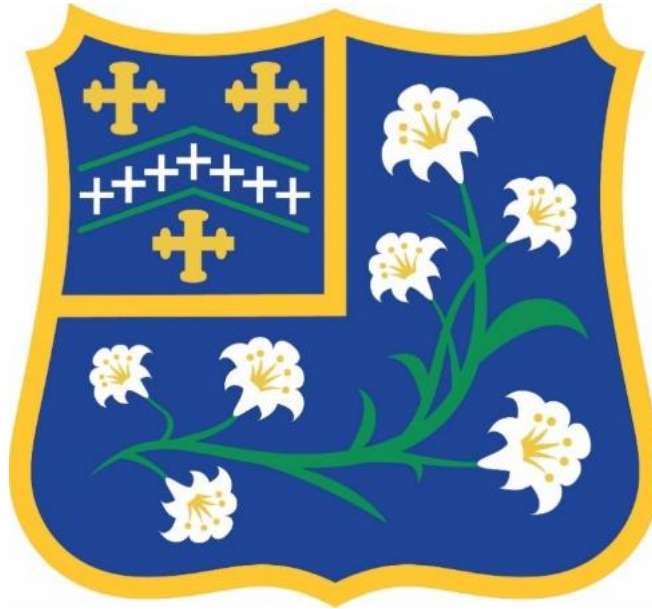


# St Mary's RC Primary School



## Allergen Safety Policy

Date policy last reviewed: **Sept 2025**

Person responsible for this policy & it's implementation: N.Price

Date approved: 1<sup>ST</sup> SEPTEMBER 2026

Date of next review : AUGUST 2027 & FOLLOWING AN INCIDENT OR NEAR MISS

## Our Mission

At St. Mary's we aim to build a community based on love of God and each other where we recognise that children are special and unique.

We celebrate the special talents that each person brings to our school and work in partnership with home, parish and the wider community to help the children grow in the Catholic faith.

We provide a happy, secure learning environment and a rich curriculum through which we encourage all our children to fulfil their God-given potential.

*Love God, Love Learning, Love St Mary's.*

## Statement of intent

St. Mary's RC Primary School strives to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community. For this reason, this policy is to be adhered to by all staff members, parents and pupils, with the intention of minimising the risk of anaphylaxis occurring whilst at school.

The school will work in partnership with parents to identify allergens, assess risk and put appropriate control measures in place so that pupils with allergies can attend school safely and participate fully in school life.

The school will not be able to guarantee a completely allergen-free environment. However, the school will take all reasonable steps to minimise exposure to allergens, promote awareness and self-management where appropriate, and ensure that robust emergency procedures are in place for both known and unexpected allergic reactions.

**The school will maintain this policy as a dedicated allergy safety policy, separate from its wider policy on supporting pupils with medical conditions, because of the specific and potentially life-threatening risks associated with anaphylaxis**

## Purpose

- To minimise the risk of any individually suffering an allergic reaction whilst at school or attending any school related activity.
- To ensure staff are properly prepared to recognise and manage allergic reactions should they arise.

## Links with other policies

- Safeguarding
- Behaviour
- Anti-bullying
- Health and Safety

## Introduction and Core Principles

In line with Benedict's Law, we are committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and welcoming environment for all children, young people, staff, 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.

Allergy is a spectrum of different allergic diseases. Reactions occur when a susceptible person is exposed to something (an "allergen") they are allergic to.

Asthma, food allergy, eczema and seasonal rhinitis (hay fever) are all forms of allergy.

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 (i.e. allergy to Mammalian meat).

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. Investigations into fatal anaphylaxis show that there is only a 20–30 minute window of opportunity during which steps can be taken to prevent death – therefore giving emergency adrenaline immediately and calling Emergency services (999).

**Anaphylaxis always requires an emergency response.**

Anaphylaxis can occur without any other signs (such as a skin rash) being present.

**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, the vast majority of 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.**

St. Mary's RC Primary School has a whole school awareness approach, because it ensures all staff 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 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 in order to keep the individual healthy. Asthma training is needed by all staff 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.

St. Mary's RC Primary School 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.

## **Emergency Treatment and Management of Anaphylaxis**

### **What to look for:**

Symptoms usually come on quickly, within minutes of exposure to the allergen.

