# Allergy Safety Policy

## Violet Way Academy

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| **Policy owner** | Natalie Nicholson – Deputy Headteacher |
| **Named Senior Leader for Allergy Safety** | Natalie Nicholson |
| **Named Governor for Allergy Safety** | Jack Waltham |
| **Approved by** | LGB |
| **Date approved** | November 2026 |
| **Review date** | September 2027 |
| **Purpose** | To minimise the risk of any individually suffering an allergic reaction whilst at school or attending any school related activity. To ensure employees are properly prepared to recognise and manage allergic reactions should they arise. |
| **Version** | 1 |
| **Linked policies and documents** | • Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy<br>• Medicines Policy<br>• First Aid Policy<br>• Educational Visits Policy<br>• Safeguarding Policy<br>• Food Safety / Catering Arrangements<br>• Lettings and External Provider Arrangements |

## Policy statement

In line with Benedict's Law, Violet Way Academy are committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and welcoming environment for all children, young people, employees, and visitors with allergies. Recognising the serious and potentially life-threatening risk posed by anaphylaxis, this dedicated policy establishes robust risk-mitigation measures and emergency response protocols.

We recognise that allergy is a spectrum of different allergic diseases and that these reactions occur when a susceptible person is exposed to something (an "allergen") they are allergic to.

We will ensure that employees are aware that

- anaphylactic reactions usually begin within minutes of being in contact with the allergen i.e. eating a trigger food, though can occur several hours later. Anaphylaxis involves difficulty in breathing and affects the heart rhythm. In extreme cases there could be a dramatic fall in blood pressure leading to collapse.
- Once started, anaphylaxis reactions progress quickly – therefore giving emergency adrenaline **immediately** and calling Emergency Services (999) is crucial. **Anaphylaxis always requires an emergency response**
- anaphylaxis can occur without any other signs (such as a skin rash) being present. We will **Always consider anaphylaxis in someone with a known food allergy who has sudden difficulty in breathing.** Giving adrenaline in this context is very safe and may be lifesaving.
- the most common causes of "whole body" allergic reactions – including anaphylaxis – are:
    - foods (e.g. peanuts, tree nuts, cow's milk/dairy foods, egg, wheat, fish/shellfish, and sesame);
    - insect stings (e.g. bee, wasp);
    - medication (e.g. antibiotics, pain medicines such as ibuprofen);
    - latex (e.g. rubber gloves, balloons, swimming caps).
    - Even for food allergy, most anaphylaxis reactions require the person to have eaten the food, although less serious allergic reactions can happen through skin or other contact. Anaphylaxis reactions due to skin contact are very rare. Students who have a skin reaction need monitoring for at least an hour.

Violet Way Academy has a whole school awareness approach, because it ensures all employees and students are aware of what allergies are, the importance of avoiding the individuals' allergens, the signs & symptoms, how to deal with allergic reactions and to ensure procedures are in place to minimise risk of exposure.

Coeliac disease and food intolerance can present symptoms which are similar to those of food allergy; it is important that Coeliac disease and food intolerance is be managed through dietary avoidance, but these conditions do not pose a risk of anaphylaxis and so they are not within this allergy safety policy.

Eczema, asthma, and allergies sometimes occur together – known as the atopic triad. It is important that these are managed well to keep the individual healthy. Asthma training is needed by all

employees and an individual's asthma care plan needs to be included with their individual healthcare plan. These conditions are not included in this allergy safety policy.

Violet Way Academy understands that severe allergies are included in the Equality Act, 2010. The act considers a person disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term negative effect on their ability to carry out normal daily activities. Seasonal rhinitis (such as hay fever) is explicitly excluded from the definition of disability unless it aggravates the effect of another health condition.

The Governors and Headteacher will draw this policy to the attention of all employees, and review annually.

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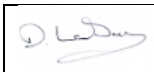
|  | | |
| *David Lambourne* ***Chair of Governors*** | | Rebecca Harris (Headteacher) |
| *1.9.26* | | 01/09/26 |

## Roles and Responsibilities

**Allergy lead and governing body are responsible for:**

The Academy Trust are responsible for ensuring that the school's policy sets out the arrangements to reduce the risk of individuals coming into contact with their known allergens and sets out the emergency response plan for cases of anaphylaxis.

