

Allergy and Anaphylaxis Policy 2026-2027

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Allergy and Anaphylaxis Policy

Introduction

1. Seaford College is committed to the safety, wellbeing and full inclusion of every student, including those living with allergies or at risk of anaphylaxis. This policy sets out the College's approach to identifying, managing and responding to allergies and anaphylaxis in all school settings.

Benedict's Law (Section 72 of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill) came into force on 1st September 2026. It introduces mandatory statutory guidance on allergy safety in all schools (maintained, academy and independent). The law is named after Benedict Blyth, a five year old who died from a preventable exposure to cow's milk protein. This policy has been written to meet and exceed the requirements set out under this legislation.

This policy applies to all staff (including teaching, non-teaching, supply and contractors), governors, volunteers and visitors. It has been written with reference to Anaphylaxis UK, the Natasha Allergy Research Foundation and the Department of Education (DfE).

Scope and Applicability

2. This policy applies to:
- All students enrolled at Seaford College
 - All school staff – teaching, non-teaching, permanent, temporary and supply
 - Volunteers, governors and regular visitors to the College site
 - All College activities, including trips, after-school clubs and residential visits

Legal and Regulatory Framework

3. From September 2026, all school in England must comply with the following mandatory requirements under Benedict's Law:

- Develop and publish a whole-school allergy policy (this document), which must be displayed on the school website
- Ensure comprehensive allergy awareness and emergency response training for all staff annually
- Hold spare in-date adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs) on-site for use in emergencies – not assigned to any individual, available for any child or adult
- Implement individual Healthcare Plans (IHCPs) and Allergy Plans with known serious allergies
- Make allergy management a formal part of safeguarding and school compliance frameworks

4. The College complies with the DfE statutory guidance "Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions at School", which requires schools to have arrangements in place to support students with medical conditions. Allergy and anaphylaxis management is embedded within the College's broader medical conditions policy.

5. A severe allergy may constitute a disability under the Equality Act 2010. The College has a duty to make reasonable adjustments to ensure students with allergies are not placed at a substantial disadvantage. This policy reflects these obligations.

Roles and Responsibilities

6. The Head Master/Senior Deputy Head will:
 - Ensure that this policy is implemented, reviewed annually and published on the College website
 - Designate a named Allergy Lead for the College
 - Ensure that all staff receive mandatory annual allergy and anaphylaxis training
 - Ensure that spare AAIs are held on site and are in date
7. The Designated Allergy Lead (Sister Malika Scott – School Nurse) will:
 - Coordinate Individual Health Plans for all students with known allergies
 - Maintain the College's allergy register and ensure it is up to date
 - Liaise with parents/carers and healthcare providers
 - Monitor stock, expiry dates and accessibility of spare AAIs
 - Organise and record annual staff allergy training
8. Under Benedict's Law, from September 2026, all staff are required to:
 - Complete annual allergy awareness and anaphylaxis response training
 - Know how to recognise the signs of an allergic reaction and anaphylaxis
 - Know the locations of AAIs and how to administer them in an emergency
 - Follow individual Healthcare Plans for students in their care
 - Report any allergic reactions or near misses to the Allergy Lead immediately
 - Never leave a student alone who is having an allergic reaction

This requirement applies to all staff, regardless of role – teaching staff, teaching assistants, non-teaching staff and sports coaches.

9. Parents and cares are required to:
 - Inform the College in writing of their child's allergy at the time of enrolment and at any point an allergy is newly diagnosed
 - Provide the College with a current Allergy Action Plan from a medical professional
 - Provide prescribed AAIs for their child – at least two and ensuring that they are in date
 - Notify the College promptly of any changes to their child's allergy status, emergency medication or contact details
 - Ensure their child understands their allergy and knows not to share food
10. Students:
 - Are educated, in an age-appropriate way, about their own allergy and how to communicate their needs
 - Are encouraged to advocate for themselves and to alert an adult immediately if they feel unwell
 - Do not share or swap food with other students

Identifying and Recording Allergies

11. The College will:
 - Collect allergy information for all students at admission and review it annually
 - Maintain a confidential, up-to-date allergy register accessible to relevant staff
 - Share relevant allergy information with all staff who have contact with the student, including supply staff and volunteers
 - Ensure kitchen and catering staff have access to all relevant dietary and allergy information

- Display allergy information in appropriate locations (for example staffroom or dining halls) in a way that respects student confidentiality

The 14 Major Allergens (UK Food Information Regulations) are celery, cereals containing gluten, crustaceans, eggs, fish, lupin, milk, molluscs, mustard, peanuts, sesame, soybeans, sulphur dioxide/sulphites, tree nuts. Any of these may trigger anaphylaxis in sensitised individuals. Latex, insect stings and medications may also cause severe reactions.

Individual Healthcare Plans (IHCPs) and Allergy Action Plans

12. For every student with a known allergy that carries a risk of anaphylaxis, the College will produce an Individual Healthcare Plan (IHCP) in partnership with the child's parents/carers and healthcare providers.

Each IHCP and accompanying Allergy Action Plan will include

- The student's name, photograph and date of birth
- Details of known allergens and the nature of previous reactions
- Symptoms and signs to watch for
- Step-by-step emergency response instructions
- Name and dosage of prescribed emergency medications, including AAls
- Consent for staff to administer emergency medication
- Contact details for parents/carers and the student's GP/allergist

IHCPs must be reviewed at least annually, and after any significant allergic reaction or change in the student's medical condition. Plans are signed by the parent/carer and, where appropriate, the student's healthcare professional.