Mild to moderate allergic reaction symptoms may include:

- a red raised rash (known as hives or urticaria) anywhere on the body
- a tingling or itchy feeling in the mouth
- swelling of lips, face or eyes
- stomach pain or vomiting
- mild throat tightness
- sudden change in behaviour

**These symptoms are treated with antihistamines.**

More serious symptoms are often referred to as the ABC symptoms and can include:

- AIRWAY – swelling in the throat, tongue or upper airways (tightening of the hoarse voice, difficulty swallowing).
- BREATHING – sudden onset wheezing, breathing difficulty, noisy breathing, cough.
- CIRCULATION – dizziness, feeling faint, sudden sleepiness, tiredness, pale clammy skin, loss of consciousness, Itchy throat, persistent confusion.

The term for this more serious reaction is anaphylaxis. In extreme cases there could be a dramatic fall in blood pressure. The person may become weak and floppy and may have a sense of something terrible happening. This may lead to collapse and unconsciousness and, on rare occasions, can be fatal.

As soon as anaphylaxis is suspected, adrenaline must be administered without delay. Action:

- Keep the individual where they are, call for help and do not leave them unattended.
- LIE individual FLAT WITH LEGS RAISED – they can be propped up if struggling to breathe but this should be for as short a time as possible.
- USE ADRENALINE DEVICE WITHOUT DELAY and note the time given. AAls should be given into the muscle in the outer thigh or nasal into the nostril. Specific instructions vary by brand – always follow the instructions on the device and child's care plan.
- CALL 999 and state ANAPHYLAXIS (ana-fil-axis).
- If no improvement after 5 minutes, administer second adrenaline device
- If no signs of life commence CPR.
- Call parent/carer as soon as possible.

Whilst waiting for the ambulance, keep the individual where they are. Do not stand them up, or sit them in a chair, even if they are feeling better. This could lower their blood pressure drastically, causing their heart to stop.

**All individuals must go to hospital for observation after anaphylaxis even if they appear to have recovered as a reaction can recur after treatment.**

## **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.

Blanket bans, especially to nuts, create a false sense of security. Whilst there are 14 key food allergens that cause over 90% of reactions, any food can cause a reaction.

St. Mary's RC Primary school is allergy aware ensuring that the staff 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.

St. Mary's RC Primary school completes a school wide allergy risk assessment that seeks to minimise the risks of exposure to known allergens. The risk assessment includes:

- Identifying the food used within the curriculum and making adaptations 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, staff).
- Identify measures to manage the risks of exposure to a food allergen through food provided by the school
- 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 adaptations to remove/reduce allergens that pose a risk.

St. Mary's RC Primary School will ensure that allergy is included in all school risk assessments to identify risks and plan control measures to minimise the risk of exposure.

We will ensure that the risk of exposure is minimised by

- All school staff allergy training every year
  - Educating students through awareness assemblies
  - Communicating with all visitors, temporary staff and cover staff that they will be teaching a student with an allergy and ensuring that the member of staff has been trained in allergy and anaphylaxis emergency response
  - 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 staff, students and visitors
- Food Provision and Catering:

We will manage the risk of food allergy and provide clear information on allergens in food including:

- Ensuring the contract with the school catering company is compliant with the Food Standards Authority allergen management regulations
- Ensuring school caterers provide information on food allergens to parents/carers
- Ensuring student's allergen information is provided by parents/carers to the caterers in a timely manner to ensure that students can eat safely
- Enabling parents/carers to liaise with the catering company
- Teach students not to food share, trade food or share utensils or food containers with the reasons why

When staff 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.

Where food is not directly provided by the school (for example brought in as treats or to celebrate birthdays) parent/carer permission will sought in advance to ensure inclusion and safety for students with allergies.

St. Mary's RC Primary School, ensures that this policy is shared and the third-party providers meets the same procedures.

We will ensure that school events, as best practice, follow FSA (Food Standards Agency) legislation for food labelling, creating allergen matrices as necessary.

We will ensure that volunteers or staff who are serving food have a basic awareness of allergen management (signpost to free FSA training)

## **Medication and Adrenaline Devices (ADs)**

People at risk of anaphylaxis are prescribed two adrenaline devices which they should they must have access to at all times. This includes the journey to and from;

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

Serious anaphylaxis is a time critical situation; delays in administering adrenaline have been associated with fatal reactions. **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 should be stored in an appropriate central location that is unlocked and accessible at all times (including during wrap around care).

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

**St. Mary's RC Primary School subscribes to KITT MEDICAL and holds 4 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.

These are located outside the school office alongside the defibrillator.

