



Stella Maris School

Allergens Policy

Updated: Sept. 2025
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Stella Maris School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare and well-being of all members of the school. All school staff and volunteers who work in the school are expected to share this commitment and vision.

This Policy was written in consultation with the Trustees, Headteacher and the staff of Stella Maris School with due regard to our mission statement.

“At Stella Maris we endeavour to put the children at the centre of everything we do. Our mission is to educate, nurture and instil traditional values and cherish our children. We inspire them to achieve their best in every aspect of their lives.”

Allergens Policy (including Nut & Food Allergies)

Introduction

At Stella Maris School we take the safety of our children very seriously and have developed this Allergens Policy to assist in this area and present a consistent and secure environment for the welfare of any children with allergies who are pupils in our school.

This policy sets out a whole school approach to the care and management of allergies within our school community, including food, insect stings, animal, nut or any other allergies which children may present with.

The school believes that all allergies should be taken seriously and dealt with in a professional and appropriate way. The aim of this policy is to minimise the risk of any child suffering allergy-induced anaphylaxis whilst at school.

Whilst we are not able to guarantee a completely allergen free environment, we will seek to minimise the risk of exposure, encourage self-responsibility, and plan for effective response to possible emergencies.

When children join our school parents are asked to provide details of their child’s allergies on their Registration Document as part of our admissions process. Any information relating to medical conditions or allergies is passed on to the school office, the First Aid Team and the Teaching Staff, so that all those who are in charge of a child’s care and welfare are aware of this information. This information is also displayed in the office so that visitors or club providers are aware of any vulnerable children.

Principles

The principles of this Allergens Policy include:

- The establishment of effective risk management practices to minimise the student, staff, parent and visitor exposure to known trigger foods and insects.
- Staff training and education to ensure effective emergency response to any allergic reaction situation.

This policy applies to all members of the school community:

- School staff, including supply staff and students
- Club and extra-curricular staff
- After-school club providers
- PTA members
- Parents/carers
- Volunteers

An allergic reaction to nuts is a common high-risk allergy and more rigorous controls are in place to avert any possibility of a child with this allergy coming into contact with nuts. We are a nut-free school and parents are made aware of this when they join the school community. Various signs throughout the school and on window panels facing outwards serve as a reminder.

Definitions:

Allergy - A condition in which the body has an exaggerated response to a substance also known as hypersensitivity.

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

Anaphylaxis - Anaphylaxis, or anaphylactic shock, is a sudden, severe and potentially life-threatening allergic reaction to food, stings, bites, or medicines.

Epi-pen - Brand name for syringe style device containing the drug Adrenalin, which is ready for immediate inter-muscular administration.

Minimised Risk Environment- An environment where risk management practices have minimised the risk of (allergen) exposure.

Health Care Plan- A detailed document outlining an individual pupil's condition, treatment and action plan for the use of an Epi-pen or other agreed medication.

Procedures and Responsibilities for Allergy Management

General

- Parents must provide up-to-date health care plans for their children where they exist. These must be shared with and handed to the Headteacher before a child with an allergy joins the school community.
- Staff will work together with the parents to follow any individual Health Care Plan which is in place.
- The school will establish and maintain systems for effectively communicating a child's Health Care Plan to all relevant staff.
- Staff who hold a First Aid certificate will access anaphylaxis management as part of their training, including awareness of triggers and first aid procedures to be followed in the

event of an emergency. All First Aiders hold the Pediatric Certificate as this gives the most advanced training.

- PTA events and other school-based events such as Movie Nights and the Christmas Fair are carefully planned and monitored to ensure that only nut-free foods are on offer.
- Class teachers regularly talk to the children about the contents of their lunches and parents are given regular reminders about being a nut-free school.
- Due to our small classes all class teachers are aware of any children in their class with an allergy and extra care is exercised at lunchtimes to ensure that children are not in danger from any other child's lunch if they have an allergy.
- Food sharing is not allowed at Stella Maris School.
- School events, for example our pizza lunch party, only accesses food which is free from any traces of nuts.
- Birthday treats are either packaged and sent home or only shared if no child in the class group has an allergy.
- If a child has an allergy parents are made aware of this when birthday cakes are being sent into school.
- Children will be given age-appropriate education about severe food allergies.

Medical Information

- Parents of children with known allergies will be asked to update their child's information via the medical form at the start of each academic year.
- Parents must immediately report to the school any change in their child's medical condition during the year – it is a parental responsibility to do this.
- For children with known allergies, parents/cares must provide written advice from a doctor (GP), which explains their child's condition, and defines the allergy triggers and any required medication.
- The Administration Team will ensure that a Health Care Plan is established and updated for each child with a known allergy.
- All teachers and assistant staff working in the school are aware of any children with allergies in the classes who they have contact with and will regularly review and familiarise themselves with the medical information for these children.
- If parents give permission, Action Plans with a recent photograph for any children with allergies, will be posted in the school office. All staff will be aware of these children.
- When children with known allergies are going on school trips or other activities away from the school site, the risk assessments will include this information and a plan for minimising the risk of exposure to allergens and treating any adverse reaction that may occur while they are participating in the school trip will be made.