The Academy Trust monitor this policy with it being a standing agenda item at meetings. A School governor has been designated as a named governor who works closely with the allergy lead and reports to the meetings. This person is Jack Waltham.

Violet Way Academy includes the risks pertaining to students and employees with allergy on the school's risk register.

Violet Way Academy has a named member of the senior leadership team who is responsible for allergy safety which includes driving the implementation of the allergy safety policy and contributing to the review of the policy.

The allergy lead is Natalie Nicholson and they are responsible for:

- systems to collect allergy information during the enrolment process, ensuring that this information is shared with catering teams. Outside of the normal admission point, they will ensure that information is shared with employees and catering teams as soon as possible but within two weeks of the student starting

- holding a register of students and employees with allergies including whether they hold adrenaline and whether they have an allergy action plan
- ensures that systems are robust for the identification of students at mealtimes
- Communication about:
  - the policy
  - the students who are on the register of those with allergies
  - the importance of recording and reporting near misses and incidents
- communication with:
  - governors to provide updates about the policy implementation
  - Health and Safety and Designated Safeguarding Leads to keep allergy safety as part of their roles
  - Outside agencies such as Health and Safety Executive (HSE) if a report under RIDDOR is needed
  - Caterer: the procedures in the kitchen and the procedures for ensuring that the students with allergies are provided with a safe meal
  - Parents/carers to enable them to input into IHPs (Individual Healthcare Plans) and to request allergy action plans when appropriate
  - Students to develop an understanding of allergy through information assemblies and workshops, participating in awareness days and weeks
- spare adrenaline devices and making sure these are checked and in date, with replacements being secured before the current ones expire
- that IHPs are created and communicated
- Training
  - ensuring that all employee annual training is up to date and that allergy is included in induction even for short term members of employees.
  - ensures that all employees have the opportunity to practice with trainer adrenaline devices at least annually but ideally a few times a year.

**All Employees are responsible for:**

- understanding their role in implementing this policy, recognising signs of allergic reactions, and acting swiftly in an emergency
- supporting the creation of the students IHP
- implementing the students IHP
- Creating an inclusive curriculum
- Curriculum adaptation to minimise risks
- Completing risk assessments for, curriculum activities involving food, trips and visits including sporting events
- Building proactive relationships with parents/carers
- Reporting near misses and incidents

**Parents are responsible for:**

- Adhering to this policy
- Providing school with the information they need to create individual health care plans
- Updating school when reactions happen outside of school or any changes to the student's allergy and its management.
- Ensuring that the student always has in date medication with them at school

## Minimising Risk and Exposure to Allergens

Minimising risk and the exposure to allergens is central to ensuring that individuals with allergies are safe from harm. Even a small amount of allergen can cause a reaction. Any food can cause a reaction with serious consequences for the individual and Violet Way Academy will only eliminate a food following a risk assessment supported by medical advice when necessary. Where a food is restricted, this will be to the smallest area for the time necessary; for example, the cooking room for the duration of the lesson when the student with allergy is cooking. Blanket bans, especially to nuts, create a false sense of security. Whilst there are fourteen key food allergens that cause over 90% of reactions, any food can cause a reaction.

Violet Way Academy is allergy aware ensuring that the employees and students are actively aware of the risk posed by allergens, take steps to minimise the risk of exposure and have robust emergency response plans in place.

Violet Way Academy completes a school wide allergy risk assessment that seeks to minimise the risks of exposure to known allergens. The risk assessment will include:

- Identifying the food used within the curriculum and making adaptions to remove allergens that pose a risk for the whole group not just the student who has the allergy.
- Conducting specific risk assessments to manage the risks of exposure to allergens in individuals when planning external visits or trips
- Identify measures to manage risks of exposure to a food allergen through food brought in by others (for example, parents, students, employees).
- Identify measures to manage the risks of exposure to a food allergen through food provided by the school, college or setting
- Putting in reasonable measures to manage the risk of individuals being exposed to allergens where they have a known allergy to airborne or contact allergens
- Identifying non-food allergens within the environment and making adaptions to remove/reduce allergens that pose a risk; for example, therapy or school dogs would require enhanced cleaning and limiting to specific areas, hygiene measures after students have worked with the therapy dog

Violet Way Academy will ensure that allergy is included in school risk assessments to identify risks and plan control measures to minimise the risk of exposure.