KITT MEDICAL monitor expiry dates and provide replacements, including when a device is used.

### **In the event of anaphylactic reaction:**

- Adrenaline should be administered as soon as possible, within five minutes. Do not wait to contact the emergency services before administering adrenaline.
- The child, young person or individual should not be moved. Adrenaline devices should be brought to them (whether their own prescribed ADs or "spare" ADs), along with their Care Plan.
- If the child, young person or individual has their own prescribed adrenaline devices, these should be used in the first instance.
- If the child, young person or individual does not have prescribed adrenaline devices, "spare" adrenaline devices can be used.
- If the child, young person or individual's prescribed adrenaline devices are not available or misfire, "spare" adrenaline devices can be used.
- If the individual has serious allergy and asthma and there is any doubt if they are presenting with anaphylaxis or having an asthma attack always administer the adrenaline first.

The Human Medicines (Amendment) Regulations 2017 do not require consent to have been obtained for "spare" adrenaline devices to be used. In an emergency situation anyone may take reasonable action to save a life without checking whether prior consent has been given.

### **Staff Training and Emergency Response**

All staff, including teaching staff, support staff, and others who may oversee students including at breakfast or after school clubs will be trained in allergy awareness and emergency response.

KITT MEDICAL provide online training and all staff have face to face first aid training which includes:

- Allergy awareness, the risks it poses, how allergic reactions occur and how to manage them
- Allergy includes multiple co-existing conditions: asthma, eczema, hay-fever
- Understanding the difference between food allergy, intolerance and coeliac disease
- Knowing the symptoms of allergic reactions and how to treat
- Knowing the symptoms of anaphylaxis and how to treat
- How to locate and administer adrenaline or an asthma inhaler
- How to report an allergic reaction including

- o Mild to moderate
- o Anaphylaxis
- o Near miss/incident

- Understanding their responsibilities in risk reduction to ensure that students prevented from coming into contact with their allergens
- Understanding the impact that allergy can have on a student's wellbeing
- Understand the school's allergy safety policy and
- How to check if a student is on the record of those with a known allergy
- How to use an allergy or asthma action plan

#### Emergency preparedness

Throughout the year staff 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

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

**During fire drills, we will ensure that a student's adrenaline device is with them.**

### **Roles and Responsibilities:**

Allergy lead and governing body:

The governing body 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 governing body monitor this policy with it being a standing agenda item at meetings.

#### **The allergy lead is responsible for:**

- systems to collect allergy information during the enrolment process.
- Outside of the normal admission point, ensures that information is shared with staff.
- holding a register of students and staff with allergies including whether they hold adrenaline and whether they have an allergy action plan
- ensuring that systems are robust for the identification of students at mealtimes
- Communication including:
  - 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
- 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

- KITT Medical – to ensure 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 staff annual training and that allergy is included in induction even for short term members of staff.

### **All Staff:**

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:**

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

## **Identification of Individuals with Allergies**

**Admissions Data Collection:** School collects detailed medical information from parents/carers regarding known allergies, dietary restrictions, and treatment histories prior to admission.

**Information Sharing:** UK GDPR does not prevent the sharing of a student's health information (special category data). Relevant information is securely compiled and shared as necessary in a controlled way with teaching staff, support staff, supply cover, and catering teams

while maintaining appropriate data privacy.

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

**Staff:** 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 member of staff 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**

- These are clinical documents that are created by a GP / allergy nurse or allergy clinic. They detail the student's allergy and medication.
- These contain parent/carer contact details and must be signed by the parent/carer as this is the parental authority to administer medication including the administration of spare adrenaline devices.
- These will only be updated by the medical professional following a review of the student's allergy management.

Parents/carers or school need to update the photo of the student annually so that the student is recognisable.

Allergy action plans are issued for students who have an IgE food allergy and often a venom allergy that could lead to anaphylaxis. They are not issued for all allergies. Students with non IgE allergies don't experience anaphylaxis and so an allergy action plan is not issued.

## **Individual Healthcare Plans (IHPs)**

Individual healthcare plans are an essential communication tool that provide clarity about the arrangements which need to be in place to ensure that a student is fully included in the life of the school. It will identify exact risk-mitigation measures that need to be followed.

Individual Healthcare Plans are school owned documents that are co-created by school, parents/carers and students. They should include any advice received from health professionals. If there is no advice from health professionals, information and support can be requested of the school nurses if this is needed.

Where a child has an allergy action plan and or an asthma plan, this must be included with the IHP.

