

Dartford Grammar School for Girls

Allergy Safety Policy

DATE REVIEWED: September 2026

NEXT REVIEW DUE: September 2027

Policy statement

Dartford Grammar School for Girls is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and supportive environment for all students, staff, volunteers and visitors with allergies.

The school recognises that allergies can range from mild symptoms to severe, potentially life-threatening allergic reactions, including anaphylaxis. We will take reasonable and proportionate steps to reduce the risk of exposure to known allergens, ensure that appropriate emergency arrangements are in place, and support students with allergies to participate fully in school life. This policy has been developed with reference to the Department for Education's **Allergy Safety in Schools statutory guidance** and the accompanying **Allergy Safety Policy – Template**. The school will review this policy at least annually and following any significant allergic reaction, serious incident or near miss where lessons may need to be incorporated into our procedures.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- all students attending Dartford Grammar School for Girls;
- all permanent, temporary, supply and agency staff;
- volunteers and regular visitors;
- catering and cleaning staff;
- staff supervising after-school clubs and other activities;
- school trips and educational visits;
- activities taking place both on and off the school premises.

The school will also take reasonable account of known allergies affecting staff and regular visitors where relevant to the safety of the school community.

Responsibilities

The Trust Board

Trustees will:

- ensure that the school has a published allergy safety policy;
- ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to support students with allergies;
- ensure the policy is reviewed at least annually;
- ensure that lessons from serious incidents and near misses are considered;
- monitor the effectiveness of the school's allergy safety arrangements

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Headteacher

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy is implemented effectively.

The Headteacher will:

- ensure that staff understand their responsibilities;
- ensure appropriate training is provided;
- ensure that emergency medication and equipment are available and appropriately stored;
- ensure that risk assessments and Medical Care Plans are in place where required;
- ensure that incidents and near misses are recorded and reviewed.

Named Allergy Lead

The school's Named Allergy Lead is Sarah Longley, Assistant Headteacher (SENCO)

The Allergy Lead will coordinate the implementation and review of this policy and will:

- maintain oversight of students with known allergies;
- coordinate Medical Care Plan (which include allergy information) any and Allergy Action Plans;
- ensure relevant staff are aware of students' needs;
- coordinate allergy awareness and emergency response training;
- oversee arrangements for prescribed and spare adrenaline devices;
- support risk assessments for activities, trips and visits;
- review allergy-related incidents and near misses;
- liaise with parents/carers and relevant healthcare professionals where appropriate.

All staff

All staff have a responsibility to:

- understand the school's allergy safety procedures;
- complete required allergy awareness and emergency response training;
- familiarise themselves with the allergy needs of students they supervise;
- know how to access relevant Allergy Action Plans and Medical Care Plans;
- take reasonable steps to prevent exposure to known allergens;
- recognise the symptoms of an allergic reaction and anaphylaxis;
- know how and when to seek emergency assistance;
- report allergic reactions and near misses promptly.

Allergy awareness and staff training

All staff who may be present when students are on the school premises will receive allergy awareness and emergency response training at least annually.

This will include, where applicable:

- teaching staff;
- teaching assistants and support staff;
- administrative staff;

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- lunchtime supervisors;
- first aiders;
- catering staff;
- supply and agency staff;
- regular volunteers;
- staff supervising educational visits.

New staff will receive appropriate allergy information as part of their induction.

The school will make arrangements to ensure that temporary, supply and cover staff receive appropriate information before supervising students.

Training will cover:

- what an allergy is and the risks it presents;
- food allergy, asthma, hay fever and other allergic conditions;
- the difference between food allergy, coeliac disease and food intolerance;
- common allergen triggers;
- symptoms of an allergic reaction;
- recognition of anaphylaxis;
- the importance of prompt administration of adrenaline;
- use of prescribed and spare adrenaline auto-injectors;
- emergency procedures and contacting emergency services;
- the location of emergency medication;
- the school's allergy safety procedures;
- Medical Care Plans (Medical Care Plans at DGGS) and Allergy Action Plans;
- reducing the risk of allergen exposure;
- supporting students' emotional wellbeing;
- reporting incidents and near misses.

