



# Allergy Policy

**Ratified by Governors: February 2025**  
**To be reviewed: February 2027**

## **SECTION ONE - INTRODUCTION**

Marden High School recognises that a number of community members (pupils, parents, visitors and staff) may suffer from potentially life-threatening allergies or intolerances to certain foods.

Marden High School is committed to a whole school approach to the care and management of those members of the School community.

The School's position is not to guarantee a completely allergen free environment, rather to minimise the risk of exposure by hazard identification, instruction and information. This will encourage self-responsibility to all those with known allergens to make informed decisions on food choices and to provide help and assistance for our youngest pupils. It is also important that the School has clear plans for an effective response to possible emergencies.

This school is an inclusive community that supports and welcomes pupils with medical conditions including allergies. It provides children with allergies with the same opportunities and access to activities (both school based and out-of-school) as other pupils. No child will be denied admission or prevented from taking up a place in this school because arrangements for their allergy have not been made.

The Government has made allergies part of the new Health Education curriculum for all pupils in state funded schools, which was made mandatory in September 2020. Guidance sets out that pupils should be taught about the facts and science relating to allergies.

## **SECTION TWO - AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **2.1 Policy Scope**

The School is committed to proactive risk food allergy management through:

- Ensuring that robust systems are in place to ensure accurate and timely sharing of information relating to all allergies, including food allergies and intolerances with clearly defined responsibilities.
- Supporting pupils with the management of allergies, including food allergies and intolerances.
- The encouragement of self-responsibility and learned avoidance strategies amongst those suffering from allergies.

- Working with catering providers to ensure that food labelling, menu planning and all aspects of food preparation support the needs of those within our school community who have food allergies.
- Provision of staff awareness on allergies, including food allergies/intolerances, possible symptoms (including anaphylaxis) recognition and treatment.

The intent of this policy is to minimise the risk of any person suffering allergy-induced reaction, or food intolerance whilst at Marden High School or attending any School related activity. The policy sets out guidance for staff to ensure they are suitably prepared to manage the day to day needs of pupils with food allergies and to address emergency situations should they arise. The policy also outlines the expectations of all those involved in the preparation or distribution of food within the school and of parents and other individuals, in informing the school of any food allergies.

## **2.2 Allergy information**

True food allergies are reproducible adverse reactions to a particular food that involve the immune system. Virtually all known food allergens are proteins. They can be present in the food in large amounts and often survive food-processing conditions. Allergic reactions are characterised by the rapid release of chemicals in the body that cause symptoms, which can occur within minutes or up to an hour or more after ingestion of the allergen. The proportion of the population with true food allergy is approximately 1-2% of adults and about 5-8% of children, which equates to about 1.5 million people in the UK.

The common causes of food allergies relevant to this policy are the 14 major food allergens:

- Cereals containing Gluten
- Celery including stalks, leaves, seeds and celeriac in salads
- Crustaceans, (prawns, crab, lobster, scampi, shrimp paste)
- Eggs - also food glazed with egg
- Fish - some salad dressings, relishes, fish sauce, some soy and Worcester sauces
- Soya (tofu, bean curd, soya flour)
- Milk and dairy - also food glazed with milk
- Nuts, (almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, pecan nuts, Brazil nuts, pistachio, cashew and macadamia (Queensland) nuts, nut oils, marzipan)
- Peanuts - sauces, cakes, desserts, ground nut oil, peanut flour
- Mustard - liquid mustard, mustard powder, mustard seeds
- Sesame Seeds - bread, bread sticks, tahini, hummus, sesame oil

- Sulphur dioxide/Sulphites (dried fruit, fruit juice drinks)
- Lupin, seeds and flour, in some bread and pastries
- Molluscs, (mussels, whelks, oyster sauce, land snails and squid).

The allergy to nuts is the most common high-risk allergy however, it is important to ensure that all allergies and intolerances are treated equally as the effect to the individual can be both life-threatening and uncomfortable, if suffered.