Violet Way Academy will ensure that the risk of exposure is minimised by ensuring:

- That all school employees complete allergy training every year
- Students are educated through awareness assemblies, Guardian Groups and within PHSE
- Educating PTAs (Parent Teacher Associations) about school expectations for allergy management

- Communicating with all visitors, contractors, temporary employees and cover employees that there are students/staff with allergies on site and what appropriate controls need to be followed
- Working closely with parents/carers and health professionals to understand the student's allergy
- Monitoring this policy to ensure that the agreed practices are implemented
- Establishing and maintaining high hygiene standards amongst employees, students and visitors

## Food Provision and Catering:

Violet Way Academy will manage the risk of food allergy and provide clear information on allergens in food provided by:

- Ensuring the contract with the school catering team – part of the Trust - is compliant with the Food Standards Authority allergen management regulations
- Ensuring school caterers provide information on food allergens to parents/carers and have this available for the students to check independently
- Providing student's allergen information to the catering team in a timely manner to ensure that students can eat safely
- Enabling parents/carers to liaise with the catering staff, when applicable
- Identify students with allergies at point of service by children being identifiable on Arbor and wearing a white band into the dining hall. These children will be placed at the front of each line by the teaching staff going into the hall when they are served their dinner when they are in Reception. Catering staff also have the list of the allergy children which has been taken from Arbor which contain photos of them. Two members of the catering team – who serve the meals – check that the correct foods have been given.
- Ensuring that food is always labelled as unlabelled food poses a potentially greater risk of allergen exposure than packaged food with precautionary ("may contain") labelling suggesting a risk of contamination with allergen. This applies to foods used within the classroom curriculum (e.g. cooking) as well that from the school kitchen.
- Teaching students not to food share, trade food or share utensils or food containers with the reasons why

When employees provide food for the students, they receive additional training to ensure they understand how to read labels for food allergens and how to prevent cross-contamination during the handling, preparation and serving of food.

Violet Way Academy have a policy where we ask parents/carers not to bring in food items to give out for children's birthdays. We have asked for any items not to be food related if treats are brought in.

These procedures apply to breakfast and after school provision – Care Club. Where a third party provides this, Violet Way Academy ensures that this policy is shared and the third-party provider meets the same procedures. Care Club are part of the Trust.

Ensuring that PTA events, as best practice, follow FSA (Food Standards Agency) legislation for food labelling, creating allergen matrices, as necessary. Ensuring that PTA members who are serving food have a basic awareness of allergen management (signpost to free FSA training).

School will work with parents/carers to determine the best way of ensuring that students receive their meal as all are entitled to free school meals.

## Medication and Adrenaline Devices (ADs)

People at risk of anaphylaxis are prescribed two adrenaline devices which they should always carry with them. This includes the journey to and from;

- school
- the classroom
- lunch area
- playground
- forest area
- when on visits or trips

An adrenaline device needs to be administered within 5 minutes so if the adrenaline device cannot be with them in the classroom, the adrenaline device must be stored in an appropriate central location that is always unlocked and accessible (including during wraparound care).

Adrenaline devices must be stored at room temperature (in line with manufacturer's guidelines) and not be exposed to extremes of heat. They must not be refrigerated or left in direct sunlight.

## Spare Adrenaline Devices

The Human Medicines (Amendment) Regulations 2017 permit "spare" adrenaline devices to be used for the purpose of saving a life. This might be, for example, a child presenting for the first time with anaphylaxis due to an undiagnosed allergy.

Violet Way Academy holds spare adrenaline devices for use in emergency situations. These are not a replacement for a student's own adrenaline device. Students prescribed adrenaline are expected to have their own adrenaline devices with them at school for use in an emergency.

| **School type** | **AAI for children under age 6 years**<br>(150 micrograms)<br>EpiPen Junior | **AAI for individuals over 6 years of age**<br>(300 micrograms)<br>EpiPen |
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| Infant School | One pair of "spare" devices | One pair of "spare" devices |

Violet Way Academy holds:

Two pairs of EpiPens – EpiPens and EpiPens Junior

These are located in: Main Office

They are stored in three transparent containers and labelled 'Spare EpiPens' with the expiry dates stated on the label too.