Training will not replace any additional clinical or competency requirements for staff supporting individual students.

Promoting wellbeing and preventing bullying

The school recognises that living with an allergy, particularly one that may cause anaphylaxis, can cause anxiety and affect a student's emotional wellbeing.

The school will:

- listen to students' concerns about managing their allergy;
- provide appropriate pastoral support;
- avoid unnecessarily singling students out because of their allergy;
- encourage students to participate fully in school activities;
- work with parents/carers to identify reasonable adjustments where necessary;
- ensure that allergy-related bullying, teasing or harassment is addressed under the school's behaviour policy and procedures.

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Where appropriate and with the student's and parents'/carers' agreement, age-appropriate information may be provided to classmates about allergy safety and how to seek adult help in an emergency.

Such awareness will not replace staff responsibility for emergency response.

Minimising the risk of allergen exposure

The school will take reasonable and proportionate measures to reduce the risk of students coming into contact with known allergens.

Risk reduction measures will consider:

- food provided by the school;
- advice and information about food brought onto the premises by students, parents/carers or staff;
- classroom activities;
- cooking and food technology;
- science experiments;
- art and craft activities;
- musical activities;
- contact with animals;
- sports and physical activities;
- school events and celebrations;
- after-school clubs;
- educational visits and residential trips.

Staff planning activities will consider whether an allergen could be present and whether alternative materials, ingredients or arrangements are required.

Where a student has an allergy to an airborne or contact allergen, reasonable measures will be considered to reduce their exposure.

The school will not routinely describe itself as an entirely "allergen-free" environment, as this cannot always be guaranteed. Instead, appropriate risk reduction measures will be used according to individual circumstances.

Food allergy and catering

The school will ensure that appropriate information about food allergens is available for food supplied by the school or its catering provider through the school's MIS system.

The school/catering provider will:

- obtain accurate information about students' known food allergies;
- maintain appropriate records;
- identify allergens in food provided;
- follow appropriate food preparation and hygiene procedures;

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- take reasonable steps to prevent cross-contact with known allergens;
- communicate relevant allergen information to students, parents/carers and staff as appropriate;
- ensure that catering staff receive appropriate allergy awareness training.

Parents/carers should inform the school promptly of any new allergy diagnosis or change to an existing allergy.

Where food is brought into school by students, parents/carers or staff, the school will take reasonable steps to reduce the risk to students with known allergies.

Specific arrangements may be set out in the school's food, catering or medical conditions procedures.

Identification and recording of allergies

The school will seek information about known allergies when a student joins the school and throughout their time at school.

Information may be obtained from:

- parents/carers;
- the student;
- previous educational settings;
- healthcare professionals, where appropriate;
- the student's Allergy Action Plan;
- the student's Medical Care Plan.

The school will maintain an appropriate record of students with known allergies.

Records will include, where relevant:

- the known allergen(s);
- symptoms and signs of an allergic reaction;
- prescribed medication;
- whether the student has an adrenaline auto-injector;
- the location of medication (stored centrally in one location in school);
- whether the student has a Medical Care Plan;
- whether an Allergy Action Plan and/or Asthma Action Plan is in place;
- relevant emergency arrangements.

Records will be updated when new information is received.

Medical Care Plans

A Medical Care Plan will be developed where a student's allergy:

- has a functional impact on them in school;
- places them at risk of harm; and

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- requires arrangements that are additional to or different from the school's general arrangements.

The Medical Care Plan will set out the individual support and emergency arrangements required. Where a student has an Allergy Action Plan or Asthma Action Plan provided by a healthcare professional, this will be incorporated into or referenced by the Medical Care Plan.