Other allergens to be aware of include, but not limited to:

- metals
- dust
- glue
- latex
- pollen
- animal hair
- chemicals

Coeliac disease is not an allergy. Whilst it is classified as a food intolerance it is not like other intolerances in that it is an 'auto-immune' disease, which means that the body produces antibodies that attack its own tissues. In coeliac disease this attack is triggered by gluten, a protein found in wheat, rye and barley. This intolerance to gluten causes an inflammatory response that damages the gut. Villi (tiny, finger-like projections that line the gut) become inflamed and then flattened (villous atrophy), leading to a decreased surface area for absorption of nutrients from food. People with undiagnosed coeliac disease can, as a result, have a wide range of digestive symptoms and can suffer from nutritional deficiencies. Other food intolerances may also require management and awareness.

### **2.3 Links with other policies**

The school has a separate policy for [Managing Medical Conditions in School](#) and for [Managing Medicines](#) which should be read in conjunction with this policy.

## **SECTION THREE - PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The School has clear procedures and responsibilities to be followed in meeting the needs of pupils with medical needs relating to allergies or food intolerances.

## Parent/Carers Responsibilities:

- Parents/Carers **MUST** contact the school to discuss their child's dietary needs.
- Notify the school of the child's allergies in writing or via Parent Portal on the school's website.
- Work with the school to develop a plan that meets the child's needs throughout the school including in the classroom, in dining areas, in extracurricular activities and during school visits.
- Provide written medical documentation, instructions and in-date medications as directed by a doctor, clearly labelled with the child's name.
- Replace medications after use or upon expiry.
- Check emergency kits carried by their child termly, to ensure they are still in date, and ready for use.
- Teach the child about managing their allergies including what foods are safe and unsafe, ways to avoid allergens, how to read food labels, how to spot symptoms of a reaction, and how to tell an adult if they think they are having a reaction.

## School Responsibilities

- Will have a named person responsible for the development of a personalised health care plan for individual children. This person should be appropriately trained.
  - Identify a core team to work with parents to set up prevention and treatment strategies.
  - When notified of a student with an allergy, carry out a risk assessment to determine if a [care plan](#) is required.
  - Work with parents to create a care plan where necessary - this should include details of the allergen, symptoms, treatment/medication and emergency contact details.
  - Arrange training for all staff, including how to use an adrenaline auto injector.
  - Ensure that all staff can recognise symptoms; know what to do in an emergency and work to eliminate the use of allergens in the allergic pupil's meals, educational tools, arts and crafts projects, etc.
  - Ensure all staff are aware of students known to have allergies
  - Work with the School Meals provider to provide signage so that students are able to self-regulate.

- Include food-allergic children in school activities. Pupils should not be excluded based on their allergy. School activities should be designed and developed to ensure the inclusion of food allergic pupils.
- Ensure that medications are appropriately stored, and easily accessible in a secure location (but not locked away) - the main office. Expiry dates will be checked termly and replacements requested where necessary.
- Parents will be informed if treatment has been administered for an allergic reaction.
- From October 2017 schools have been allowed to buy Adrenaline-Auto Injectors without a prescription, for emergency use in children who are at risk of anaphylaxis, a minimum of 2 injectors will be held in the main office.
- In all incidents where an Adrenaline-Auto Injector has been administered, an ambulance will be called.
- Review policies and procedures after a reaction has occurred.

All medical needs forms are stored confidentially yet centrally so they can be accessed by appropriate members of staff as required. Medical information for pupils is private and confidential however in order to ensure that medical needs can be properly managed, information is shared with school staff. This is done in several ways:

- Recorded on SIMS
- A poster is displayed in the staffroom and available on the Drive, this includes pupil name, photograph, allergen, medication/treatment and emergency contact details.
- Care plans are held centrally in the main office allowing easy access in the case of an allergic reaction.
- Key medical needs information will be available when children are taken off site.

## **Catering Staff Responsibilities**

Catering at Marden High School is provided by Dolce, they have their own policies relating to all aspects of food management and preparation. They include:

- Staff will familiarise themselves with the medical needs of our pupils in order for correct meals to be consumed
- Menus will clearly identify ingredients that may pose a risk to allergy sufferers, enabling informed choices to be made
- Information relating to the 14 common allergens will be displayed  
[Food standards poster for high schools](#)
- Rigorous food hygiene is maintained to reduce risk of cross contamination

- Suppliers provide information regarding the content of their products

### **Pupil Responsibilities**

Students at Marden High School are encouraged to take responsibility for managing their own condition. They will be allowed to carry their own medication, parents will have to give written consent.

