergies;
- Providing Larches High School with information about their child's medical needs, including dietary requirements and allergies, history of their allergy, any previous allergic reactions or anaphylaxis. They should also inform the school of any related conditions, for example asthma, hay fever, rhinitis or eczema;
- Considering and adhering to any food restrictions or guidance the school has in place when providing food, for example in packed lunches
- Encouraging their child to be allergy aware.

4.7 Parents of children with allergies

In addition to paragraph 4.6, the parents and carers of children with allergies should:

- Work with the school to fill out an Individual Healthcare Plan and provide an accompanying Allergy Action Plan;
- If applicable, provide the school or their child with two labelled adrenaline devices and any other medication, for example antihistamine, inhalers or creams;
- Ensure medication is in-date and replaced at the appropriate time;
- Ensure their child has access to their allergy medication, including two adrenaline devices, if prescribed, on the journey to and from school;
- Update the school with any changes to their child's condition and ensure the relevant paperwork is updated too;
- Support their child to understand their allergy diagnosis, advocate for themselves, and take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of an allergic reaction occurring e.g. not eating the food to which they are allergic.

4.8 All pupils

All pupils at the school should:

- Be allergy aware;
- Understand the risks that allergens might pose to their peers and respect measures to support them;
- Learn how they can support the wellbeing of their peers and be alert to allergy-related bullying.

4.9 Pupils with allergies

In addition to paragraph 4.8, pupils with allergies, as appropriate to their age and capability, are responsible for:

- Knowing what their allergies are and how to mitigate personal risk;
- Avoiding their allergen as best as they can;
- Understanding the importance of following the school specific processes of lunch and break time services and how that mitigates risk;
- Understanding that they should notify a member of staff if they are not feeling well, or suspect they might be having an allergic reaction;
- Knowing where their adrenaline auto-injectors are stored during the school day
- Understanding how and when to use their adrenaline auto-injector and only using them for their intended purpose;
- Raising concerns with a member of staff if they experience any inappropriate behaviour in relation to their allergies;
- Ensuring they have their medication with them on the journey to and from school.

5. INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTATION

5.1 Register of pupils and staff with an allergy

The school has a register of pupils and record of staff who have a diagnosed allergy. This includes children and staff who have a history of anaphylaxis or have been prescribed adrenaline devices, as well as pupils and staff with an allergy where no adrenaline devices have been prescribed.

5.2 Individual Healthcare Plans

Each pupil with an allergy requiring active management by the school has an Individual Healthcare Plan. The information on this plan includes:

- Known allergens, risk factors for allergic reactions and any adaptations needed;
- A history of their allergic reactions;
- If the pupil has asthma and any other medical conditions and necessary detail;
- Details of the medication that the pupil has been prescribed, including their dose, this should include adrenaline devices, antihistamine etc;

- A copy of parental consent to administer medication, including the use of spare adrenaline devices in case of suspected anaphylaxis, and asthma inhalers;
- An indication of how the child's condition may impact on their learning or wellbeing;
- If the child is able to take responsibility for their condition including in an emergency;
- A copy of their Allergy and/or Asthma Action Plan.

6. ASSESSING RISK

Allergens can crop up in unexpected places. Staff (including visiting staff) will consider allergies in all activity planning and include it in risk assessments. Some examples include:

- Classroom activities, for example science experiments where allergens are present, Food Technology lessons; After school clubs
- Running activities or clubs where they might hand out snacks. Ensure safe food is provided or consider an alternative non-food treat for all pupils; and
- Planning special events, such as cultural days and celebrations.

Inclusion of pupils with allergies must be considered alongside safety and they should not be excluded. If necessary, staff should adapt the activity. The School will ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010.

7. FOOD, INCLUDING MEALTIMES & SNACKS

7.1 Catering in school: Lancashire County Council

The school is committed to providing safe and inclusive meals and snacks for all students, staff and visitors, including those with food allergies.

- Due diligence is carried out with regard to allergen management when appointing catering providers;
- All catering staff and other staff preparing food will receive relevant and appropriate allergen awareness training;
- Catering staff are available to discuss the provision of allergen safe meals with parents/ carers as required
- Anyone preparing food for those with allergies will follow good hygiene practices, food safety and allergen management procedures;
- The catering team will endeavour to get to know the pupils with allergies and what their allergies are, supported by school staff;
- The catering team will endeavour to provide varied meal options to students and staff with allergies. Any menu item or ingredient change will be communicated and agreed with the school.
- The school has robust procedures in place to identify pupils with food allergies with pupils being identified on the daily food ordering sheet

- Dishes and menus containing the main 14 allergens (see Allergens definition) will be clearly labelled using full words, not symbols or abbreviations. Other ingredient information will be available on request. If an allergen is not one of the known 14 then additional check will be completed manually of all packaging to ensure safety.
- Information on allergens will be available for the pupil to check independently
- Pre-packaged food will comply with PPDS legislation (Natasha's Law) requiring the allergen information to be displayed on the packaging;
- Where changes are made to the ingredients which involve the introduction of a known allergen this will be communicated to pupils with dietary needs by staff taking lunch orders
- Food provided at breakfast club and at break times will follow these procedures
- Lancashire is a nut free council so nut products are not purchased by the catering team

7.2 Food brought into school

Pupils do not bring food into school unless they have a specific medical condition such as Type 1 Diabetes. Food for this purpose is stored in the Behaviour Office

7.3 Food hygiene for pupils

- The school will encourage pupils to wash their hands with soap and warm water before and after eating;
- Throwing food is not allowed.