Medical Care Plans will be reviewed:

- at least annually where appropriate;
- when the student's circumstances change;
- when new medical information is received;
- following a significant allergic reaction or near miss where the plan may need amendment.

Prescribed adrenaline auto-injectors

Students who have been prescribed adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs) must have rapid access to them at all times. Students will be advised to carry their adrenaline auto-injector with them at all times, and a spare will be stored in school, ensuring they are available:

- during lessons;
- during break and lunchtime;
- on the playground;
- during PE and sports activities;
- during clubs and other activities;
- during school events;
- on educational visits and trips.

Where a student carries their own AAI, appropriate arrangements will be made based on their age, competence and Medical Care Plan.

The school will maintain appropriate records of prescribed AAIs held by the school.

Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring that prescribed medication supplied to the school is within date and replaced when required, unless alternative arrangements have been agreed. Where required, students and parents/carers will be able to take prescribed medication home at the end of the school day but parents/carers would be responsible for ensuring this is returned each day.

Emergency response to anaphylaxis

Anaphylaxis is a medical emergency.

If a student is suspected of experiencing anaphylaxis:

1. **Administer adrenaline immediately** using the person's prescribed AAI where available.
2. If the prescribed AAI is not available, a school spare AAI should be considered in accordance with the school's procedures and applicable guidance.

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3. **Call 999** and state that the person is experiencing anaphylaxis.
4. Inform the emergency services that adrenaline has been administered.
5. Contact the student's parent/carer as soon as practicable.
6. Keep the student with an appropriate adult and monitor them continuously.
7. If symptoms have not improved after approximately 5 minutes, a second adrenaline device should be administered where available and clinically appropriate.
8. Follow the instructions of the emergency services.
9. Record the incident and complete the school's incident reporting procedure.

Adrenaline should be administered promptly. The school's arrangements will ensure that a student at risk of anaphylaxis is not more than five minutes from appropriate adrenaline. Staff will not delay the administration of adrenaline while waiting for confirmation from parents/carers or another person.

Spare adrenaline auto-injectors

The school will maintain a supply of spare adrenaline auto-injectors in accordance with current Department for Education guidance.

Spare AAls will:

- be stored in clearly labelled emergency kits;
- be readily accessible and not locked away;
- be stored in pairs;
- be located so that they can be accessed within five minutes where required;
- be checked regularly to ensure they are within date and in good condition;
- be replaced promptly after use or expiry;
- be disposed of safely in accordance with appropriate arrangements.

The school will determine the number and location of spare AAls according to the size and layout of the premises.

Where appropriate, an emergency kit may also contain an emergency asthma reliever inhaler, spacer and relevant instructions.

Staff will receive training in the use of spare AAls.

School trips and educational visits

Students with allergies will be supported to participate fully in educational visits wherever reasonably possible.

Before a trip or visit, staff will consider:

- the student's Medical Care Plan;
- known allergens;
- access to food and drink;
- potential environmental or contact allergens;
- access to prescribed medication;

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- access to spare emergency medication where appropriate;
- the location of the nearest emergency medical services;
- staff trained to recognise and respond to anaphylaxis;
- appropriate emergency contact arrangements.

A specific risk assessment will be undertaken where required.

A student at risk of anaphylaxis must have access to their prescribed adrenaline device during the visit.

Staff accompanying the student must know the emergency procedures and how to access and administer emergency medication where appropriate.

No student should be prevented from participating in a trip solely because they have an allergy where appropriate reasonable adjustments can be made to enable safe participation.

Serious incidents and near misses

The school will record and review allergic reactions, anaphylaxis incidents and relevant near misses.

Examples of a near miss may include:

- a student being given food containing a known allergen but not experiencing a reaction;
- an AAI being unavailable when required;
- incorrect allergen information being provided;
- a significant failure in an agreed control measure;
- accidental exposure where no reaction occurs.