- To be sure not to exchange food with others.
- To avoid eating anything with unknown ingredients.
- To be proactive (age permitting) in the care and management of their food allergies and reactions.
- To notify an adult if they have eaten something that they believe may have contained the food to which they are allergic, or if they believe that they are having a reaction.
- To keep all medication secure, they will not give their medication to other students
- Students at risk of anaphylaxis who have been prescribed an Adrenaline-auto Injector (AAI) should carry this with them - current recommendations state that 2 AAIs should be carried at all times.

### **3.3.1 Lunchtime**

Children are able to have a school dinner or bring a packed lunch from home. If children are having a school dinner, they can make their menu selection at the start of the school day by visiting the catering office in the cafe. Their food will be prepared and stored separately to be available at lunchtime.

## **SECTION FOUR - MANAGEMENT OF FOOD ALLERGIES IN OTHER AREAS OF SCHOOL LIFE**

### **4.1 Rewards**

School has a non-food based reward system - refer to [Behaviour Management Policy](#)

### **4.2 Curriculum Activities**

As part of the school curriculum, children may be involved in activities that involve preparing food or tasting food (e.g. DT lesson). Teachers will take the needs of children with allergies into account when planning these activities and will make modifications where possible to allow participation.

The following precautions should be taken during Food Technology lessons:

- Staff to be aware of students in their class with allergies
- All surfaces should be wiped down before the lesson to ensure no allergens remain from a previous lesson.
- All utensils and cookware must also be washed carefully in warm soapy water.
- Know which specific allergens the child in your cookery class needs to avoid and make sure the allergen is not present, as there is a risk of cross-contamination even if it is on a separate table to the allergic child.
- Identify alternative recipe ingredients.

While many allergic reactions are caused by food, staff need to be aware of other allergens including but not restricted to:

- metals
- dust
- glue
- latex
- pollen
- animal hair
- chemicals

#### **4.3 Educational Visits/Extracurricular Activities**

The lead member of staff for an educational visit will ensure that consideration has been taken for students with medical conditions including allergies

- Details of all medical conditions, including allergies, will be included in the visit risk assessment.
- When a child with a food allergy participates in a residential visit, their dietary needs will be planned for, in conjunction with the activity centre.
- Necessary medication and health care plans will be held by the lead member of staff
- All accompanying staff will be made aware of individual needs.

#### **4.4 Charity/PTA Events**

If the School hosts any 'cake sales' or similar events for charity it is important that no food poses a risk to the end user, however, this is difficult for the school to monitor. Where products are not made on site, but sold by the school, appropriate signage will be put in place. This will state the following:

'This item was not produced at Marden High School, therefore we cannot guarantee that it does not contain nuts or any other allergen'.

It should be left to the discretion of the person buying the food that they accept the risk that allergens may be present.

The same will apply to any cake sales organised by the PTA.

The PTA sell a small number of sweets at PTA quizzes which children are able to buy. These are sold in their original packaging. It is the parents' decision whether their children will be allowed to purchase sweets at the quiz when they are not present. The school is unable to supervise the purchase of these items with regard to children with food allergies.

## **SECTION FIVE - MONITORING AND REVIEW**

This policy will be formally reviewed by the Governing Body every two years. The policy review takes into consideration the views of all stakeholders. This policy is available to all stakeholders on the school website or alternatively from the school office.

### **Definitions**

**Allergen** – A normally harmless substance that triggers an allergic reaction in the immune system of a susceptible person.

**Allergy** - A condition in which the body has an exaggerated response to a substance (e.g. food or drug). Also known as hypersensitivity.

**Allergic reaction** – A reaction to an allergen. Common signs and symptoms include one or more of the following: hives, generalised flushing of the skin, tingling around the mouth, swelling of tissues of the throat and mouth, difficulty breathing, abdominal pain, nausea and/or vomiting, alterations in heart rate, sense of impending doom, sudden feeling of weakness, collapse and unconsciousness.

**Anaphylaxis** – Anaphylaxis, or anaphylactic shock, is normally a sudden, severe and potentially life-threatening allergic reaction to food, stings, bites, or medicines though a delayed reaction is possible in certain cases.

**AAI** – Adrenaline-auto Injector, a syringe style device containing the drug adrenaline which is ready for immediate intramuscular administration.