Parental Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of parents to provide the school with written ongoing accurate and current medical information about their child.

For a child with a known allergy or a newly diagnosed allergy, parents must send a letter to the school confirming the allergy and giving the following information:

- The allergen (substance the child is allergic to).

- The nature of the allergic reaction (e.g. rash, breathing problems to anaphylactic shock).
- What action must be taken if the child has an allergic reaction, including any medication, dosages and how it is to be administered. This medication will be held in the office in the First Aid/Medical area of the school office and be easily accessible in the case of an emergency.
- Any control measures that can be put in place to prevent an allergic reaction occurring.

It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that the contents of any snacks and lunches that their child brings into school are safe for the child to consume. Stella Maris School has a strict no sharing of food rule and the children are aware of this.

Parents should liaise with staff about the suitability of ingredients for any food-related activities (e.g. cooking) and provide a list of all food products and food derivatives that their child is known to be allergic to.

All parents, regardless of whether their child has a known allergy, must ensure that any snacks and lunches that their child brings into school are free of peanuts and other nuts. The school will ensure that parents are regularly reminded of this and will monitor the contents of lunchboxes and snacks.

Epi-pens

If a child has an allergy requiring an Epi-pen, or the risk assessment deems it necessary, a Health Care Plan must be completed and signed by the parents.

- It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that the Epi-pen is in school and in date. The Epi-pen must be clearly labelled and in a suitable container.
- Any child with an allergy requiring an Epi-pen will not be allowed to attend school without an in-date Epi-pen.
- The Epi-pen will be located securely in the First Aid/Medical area in the school office, in a box clearly labelled with the child's name and photograph and with a copy of the child's Health Care Plan.
- Parents must ensure that the school has up-to-date emergency contact information.

Staff Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of every staff member to familiarise themselves with this policy and to adhere to the school's health & safety regulations regarding food and drink.

All teachers and assistant staff working in the school who has regular contact with children must ensure that they are aware of any children with allergies in the classes or groups they work with. This information is passed to staff at the beginning of the academic year and updated as and when necessary. The information is also held in the school office in the First Aid/Medical area and with the First Aid Team.

During school parties, shared lunches, or other PTA events, including the Summer Picnic or the Christmas Fair every effort will be made to ensure that all food on the premises meets the standards required for any children with allergies, to ensure that the environment is safe for everyone.

- All staff are to encourage children to wash their hands before and after eating.
- At Stella Maris School we do not have catering facilities, so all children bring a packed lunch to school. Staff monitor any snacks and packed lunches that children bring in from home to ensure that they do not contain peanuts, nuts or other known allergens. (We regularly remind parents about our policies, but we cannot, however, guarantee that all foods do not contain traces of nuts.)
- Children should not be permitted to share any food that they have brought from home.
- After eating, all tables are cleaned with approved bacteria wipes.
- The First Aid Team have received Epi-pen training as part of their First Aid qualification and all staff will be made aware of the location of Epi-pens for children who need them.
- Emergency medication should be always accessible, especially at times of high risk such as school trips and off-site visits.
- When children with allergies attend off-site visits or school trips this information and emergency contact information will be recorded in the risk assessment for the activity.
- Staff should consult with parents in advance about the suitability of any planned food-related activities (e.g. snacks, food sample sessions, cooking).

New pupils with allergies

If a child's Registration Form states that they have an allergy, a Health Care Plan must be in place before the child starts attending school. A risk assessment should be carried out prior to the child joining the school and any actions identified must be put in place. This assessment should be stored with the child's Health Care Plan.

Diagnosis of an allergy for an existing pupil

If a child already attending school is diagnosed with a new allergy, a team meeting will be set up as soon as possible to update all relevant staff of the details of the child's allergy and treatment.

In the event of a child suffering an allergic reaction:

- Parents will be contacted immediately.
- If medication has been prescribed, this will be administered as per training and in line with the school's Administering of Medicine procedures.
- If the child becomes distressed or their symptoms become more serious an ambulance will be called.
- Staff will endeavour to keep calm, make the child feel comfortable and give the child space.
- If an ambulance is called and arrives before the parent has arrived, a member of the First Aid Team or the Headteacher will accompany the child to hospital.

By following this Allergens Policy we are endeavouring to keep our school environment as safe as possible for any children who have allergies. To ensure the success of this Policy and the safety of our children all staff, parents and children must abide by the rules which have been set by the Management of Stella Maris School.