Following an incident or near miss, the school will:

- ensure the immediate safety and medical needs of the student are addressed;
- inform parents/carers as appropriate;
- complete the relevant incident record;
- review what happened;
- identify any contributing factors;
- consider whether the student's Medical Care Plan or risk assessment needs updating;
- consider whether staff training or procedures need to change;
- implement lessons learned.

Where appropriate, the school will cooperate with healthcare professionals, the local authority, governing body/trust and other relevant organisations.

Parents/carers are encouraged to report any delayed reaction or exposure that becomes apparent after the student has returned home.

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Information sharing and confidentiality

Information about a student's allergy is health information and will be handled sensitively and in accordance with UK data protection requirements.

Relevant information will be shared with staff who need it to keep the student safe.

Information may be shared with:

- teaching and support staff;
- catering staff;
- lunchtime and club staff;
- first aiders;
- staff supervising educational visits;
- relevant healthcare professionals;
- emergency services.

Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis and in a way that respects the student's dignity and privacy.

The school will avoid unnecessary disclosure of a student's medical information.

Parents/carers should inform the school promptly of any change to their child's allergy, medication or emergency arrangements.

Raising awareness

This policy will be:

- published on the school's website;
- available to staff;
- available to parents/carers on request;
- included within relevant staff induction arrangements;
- covered as part of annual allergy awareness training.

The school will also promote age-appropriate understanding of allergy safety among students. Students will be encouraged to understand that allergies are medical conditions and that bullying, teasing or deliberately exposing another person to an allergen is unacceptable.

Review and monitoring

This policy will be reviewed at least annually by the Named Allergy Lead and Headteacher and presented to the Governing Body/Trustees as appropriate.

The review will consider:

- allergic reactions and anaphylaxis incidents;
- near misses;
- medication errors;
- staff training records;
- changes to students' medical needs;

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- changes to national guidance;
- the effectiveness of risk assessments;
- feedback from students, parents/carers and staff;
- the accessibility and location of emergency medication.

Where an incident indicates that existing arrangements may not adequately protect a student, the policy or associated procedures will be reviewed sooner.

Related policies and documents

This policy should be read alongside:

- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy;
- First Aid Policy;
- Medication Policy;
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- Food Safety/Catering Policy;
- Educational Visits Policy;
- Behaviour Policy;
- Anti-Bullying Policy;
- Data Protection/Privacy Policy;
- Medical Care Plans;
- Allergy Action Plans;
- Asthma Action Plans;
- Relevant risk assessments.

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Appendix 1 – Key emergency information

School emergency number: 01322 223123

NB: Staff would always contact school in an emergency, even when on an educational visit. School mobile phones are taken on educational visits alongside parent/carers contact details.

School address: Dartford Grammar School for Girls, Shepherds Lane, Dartford, Kent, DA1 2NT

Nearest emergency department: Darent Valley Hospital, Darent Wood Road, Dartford, DA2 8DA.

Named Allergy Lead: Sarah Longley

First Aid Lead: Sarah Longley

Location of spare adrenaline auto-injectors: Main Office (2), Sports Hall (2), SS1 (1), SS2 (1), Roseberry Gardens (2)

Location of emergency asthma inhaler: Main Office (2), Sports Hall (2), SS1 (1), SS2 (1), Roseberry Gardens (2)

Location of student allergy records/MCPs: Main Office

Procedure for contacting parents/carers: Use of MIS system for parent/carers details. Usual school procedure for contacting for any first aid incident/accident/emergency to be followed.

Appendix 2 – Allergy incident/near-miss reporting

All incidents and near misses should be reported to: Sarah Longley, Named Allergy Lead

The following information should be recorded on Every:

- student's name;
- date and time;
- location;
- suspected allergen;
- symptoms observed;
- medication administered;
- time adrenaline was administered, if applicable;
- time emergency services were called;
- actions taken;
- people informed;
- outcome;
- contributing factors;
- lessons identified;

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- changes required to the student's Medical Care Plan/risk assessment or school procedures.
-