



Nurturing to Learn

ALLERGY SAFETY POLICY

Policy Information Details

Policy Owner	Executive Headteacher
Responsible Person	Executive Headteacher / Mrs Sharon Spiller/ Mrs Katrina Allen
Approved by	Governing Body
Date approved	
Issue date	October 2026
Next review date	October 2027
Review frequency	At least annually

1. Aims

The Elms School is committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment for pupils with allergies.

Allergies can range from mild reactions to anaphylaxis, which is a potentially life-threatening medical emergency. The school will take reasonable and proportionate steps to reduce the risk of exposure to known allergens while ensuring pupils with allergies are able to participate fully in school life.

This policy aims to ensure that:

- pupils with allergies are identified and appropriately supported;
- allergy risks are assessed and managed;
- staff understand allergies and know how to respond to an allergic reaction;
- emergency medication is readily available;
- pupils with allergies are included in education, visits, activities and wider school life;
- serious incidents and near misses are recorded and reviewed; and
- pupils are supported in a way that promotes dignity, confidence and increasing independence.

This policy should be read alongside the school's Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy. The current DfE medical-conditions statutory guidance remains in force while revised guidance is being developed. [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/672222/20190523_Medical_Conditions_Guidance.pdf)

2. The Elms Approach – Nurturing to Learn

At Elms School, allergy safety is not simply about managing a medical condition. Pupils need to feel safe in order to learn.

Our approach reflects the six elements of the Elms Approach:

Culture – everyone understands that allergy safety is a shared responsibility.

Predictable – pupils know how their allergy will be managed and what adults will do if they become unwell.

Connection – trusted adults listen to pupils and recognise their individual communication and presentation.

Structure – clear Individual Healthcare Plans, emergency procedures, medication arrangements and routines provide security.

Belonging – pupils with allergies participate in school life without unnecessary restriction, stigma or exclusion.

Alignment – pupils, parents/carers, staff, healthcare professionals, caterers and other providers work together.

At Elms School we recognise that:

Behaviour is communication.

A pupil with SEMH, SEND or communication difficulties may not always be able to tell an adult clearly that they are experiencing an allergic reaction.

A sudden change in behaviour, communication, emotional regulation or physical presentation must therefore never automatically be assumed to be behavioural. Staff should consider whether the pupil may be experiencing pain, illness, an allergic reaction or another unmet medical need.

Know → Prevent → Recognise → Respond → Record → Review

3. Legal and Statutory Framework

This policy has been developed with regard to:

- Children and Families Act 2014, including sections 100 and 100A;
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026;
- DfE Allergy Safety in Schools statutory guidance 2026;
- DfE Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions statutory guidance;
- Equality Act 2010;
- current safeguarding requirements; and
- relevant food information and allergen requirements.

Section 34 of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 inserted the new allergy-safety provisions into the Children and Families Act 2014. The requirements came fully into force in England on 1 September 2026. [Legislation.gov.uk](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

4. What is an Allergy?

An allergy is an inappropriate immune-system response to a substance that would normally be harmless.

Allergens may include, but are not limited to:

- foods;

- medicines;
- insect stings;
- latex; and
- environmental allergens.

Reactions vary between individuals and can vary in severity on different occasions.

A pupil who has previously experienced a mild reaction may experience a more serious reaction in the future.

The school will therefore treat known allergies seriously and follow the pupil's individual medical advice.

5. Anaphylaxis

Anaphylaxis is a serious and potentially life-threatening allergic reaction requiring immediate action.

Staff will receive training appropriate to their role so that they can recognise allergic reactions and know how to respond.

Where anaphylaxis is suspected, staff must follow the pupil's emergency plan and training and call 999 without delay.

Where indicated, an adrenaline auto-injector (AAI) should be administered promptly in accordance with the pupil's plan, the device instructions and staff training.

Emergency action must not be delayed while waiting for a parent/carers to arrive.

6. Identifying Pupils with Allergies

Parents/carers are asked to inform the school of any diagnosed or suspected allergy and provide accurate, up-to-date information.

Information should include, where relevant:

- known allergens;
- previous reactions;
- symptoms;
- level of risk;
- medication;
- emergency treatment;
- healthcare-professional advice; and
- any changes in the pupil's condition.

Information will be updated whenever needs change and as part of the pupil's healthcare planning.

Staff who need to know about a pupil's allergy will have access to appropriate information while respecting confidentiality.

7. Individual Healthcare Plans

Pupils requiring individual arrangements to manage an allergy will have an Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP) where appropriate.

This will be managed under the school's Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy.

The IHP should identify, as relevant:

- the pupil's allergy and known allergens;
- signs and symptoms of a reaction;
- how the pupil communicates feeling unwell;
- emergency procedures;
- medication and its location;
- AAI arrangements;
- staff training requirements;
- catering arrangements;
- environmental considerations;
- educational visits and off-site arrangements;
- reasonable adjustments;
- pupil self-management where appropriate; and
- arrangements for reviewing the plan.