8 EDUCATIONAL VISITS AND SPORTS FIXTURES

- Staff leading the trip will have a register of pupils with allergies and details of their medication. Staff should notify the trip leader if they themselves have any allergies;
- Allergies will be considered on the risk assessment and catering provision put in place;
- Parents, and pupils where appropriate, may be consulted if considered necessary, or if the trip requires an overnight stay;
- Staff (and some pupils, if appropriate) accompanying the trip will be trained to recognise and respond to an allergic reaction;
- Allergens will be clearly labelled on catered packed lunches as appropriate
- See Adrenaline Devices section for School Trips and Sports Fixtures.

9 INSECT STINGS

Those with a known insect venom allergy should:

- Avoid walking around in bare feet when outside and when possible keep arms and legs covered;
- Keep food and drink covered.

Larches High School site supervisors will monitor the grounds for wasp or bee nests.

10 ANIMALS

It's normally the dander (flakes of skin) saliva or urine that causes a person with an animal allergy to react.

Precautions to limit the risk of an allergic reaction include:

- A pupil with a known animal allergy should avoid the animal to which they are allergic;
- Anyone in contact with an animal will wash their hands after contact;
- School trips that include visits to animals will be carefully risk assessed.

11 ALLERGIC RHINITIS/ HAY FEVER

Pupils with a known allergy to pollen will be advised to avoid ging outside when pollen is known to be at its peak.

12 INCLUSION AND MENTAL HEALTH

Allergies can have a significant impact on mental health and wellbeing. Pupils may experience anxiety and depression and are more susceptible to bullying.

- Staff are alert to the possibility of allergy-related bullying and are proactive in safeguarding the wellbeing and inclusion of pupils with allergies;
- No child should be excluded from taking part in a school activity, whether on the school premises or a school trip because of their allergies;
- Affected pupils will be given consideration in advance of wider school discussions about allergy and school Allergy Awareness initiatives;
- Bullying related to allergy will be treated in line with the school's anti-bullying policy;

13 ADRENALINE DEVICES

See the government guidance on Adrenaline Devices in Schools.

a. Storage of adrenaline devices

- Pupils prescribed with adrenaline devices will have easy access to two, in-date devices at all times
- Pupil Adrenaline devices are stored in the Behaviour Office
- Adrenaline devices should be stored at moderate temperatures (see manufacturer's guidelines), not in direct sunlight or above a heat source (for example a radiator); and
- Used or out of date devices should be disposed of as sharps.

b. Spare adrenaline devices

This school has 4 spare adrenaline devices to be used in accordance with government guidance.

The locations of spare adrenaline devices are clearly signposted. These are: in Main Reception and the Attendance office – all staff have access to these places at all times.

- Adrenaline devices will be kept close to the pupils at all times
- Adrenaline devices will be protected from extreme temperatures;
- Staff accompanying the pupils will be aware of pupils with allergies and be trained to recognise and respond to an allergic reaction; and
- Consider whether to take spare adrenaline devices to off-site activities. This should be recorded as part of the risk assessment process.

14 RESPONDING TO AN ALLERGIC REACTION /ANAPHYLAXIS

See the appendix to this policy for details of how to recognise and respond to an allergic reaction.

In all cases:

- A pupil with a known allergy should be treated in accordance with their Allergy Action Plan and/or Individual Healthcare Plan.
- If anaphylaxis is suspected adrenaline should be administered without delay, using the school's spare device if needed
- Anyone who has had suspected anaphylaxis and received adrenaline must go to hospital, even if they appear to have recovered. A member of staff should accompany the pupil in an ambulance until a parent or guardian arrives.

15 TRAINING

The school is committed to ensuring that all staff receive annual allergy awareness training. This training should cover all staff, including teaching staff, support staff and site staff

This training will cover:

- Understanding what an allergy is;
- How to reduce the risk of an allergic reaction occurring;
- How to recognise and treat an allergic reaction, including anaphylaxis
- How to treat an asthma attack using a reliever inhaler;
- How to check who has an allergy, and how to use an IHP and Allergy or Asthma Action Plan;
- Where adrenaline devices are kept (both prescribed devices and spare devices) and how to access them;
- The importance of inclusion of pupils with food allergies, the impact of allergy on mental health and wellbeing and the risk of allergy related bullying;

- How to report an allergic reaction or near miss;

16 ASTHMA

The school understands that it is vital that pupils with allergies keep their asthma well controlled. Asthma can exacerbate allergic reactions and poorly managed asthma increases the severity of an allergic reaction.