Emergency Medication – Adrenaline Auto-Injectors (AAls)

13. With respect to prescribed AAls:

- Parents must provide the College with two in-date, prescribed AAls for their child
- AAls will be stored in a clearly labelled, easily accessible location known to all staff
- The Allergy Lead will check all AAls termly to ensure that they are in date and in working order

14. From September 2026, all schools in England must hold spare, in-date adrenaline auto-injectors on site. These are not assigned to any individual student or staff member – they may be used on any child or adult experiencing anaphylaxis, including a first-time reaction. Schools may obtain spare AAls under a Patient Group Direction (PGD). Guidance is available from NHS England and the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). This is statutory guidance under Benedict's Law.

- The College holds a minimum of two spare AAls in the Medical Centre, Walled Garden East/West boarding house, Heden Court/Heden Hall, the Prep School, the Prep School Canteen, Johnson Centre and Mansion reception.
- Spare AAls are checked every term for expiry dates and replaced as necessary
- Spare AAls are clearly labelled 'Emergency Use' and stored separately from prescribed devices
- The location of spare AAls is known to all staff and communicated during induction and training.

15. After using an AAI

- Call 999 immediately – the child must be taken to hospital even if they appear to have recovered

- Administer a second AAI after 5-10 minutes if there has been no improvement
- Lay the child flat with legs raised (unless breathing is difficult, in which case sit upright)
- Stay with the child until the emergency services arrive
- Record the time the AAI was administered and report to the emergency services
- Notify parents/carers, the Allergy Lead and the Head Master/Senior Deputy Head immediately
- Complete a written incident report. The used AAI(s) must be replaced immediately.

Recognising and Responding to Anaphylaxis

16. The signs of an allergic reaction (mild to moderate) include:
 - Itching or tingling in the mouth
 - Hives, itching or swelling of the skin
 - Runny nose and sneezing
 - Stomach cramps, nausea or vomiting
 - Red, watery eyes
17. The signs of anaphylaxis (severe – life threatening) include the below. **It is essential to act immediately:**
 - Swelling of the throat/tongue
 - Difficulty breathing/severe wheeze
 - Sudden drop in blood pressure
 - Confusion
 - Pale/clammy skin
 - Loss of consciousness

In the case of the above occurring the following steps must be taken:

- Call 999 immediately – say ‘anaphylaxis’
- Administer AAI (EpiPen/Jext) into outer mid thigh – hold for 10 seconds
- Lay person flat, legs raised (unless breathing difficulty – then sit upright. If unconscious place into the recovery position)
- If no improvement after 5-10 minutes, administer second AAI
- Stay with the casualty until paramedics arrive
- Do NOT give antihistamines as a substitute for adrenaline in anaphylaxis
- Even if symptoms improve, hospital assessment is always required

It is important to note that antihistamines and asthma inhalers are not appropriate treatments for anaphylaxis. Adrenaline is the only first-line treatment. Staff should never delay administering an AAI in a suspected anaphylaxis emergency.

Staff Training

18. Under Benedict’s Law, all College staff, regardless of role, must receive allergy awareness and anaphylaxis emergency response training annually. This includes staff who are not typically involved in direct student care, as reactions can occur anywhere of the College premises.

Training for all staff will cover:

- What allergies are, how they develop and the difference between intolerance and allergy
- The 14 major allergens and common triggers
- How to recognise the signs of mild allergic reactions and anaphylaxis

- The correct use of AAls (EpiPen and Jext devices)
- Emergency response procedures and how to call for help
- The location and use of spare AAls
- Individual Healthcare Plans – understanding and following them

All training must be:

- Delivered or accredited by a recognised provider (e.g. Anaphylaxis UK, St John's Ambulance, or a qualified healthcare professional)
- Repeated annually for all staff
- Recorded, with training logs maintained by the Allergy Lead
- Included as part of new staff induction (unless staff join at a point where annual training is given to all staff), with refresher training within the first term of employment.

Prevention and Risk Management

19. Within the College catering and department, and with respect to food more generally:
 - Catering staff receive specific allergen awareness training and understand all 14 major allergens
 - All food prepared or served on the premises is clearly labelled with allergen information
 - Students with allergies will be offered safe, nutritious alternatives and will never be excluded from mealtimes
 - Food brought in from home for class events, parties or bake sales must comply with the College's allergy guidance; parents/carers will be informed in advance
20. In the classroom and wider College environment:
 - Science, art and food technology lessons involving known allergens will be risk-assessed in advance
 - Craft materials and paints will be checked for allergen content
 - Animals and plants in College that may trigger reactions will be risk-assessed
 - Students' allergy information is shared with supply staff or visiting teachers
21. On College trips, residential visits and during after-school activities:
 - Risk assessments for all off-site activities will include consideration of allergy risks
 - Staff accompanying trips will carry the student's prescribed AAls and a copy of their Allergy Action Plan
 - Relevant catering venues or activity providers will be informed of student allergies in advance
 - A trained member of staff with access to AAls attends all trips and activities

Communication and Inclusion

22. This policy is published on the school website in compliance with Benedict's Law. Parents/carers will be notified of this policy at admission and when it is updated.

Allergy information is shared sensitively to protect individual student privacy. Students with allergies are fully included in all College activities; adaptations are made to ensure participation rather than exclusion.

The College promotes a culture of allergy awareness and mutual respect amongst students.

Monitoring, Review and Compliance

23. This policy will be:

- Reviewed annually by the Allergy Lead and approved by the Governing Body
- Updated immediately following any significant allergic incident or change in legislation
- Published on the school website in line with statutory requirements under Benedict's Law

Compliance with this policy will be monitored through:

- Termly checks of AAI stock and expiry dates
- Annual staff training record and sign-off sheets
- Annual review of all Individual Healthcare Plans
- Incident logs and post-incident reviews