The DfE's 2026 allergy guidance specifically addresses identifying pupils who require an IHP and provides an allergy-focused IHP template for schools. [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/612226/Allergy_guidance_for_schools_2026.pdf)

8. Pupil Voice and Communication

Pupils will be involved in decisions about managing their allergy as far as appropriate to their age, understanding and communication needs.

Staff will consider the individual pupil's preferred communication methods.

For some pupils at The Elms, signs of illness or an allergic reaction may include changes in:

- behaviour;

- facial expression;
- communication;
- activity level;
- regulation;
- anxiety;
- eating or drinking;
- breathing;
- skin appearance; or
- usual presentation.

Communication difficulties must never be interpreted as meaning that a pupil cannot communicate pain, discomfort or distress.

Staff should know the pupil and respond to significant changes in their normal presentation.

9. Reducing Exposure to Allergens

The school will take reasonable and proportionate steps to reduce exposure to known allergens.

Risk management may include:

- appropriate handwashing;
- cleaning tables and equipment;
- careful food preparation;
- appropriate food storage;
- preventing cross-contact where reasonably practicable;
- checking ingredients and labels;
- appropriate supervision;
- considering allergens when planning lessons and activities;
- individual seating or environmental arrangements where necessary;
- safe storage and disposal arrangements; and
- communicating relevant information to staff and providers.

The school will not rely solely on general statements such as “nut-free school” as a substitute for individual risk management.

The focus will be on understanding individual risk and implementing appropriate controls.

10. Food and Catering

The school and its catering provider will work together to manage food-allergy risks.

Relevant catering staff will know which pupils have food allergies and what arrangements are required.

Appropriate procedures will be in place for:

- allergen information;
- checking ingredients;
- food substitutions;
- avoiding unintended cross-contact;
- communication between school and catering staff; and
- responding to concerns.

Food businesses, including school caterers, are subject to allergen-information requirements. Current government guidance emphasises checking substitutions, product information and allergen content when menus or products change. [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)

Food should never be used as a reward, consequence or behavioural strategy where doing so could conflict with a pupil's allergy, healthcare or dietary requirements.

11. Medication and Adrenaline Auto-Injectors

Medication will be managed in accordance with the school's Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy.

Pupils prescribed an AAI should have appropriate access to it in accordance with their IHP.

Emergency medication must be:

- readily accessible;
- clearly identified;
- stored appropriately;
- within its expiry date; and
- available during activities away from the main school site.

It must not be locked away in a way that prevents prompt access in an emergency.

Where appropriate, pupils who are competent to carry and use their own medication will be encouraged to develop independence, with arrangements recorded in their IHP.

12. Spare Adrenaline Auto-Injectors

The school will maintain appropriate arrangements for spare adrenaline auto-injectors in accordance with current statutory guidance and applicable requirements.

Staff will know:

- where spare AAls are kept;
- how they can be accessed;
- who may receive them;
- the procedure for their use; and
- how their expiry dates and stock are monitored.

The DfE's current allergy guidance includes specific expectations around emergency adrenaline devices, and government school-food guidance states that the statutory allergy guidance includes schools stocking spare adrenaline devices for emergency use. [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)

Two devices are kept in the admin corridor and are accessible via direct collection, emergency radio call. Should a device need to be used or a staff member is concerned they should take appropriate action but also call for Senior Leadership or a first aider additionally in support.

13. Staff Training

All staff will receive allergy-awareness training appropriate to their role.

This includes staff who do not normally work directly with a pupil known to have an allergy.

Training will address:

- what allergies are;
- common allergens;
- recognising an allergic reaction;
- recognising anaphylaxis;
- emergency procedures;
- how to summon emergency assistance;
- the importance of rapid access to medication; and
- the school's allergy-safety arrangements.

Staff with specific responsibility for pupils at risk of anaphylaxis will receive appropriate additional training, including use of AAls.

Training will be refreshed appropriately and included within arrangements for new staff.

The DfE's 2026 statutory guidance expressly includes putting allergy-safety training in place for all staff. [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) this has been done and staff have accessed the online training from 'The Key' records or completion are kept with the Schools HR.

14. Supply Staff, Agency Staff and Visitors

Appropriate information will be made available to supply, agency and temporary staff who need it.

External professionals, contractors and visitors responsible for activities involving pupils will be informed of relevant allergy arrangements where necessary for pupil safety.

Confidential medical information will only be shared where appropriate and necessary.

15. Educational Visits and Off-Site Activities

Having an allergy should not automatically prevent a pupil from participating in educational visits, Duke of Edinburgh activities, residential experiences, sporting activities or other aspects of school life.

Planning will consider:

- allergens at the destination;
- food arrangements;
- emergency medication;
- access to A&Es;
- staff competence;
- emergency services;
- transport;
- accommodation;
- communication with external providers; and
- individual reasonable adjustments.

Relevant medication must accompany the pupil and remain appropriately accessible.