The Allergy Lead is responsible for checking that adrenaline devices are in date and remain clear (not cloudy) on a monthly basis. They will secure replacements one month before the current adrenaline device expires.

Adrenaline devices that are used will be given to the paramedic. Adrenaline devices that are out of date or where the adrenaline has degraded will be taken to a pharmacy to be disposed of.

Violet Way Academy recognises that the Human Medicines (Amendment) Regulations 2017 do not require consent to have been obtained for "spare" adrenaline devices to be used. It can be good practice for the school, college or setting to obtain advance consent from parents or the young person for "spare" adrenaline devices to be used, so that in an emergency, consent can be assumed to be in place. However, in an emergency situation anyone may take reasonable action to save a life without checking whether prior consent has been given.

**Student self-management:**

Depending on their level of understanding and competence, students will be encouraged to take responsibility for and to always carry their own two adrenaline devices on them in a named, green bum bag. Staff at the school will assist the children with this due to their age.

## Employee Training and Emergency Response

All employees, including teaching employees, support employees, catering employees, and others who may oversee students including at breakfast or after school clubs will be trained in allergy awareness and emergency response. The school is responsible for ensuring that supply, cover, coaching, peripatetic employees have received allergy awareness training.

## Emergency preparedness

Violet Way Academy will annually hold a practice response to anaphylaxis, review how the practice went and update policy and procedures.

Throughout the year employees will be reminded of key aspects of the policy such as:

- how to find out who has an allergy
- the storage of spare adrenaline
- practice with adrenaline trainer devices.

Violet Way Academy will communicate key messages regarding risk reduction leading up to festivals, trips and end of term celebrations.

During fire drills and lockdown practices, Violet Way Academy will ensure that a student's adrenaline device is with them. Should a real evacuation happen, the student may have to go home without adrenaline if this has not been taken out during a fire evacuation.

## Identification of Individuals with Allergies

**Admissions Data Collection:**

Violet Way Academy collects detailed medical information from parents/carers regarding known allergies, dietary restrictions, and treatment histories prior to admission through parent meetings prior to starting school in Reception. There are also meeting with previous settings – nurseries. Parents are asked to complete this information on Arbor. Food-Related Medical Forms are also filled in at the parent meetings for Reception children prior to admission in September.

For children starting mid-year or not in Reception, parents/carers are given access to Arbor to complete any information. But in case of difficulties, paper copies are used. This is via the staff in the office.

**Information Sharing**

Information will be shared only with those who need it to keep the pupil safe.

Relevant information may be shared with school employees, school-run clubs, educational visit leaders, transport employees where relevant, and external providers operating on the school site or delivering activities on behalf of the school.

Where full IHP or AAP sharing is not necessary, the school may issue a concise allergy information summary containing the pupil's name, photograph, allergens, signs of reaction, medication location, emergency actions and key contacts.

**Transition:** Allergy information and existing care plans are shared as part of a student's transition. Violet Way Academy will request allergy information from the previous school or setting and will consider whether any of the arrangements are suitable to implement. Violet Way Academy work with parents/carers and the student, if appropriate, to write a new IHP. Employees will provide information about students for transition visits ahead of a formal move.

**Employees:** Pre-employment questionnaires will ask whether they have any allergies. If an allergy is declared, there will be a discussion and action plan created to ensure that the employee has a safe working environment.

**Visitors and regular volunteers** will be asked about allergies ahead of their visit. If an allergy is declared, the Allergy Lead will be notified, and this information will be communicated as necessary to ensure that the visitor or regular volunteer has a safe working environment.

## Student Individual Healthcare Plans (IHPs) and Allergy Action Plans

**Allergy action plans**

Where a healthcare professional provides an AAP, the school will obtain a copy from parents/carers and attach it to the pupil's IHP.

Relevant employees will be made aware of the AAP and emergency actions needed for the pupil.