IHPs will be reviewed annually or when staff change however they will be reviewed earlier if an incident or near miss occurs. They need to be brought to the attention of supply or cover staff and be passed on during transition to a new school.

St. Mary's RC Primary School will ensure that:

- students with an allergy action plan and/or an asthma plan have an individual healthcare plan
- students without an allergy action plan or asthma plan but have an allergy that needs active management over and above what other students need will have an individual healthcare plan
- individual healthcare plans are created whilst students are waiting for a diagnosis

## **School Trips and External Visits**

School 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. In order 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.

Staff 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. School 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.

## **Serious Incidents and 'Near Misses'**

St. Mary's RC Primary School approaches serious incidents and "near misses" in a "no blame" spirit, seeking to learn lessons and address any issues which the incident identified, so that students are better protected in the future.

School 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.

School uses KITT MEDICAL Portal 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.

School 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. School 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 St. Mary's, allergy safety is a priority and actions to ensure that students are included and safe are embedded into the school's culture. Students with an allergy can 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.

School will:

- regularly communicate to students, parents and staff about allergies, ensuring ongoing awareness and appreciation of the severity of the potential risks

- includes allergy and anaphylaxis lessons during assembly or class time
- plans school celebrations, rewards, and communal events inclusively from the outset to eliminate social isolation
- involves students and staff with allergies in developing and reviewing the policy and procedures for allergy management
- invites new joiners with allergies to meet kitchen staff and get used to the mealtime environment which may help to reduce anxiety and enable staff to identify students with allergies in the dining hall
- has proactive engagement with new joiners with known allergies, setting out the school, policies and the support available

## **Safeguarding:**

St. Mary's RC Primary School 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 school, or where they are repeatedly sent without essential medication, thereby putting the individual at risk.

## **Unacceptable practice**

School staff are clear about what constitutes unacceptable practice and are committed to ensuring that only good practice occurs. Should unacceptable practice occur the school will follow its own procedures to identify and address this using staff conduct policies.

Examples of unacceptable practice include (but are not limited to):

- preventing children and young people from easily accessing and administering their medication in line with what is agreed in their Individual Healthcare Plan (for example prescribed adrenaline devices and asthma reliever inhalers) when and where necessary;
- assuming that every child with the same condition requires the same support;
- ignoring the views of the child or young person or their parents or carer;
- ignoring medical evidence or the opinion and advice of healthcare professionals;
- assuming that a child or young person does not have an allergy because they do not yet have a diagnosis, for example while medical investigation is under way;
- sending a child or young person who becomes unwell to a school office without suitable supervision. In the case of an emergency or suspected emergency (for example anaphylaxis) help should come to the child or young person;
- penalising children or young people for their attendance record if their absences are related to their medical condition, e.g. hospital appointments and health management.
- requiring parents / carers (or otherwise making them feel obliged) to attend the school

to administer medication or provide medical support to their child; or preventing children and young people from participating or creating unnecessary barriers to them participating in any aspect of school life, including external visits and trips, e.g. by requiring parents to accompany the child.

## **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.

## **Further reading:**

Anaphylaxis UK: for teachers by teachers, the one stop shop for all school allergy needs:

<https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/education>

Allergy UK: <https://www.allergyuk.org/about-allergy/types-of-allergies>

Allergy Safety in Schools July 2026: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/allergy-safety-inschools>

Guidance on the use of adrenaline auto-injectors in schools

Spare Pens in School: <https://www.sparepensinschools.uk>

Benedict's law:

<https://benedictblythe.com/benedicts-law>

<https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/education/benedicts-law>

Food:

Allergy Guidance for Schools: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-food-standards-resources-for-schools/allergy-guidance-for-schools>

Allergy Guidance for food businesses:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/allergen-guidance-for-food-businesses>

## **Statutory Duties:**

- The duties under Section 34 of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 place a
- requirement on LA-maintained schools, Academies and PRUs to have allergy safety policies, publish them and keep them under review.
- The duty of care under section 3 of the Children Act 1989 for any person with the care of a child to do all that is reasonable for the purposes of safeguarding or promoting the

welfare of the child;

- The duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils and students under sections 20 and 175 of the Education Act 2002, the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (and associated statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education) and the Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015;
- The duty of the employer under section 2 of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 to take reasonable steps to ensure that employees are not exposed to risks to their health and safety;
- The duties under the Equality Act 2010 to provide equality of opportunity for all, including those who are disabled.
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework.