This section should be implemented alongside the Educational Visits Policy and the pupil's IHP.

16. Inclusion and Reasonable Adjustments

The school will actively seek to ensure pupils with allergies are included in the full life of the school.

Pupils should not be unnecessarily:

- excluded from activities;
- required to eat separately;
- isolated from peers;
- prevented from attending trips;
- excluded from food technology or other curriculum activities; or
- made to feel responsible for inconveniencing others.

Where adjustments are required, these will be individualised and proportionate.

Allergy safety should enable participation rather than unnecessarily restrict it.

17. Emergency Response

Where a pupil experiences or is suspected of experiencing a serious allergic reaction:

1. Stay with the pupil.
2. Radio/ Call for assistance.
3. Follow the pupil's emergency/IHP arrangements.
4. Administer an AAI immediately where indicated and in accordance with training.
5. Call 999 and state that anaphylaxis is suspected.
6. Follow emergency-service advice.
7. Use further emergency medication/AAI where indicated by the emergency plan, device guidance, training or emergency-service advice.
8. Ensure an appropriate adult remains with the pupil.
9. Contact parents/carers as soon as practicable.
10. Record and report the incident.

A pupil experiencing suspected anaphylaxis must not be left alone or sent elsewhere in school to seek help.

18. Serious Incidents and Near Misses

The school will record and review:

- serious allergic reactions;
- anaphylaxis;
- use of an AAI;
- medication errors;
- significant allergen exposures;
- emergency-service involvement; and
- significant near misses.

The purpose of review is learning and prevention, not blame.

The review should consider:

What happened?

Why did it happen?

Were procedures followed?

What helped?

What needs to change?

Where necessary, risk assessments, IHPs, staff training, catering procedures or other arrangements will be updated.

Recording and learning from serious incidents and near misses is expressly included within the DfE's statutory allergy guidance. [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)

19. Responsibilities

Governing Body

The Governing Body will ensure that:

- statutory allergy-safety arrangements are in place;
- this policy is implemented;
- appropriate resources and training are available;
- the policy is reviewed at least annually; and
- statutory publication and communication requirements are met.

Executive Headteacher

The Executive Headteacher will ensure:

- the policy is implemented in practice;
- responsibilities are appropriately delegated;

- pupils with allergies are identified;
- appropriate IHPs and risk-management arrangements are established;
- staff receive appropriate training;
- emergency arrangements and medication are accessible;
- catering arrangements support allergy safety; and
- serious incidents and near misses are appropriately reviewed.

Staff

All staff must:

- follow this policy and pupils' IHPs;
- undertake required training;
- know how to obtain emergency assistance;
- know how to access emergency medication where relevant;
- take allergy concerns seriously; and
- report incidents, errors and near misses.

Parents/Carers

Parents/carers should:

- provide accurate and current medical information;
- inform the school of changes;
- provide prescribed medication/devices where required;
- ensure medication supplied to school is in date; and
- participate in IHP development and review.

Pupils

Pupils will be encouraged, according to their age, understanding and individual needs, to:

- understand their allergy;
- recognise and communicate symptoms;
- avoid known allergens;
- know how to seek help;
- understand their medication; and
- develop appropriate independence.

20. Policy Communication and Publication

This policy will be:

- published on the school's website;

- made known to parents/carers;
- available to staff;
- brought to the attention of everyone working at the school;
- brought to pupils' attention in an accessible and developmentally appropriate way; and
- actively communicated at least annually.

For Elms School, pupil communication may include visual information, assemblies, tutor work, PSHE, individual teaching, social narratives or other accessible approaches.

These arrangements reflect the specific publication and annual communication requirements introduced by section 100A of the Children and Families Act 2014. [Legislation.gov.uk](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

21. Monitoring and Review

The Governing Body will review this policy at least annually and sooner where necessary following:

- a significant allergy incident;
- a significant near miss;
- changes in statutory guidance or legislation;
- changes in school arrangements; or
- learning identified through monitoring.

The Executive Headteacher will ensure that practice is monitored and that identified improvements are implemented.

22. Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- SEND Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Administration of Medicines procedures
- Behaviour/Relationships Policy
- Equality Information and Objectives
- Accessibility Plan

- Food/Catering procedures
- Data Protection and Records Retention procedures

The Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy remains the overarching framework for IHPs, medicines, medical training and general medical support. This Allergy Safety Policy provides the additional specific arrangements required for allergy and anaphylaxis safety.

The Elms Commitment

At Elms School, pupils with allergies should be able to come to school knowing that adults understand their needs, recognise when something is wrong and know what to do.

We will balance safety with inclusion so that allergy management does not unnecessarily limit a pupil's opportunities, relationships or sense of belonging.

For our pupils, a change in behaviour may be the first indication that something is wrong.

Know the pupil. Know the allergy. Know the plan. Know what to do.

Know → Prevent → Recognise → Respond → Record → Review

Nurturing to Learn