AAPs will be reviewed alongside the IHP.

**Individual Healthcare Plans (IHPs)**

The IHP should capture key information required to keep the pupil safe, including emergency contacts, photograph, allergens, signs of reaction, medication, location of medication and emergency actions.

IHPs should be developed with parents/carers and, where appropriate, healthcare professionals.

IHPs will be reviewed at least annually, following incidents or where there is a change in medical advice, medication, triggers, or circumstances.

## School Trips and External Visits

Violet Way Academy ensures that students with allergies are fully included in every trip, sporting event, or extracurricular activities. A risk assessment addressing allergen exposure in each activity, emergency medication, transport, and proximity to local emergency care will be undertaken with control measures identified. To ensure that the student is safe and included, alternative activities will be planned. This will include the safe storage adrenaline for the duration of the school trip.

Employees leading school trips will ensure they carry all relevant emergency supplies. Trip leaders will check that all students have their medication including adrenaline devices with them before departure. Students unable to produce their required medication will not be able to attend the excursion.

In conjunction with the Allergy Lead, the trip leader will review the risk assessment to determine whether the school's spare adrenaline devices should be taken on the trip. Violet Way Academy will provide additional spare adrenaline devices should the risk assessment for the trip deem necessary to take them ensuring that students remaining in school still have access to spare adrenaline devices should the need arise.

Violet Way Academy will notify the host school, when arranging a sporting fixture, that a member of the team has an allergy. When a sports team is provided, the students' school will ensure the students' allergies are communicated and appropriate food is provided.

## Serious Incidents and "Near Misses":

Violet Way Academy is aware, when an incident occurs that materials such as residues of food consumed or handled or samples of fluids may constitute evidence, which may need to be seized and retained.

Violet Way Academy uses 'My Health and Safety' to record allergic reactions (incidents) and near misses (e.g., accidental exposure without reaction, or labelling errors) immediately. The incident or near miss will be reviewed and a report written. All allergy incidents will be reported to the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Duty Officer.

Violet Way Academy will share the report with the student's parents/carers, the student and the individual involved. They should be given the opportunity to discuss what happened and to contribute their views to the consequent lessons learned review. Violet Way Academy will confirm what it has learned from the incident and outline any actions it is taking as a result. The student's IHP will be updated if necessary.

If unsafe food was supplied by the school operating as a food business, the incident must be reported to the local authority environmental health team.

## Wellbeing and Support

At Violet Way Academy, allergy safety is a priority and actions to ensure that students are included and safe are embedded into the school's culture. Students with allergy become anxious as a result of the risk of exposure to allergens and the potential for anaphylaxis, which may be compounded by living with difficult-to-control asthma or eczema.

**Violet Way Academy**

- regularly communicate to students, parents and employees about allergies, ensuring ongoing awareness and appreciation of the severity of the potential risks
- includes allergy and anaphylaxis lessons during assembly, Guardian Group time or in PSHE
- plan school celebrations, rewards and communal events inclusively from the outset to eliminate social isolation
- involves students and employees with allergies in developing and reviewing the policy and procedures for allergy management
- understands that allergy bullying is extremely serious and actively monitors, prevents, and addresses any stigmatisation or bullying directed at individuals due to their allergies or dietary constraints
- promotes "allergy champion" roles for employees and students (not just within the catering team) who act as a point of contact for students and employees with allergies, they can share feedback and support new joiners or anxious students
- invites new joiners with allergies to meet the kitchen and dining hall staff and get used to the mealtime environment which may help to reduce anxiety and enable employees to identify students with allergies in the dining hall
- has proactive engagement with new joiners with known allergies, setting out the school's policies and the support available

## Safeguarding:

Violet Way Academy recognises that a safeguarding referral may be needed if an incident highlighted concern that the child or young person might be at an increased risk of being neglected, abused, or exploited by persons inside or outside of their family unit because of their

medical condition. This might occur where relevant information about a child or young person's medical condition is not provided to a school, college or setting, or where they are repeatedly sent without essential medication, thereby putting the individual at risk.

## Policy Review and Publication

This policy is published openly on the school website and is reviewed at least annually, or more frequently in response to local incident trends or updated statutory guidelines.