Staff will be aware of common asthma triggers which may include airborne allergens such as pollen, house dust mite, mould spores or pet dander and food allergens.

- All pupils with asthma will have an Asthma Action Plan.
- The Asthma Action Plan will be included in the pupil's Individual Healthcare Plan, and will include medical and parental consent for staff to administer medicines, including an emergency reliever inhaler in the event of an asthma attack.
- Children and young people known to have asthma should have their own reliever inhaler at school at all times
- Where a pupil is able to manage their asthma themselves, they should keep their inhaler on them. If they cannot, it should be stored in a clearly labelled, easily accessible location.]
- Spare salbutamol inhalers will be stored in the medical cabinet in the Behaviour Office. These will be checked regularly and those out of date will be disposed of.

REPORTING ALLERGIC REACTIONS

The school will log all allergic reaction incidents and near-misses as soon as is feasible after they occur.

- Each record should include: Who was affected, what happened, when and where, why the incident occurred (as far as is known), how staff and the pupil responded; what was done to support the individual; whether emergency services were called and how the incident concluded
- All incident reports should be shared with:
    - the pupil's parents or carers, who will be given the opportunity to discuss the incident and contribute their views to the review; and
    - the Named Allergy Governor and the governing body, so they can consider what lessons to learn and whether policy changes are required.
- Any learning from an incident should be shared appropriately with staff so they can act on it.
- It may be necessary to share the report with other agencies, for example:
    - Incidents arising directly from a work activity that result in death or immediate hospitalisation must be reported to the Health and Safety Executive under RIDDOR.
- Following any incident or near miss the school will meet with the child or young person and their parents/ carers to ensure they are confident the setting remains safe.

- The school recognises the impact of an incident or near miss not just on the individual and their family, but also on staff who responded and children who witnessed it and will offer appropriate support.

MANAGING ALLERGIC REACTIONS

ALLERGIC REACTIONS VARY

Allergic reactions are unpredictable and can be affected by factors such as illness or hormonal fluctuations.

You cannot assume someone will react the same way twice, even to the same allergen.

Reactions are not always linear. They don't always progress from mild to moderate to more serious; sometimes they are life-threatening within minutes.

MILD TO MODERATE ALLERGIC REACTIONS

Symptoms include:

- Swollen lips, face or eyes
- Itchy or tingling mouth
- Hives or itchy rash on skin
- Abdominal pain
- Vomiting
- Change in behaviour

Response:

- Stay with pupil
- Call for help
- Locate adrenaline devices
- Give antihistamine. Note: if any signs of anaphylaxis are present, give adrenaline without delay.
- Make a note of the time
- Phone parent or guardian
- Continue to monitor the pupil for at least 60 minutes in case the reaction gets worse

SERIOUS ALLERGIC REACTIONS / ANAPHYLAXIS

The most serious type of reaction is called **ANAPHYLAXIS**. Anaphylaxis is uncommon, and children experiencing it almost always fully recover.

In rare cases, anaphylaxis can be fatal. It should always be treated as a time-critical medical emergency.

Anaphylaxis usually occurs within 20 minutes of eating a food but can begin 2-3 hours later.

People who have never had an allergic reaction before, or who have only had mild to moderate allergic reactions previously, can experience anaphylaxis

A – Airway

- Persistent cough
- Hoarse voice
- Difficulty
- Swollen Tongue

B – Breathing

- Difficult or noisy breathing
- Wheeze or cough

C - Circulation

- Persistent dizziness
- Pale or floppy
- Sleepy
- Collapse or unconscious

IF YOU SUSPECT ANAPHYLAXIS, GIVE ADRENALINE FIRST BEFORE YOU DO ANYTHING ELSE.

DELIVERING ADRENALINE

1. Treat the patient where they are. **Take the medication to the patient**, rather than moving them.
2. The patient should be **lying down with legs raised.** If they are having trouble breathing, they can sit with legs outstretched.
3. **Call 999 for an ambulance** (or get someone else to do this while you give adrenaline). Tell them you have given adrenaline for anaphylaxis.
4. It is not necessary to remove clothing but make sure you're not injecting into thick seams, buttons, zips or even a mobile phone in a pocket.
5. **Inject adrenaline into the upper outer thigh** according to the manufacturer's instructions. Pupils may be able to do this themselves, but some will require or want adult support. Whilst all members of staff should be trained, in an emergency, anyone can administer adrenaline.
6. **Make a note of the time you gave the first dose.**
7. **Stay with the patient and do not let them get up or move**, even if they are feeling better (this can cause cardiac arrest).
8. **Call the pupil's emergency contact.**
9. **If their condition has not improved or symptoms have got worse, give a second dose of adrenaline after 5 minutes, using a second device**. Call 999 again and tell them you have given a second dose and to check that help is on the way.

10. Hand over used devices to paramedics and remember to get replacements.

11. Anyone who has had suspected anaphylaxis and received adrenaline must go to hospital, even if they appear to have recovered. A member of staff should accompany them in an ambulance until a parent or guardian arrives.

For more information see the Government's Guidance for the use of adrenaline auto-injectors in schools.