



# St Brigid's School

## Policy and Procedure Document

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# Anaphylaxis Policy

## 1. POLICY STATEMENT




### Values

St. Brigid's School believes that the safety and wellbeing of children who are at risk of anaphylaxis is a whole-of-community responsibility. This School is committed to:

-  Providing, as far as practicable, a safe and healthy environment in which children at risk of anaphylaxis can participate equally in all aspects of the school program and experiences.
-  Raising awareness about allergies and anaphylaxis amongst St. Brigid's School community and children in attendance.
-  Actively involving the parents/guardians of each child at risk of anaphylaxis in assessing risks, developing risk minimisation strategies and management strategies for their child.
-  Ensuring each staff member and other relevant adults have adequate knowledge of allergies, anaphylaxis and emergency procedures.
-  Facilitating communication to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children at risk of anaphylaxis.

### Purpose

The aim of this policy is to:

-  Minimise the risk of an anaphylactic reaction occurring while the child is in the care of St. Brigid's School.
-  Ensure that staff members respond appropriately to an anaphylactic reaction by initiating appropriate treatment, including competently administering an EpiPen®.
-  To raise the awareness of the St. Brigid's School community about anaphylaxis and its management through education and policy implementation.

## 2. SCOPE

This Policy applies when a child diagnosed as being at risk of anaphylaxis is enrolled at St. Brigid's School. It applies to children enrolled at St. Brigid's, their parents/guardians, staff, volunteers, visitors and contractors. It also applies to other relevant members of the St. Brigid's School community, such as volunteers and visiting specialists.

## 3. BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

Anaphylaxis is a severe, life-threatening allergic reaction. The most common causes in young children are eggs, peanuts, tree nuts, cow's milk, bee or other insect stings, and some medications.

Young children may not be able to express the symptoms of anaphylaxis. A reaction can develop within minutes of exposure to the allergen, but with planning and training, a reaction can be treated effectively by using an adrenaline auto-injector called an EpiPen®.



The school recognises the importance of staff responsible for the child/ren at risk of anaphylaxis undertaking training that includes preventative measures to minimise the risk of an anaphylactic reaction, recognition of the signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis and emergency treatment, including administration of an EpiPen®.



Staff and parents/guardians need to be made aware that it is not possible to achieve a completely allergen-free environment in any school that is open to the general community. Staff should not have a false sense of security that an allergen has been eliminated from the environment. Instead, the School recognises the need to adopt a range of procedures and risk minimisation strategies to reduce the risk of a child having an anaphylactic reaction, including strategies to minimise the presence of the allergen in St. Brigid's School.

## 4. DEFINITIONS



**Allergen:** A substance that can cause an allergic reaction.



**Allergy:** An immune system response to something that the body has identified as an allergen. People genetically programmed to make an allergic response will make antibodies to particular allergens.



**Allergic reaction:** A reaction to an allergen. Common signs and symptoms include one or more of the following: hives, tingling feeling around the mouth, abdominal pain, vomiting and/or diarrhoea, facial swelling, cough or wheeze, difficulty swallowing or breathing, loss of consciousness or collapse (child pale or floppy), or cessation of breathing.



**Anaphylaxis:** A severe, rapid and potentially fatal allergic reaction that involves the major body systems, particularly breathing or circulation systems.



**Anaphylaxis Action Plan:** A medical management plan prepared and signed by a doctor providing the child's name and allergies, a photograph of the child and clear instructions on treating an anaphylactic episode.



**Anaphylaxis management training:** Comprehensive training provided by First Aid trainers or other professionals (nurse or doctor), which includes strategies for anaphylaxis management, recognition of allergic reactions, emergency treatment and practise with an EpiPen® trainer.



**Children at risk of anaphylaxis:** Those children whose allergies have been medically diagnosed and who are at risk of anaphylaxis.



**EpiPen®:** A device containing a single dose of adrenaline, delivered via a spring-activated needle, which is concealed until administered. Two strengths are available, an EpiPen® and an EpiPen Jr®, and are prescribed according to the child's weight. The EpiPen Jr® is recommended for a child weighing 10-20kg. An EpiPen® is recommended for use when a child is in excess of 20kg.



**EpiPen® kit:** The kit contains a current EpiPen®, a copy of the child's anaphylaxis action plan, and telephone contact details for the child's parents/guardians, the doctor/medical service and the person to be notified in the event of a reaction if the parents/guardians cannot be contacted. These are stored in the First Aid Room and each kit has the child's name labelled.



**Intolerance:** Often confused with allergy, intolerance is a reproducible reaction to a substance that is not due to the immune system.





**No food sharing:** The practice where the child at risk of anaphylaxis eats only that food that is supplied or permitted by the parents/guardians, and does not share food with, or accept other food from any other person.













**Risk minimisation:** A practice of reducing risks to a child at risk of anaphylaxis by removing, as far as is practicable, major sources of the allergen from St Brigid's School and developing strategies to help reduce risk of an anaphylactic reaction.

## 5. PROCEDURES








Staff responsible for the child at risk of anaphylaxis are responsible for:

-  Ensuring a copy of the child's Anaphylaxis Action Plan is in the Sick Room with the medication and is available to all staff.
-  Following the child's Anaphylaxis Action Plan in the event of an allergic reaction, which may progress to anaphylaxis.

Where a child who has not been diagnosed as allergic, but who appears to be having an anaphylactic reaction:

-  Calling an ambulance immediately by dialling 000
-  Commencing First Aid measures
-  Contacting the parents/guardians
-  Contacting the person to be notified in the event of illness if the parents/guardians cannot be contacted.
-  Practising EpiPen® administration procedures using an EpiPen® trainer and "anaphylaxis scenarios" on a regular basis, prefer.
-  Asking all parents/guardians as part of the enrolment procedure, prior to their child's attendance at St. Brigid's Catholic School, whether the child has allergies, and document this information on the child's enrolment record. If the child has allergies, ask the parents/guardians to provide a medical management plan.
-  Ensuring that parents/guardians provide an Anaphylaxis Action Plan signed by the child's doctor and a complete EpiPen® kit while the child is present at St. Brigid's.
-  Ensuring that the EpiPen® kit is stored in a location that is known to all staff, including relief staff; easily accessible to adults (not locked away); inaccessible to children; and away from direct sources of heat.
-  Ensuring that the EpiPen® kit for each child at risk of anaphylaxis is carried by a trained adult on excursions that this child attends.
-  Regularly checking the EpiPen® expiry date, thereby ensuring that the EpiPen® has not expired. (The manufacturer will only guarantee the effectiveness of the EpiPen® to the end of the nominated expiry month).

## Parents/guardians of a child at risk of anaphylaxis are responsible for:

-  Informing staff, either on enrolment or on diagnosis, of their child's allergies.
-  Providing staff with an Anaphylaxis Action Plan and written consent to use the EpiPen® in line with this action plan.
-  Providing school with a complete EpiPen® kit.
-  Regularly checking the EpiPen® expiry date.
-  Assisting staff by offering information and answering any questions regarding their child's allergies.
-  Notifying the staff of any changes to their child's allergy status and provide a new Anaphylaxis Action Plan in accordance with these changes.
-  Communicating all relevant information and concerns to staff, for example, any matter relating to the health of the child.