



anaphylaxis UK

A brighter future for people with serious allergies

Preparing for and managing the transition to secondary school with allergies



"This guide is not only incredibly useful but absolutely essential for parents whose allergic children are transitioning to secondary school in the near future" – Tina Naseem, volunteer



Who are we?

Anaphylaxis UK is the only UK wide charity solely focused on supporting people at risk of serious allergic reactions. We empower people living with serious allergies to be more confident and in control of their lives.

Find out more at:-
www.anaphylaxis.org.uk



Introduction

This booklet has been written for parents/carers of children with allergies who are approaching the transition from primary to secondary school. This is a time where children are beginning to take more responsibility for managing their allergies and are developing their confidence and independence.

Parents/carers often feel unsure of what to expect from a secondary school, how to choose a suitable school and what questions they should ask to ensure their child will be supported to manage their allergies independently in school.

Every school works differently. What works at primary school will not necessarily work or be an option at secondary school. Positive, open communication with the school is key. It is important to include the child in all discussions and decisions, taking into account what the child feels comfortable with.

This booklet is designed to help parents/carers in four key areas: -



Getting prepared for the transition to secondary school and understanding responsibilities



Questions to ask when choosing a secondary school for your allergic child



Ensuring a smooth transition from primary school to your chosen secondary school



Monitoring ongoing allergy management after starting at secondary school

Getting prepared for the transition to secondary school

Talk to your child's primary school

A good place to begin the transition process is to think about how your child's allergy is currently managed at their primary school, what may still work at the new school and what will need to be managed differently.

You can contact your child's current primary school to find out:

- Does the school have an existing relationship with the secondary schools of interest and will they discuss your child's individual medical needs with them?
- Are they encouraging your child to take responsibility for managing their allergies now in preparation for secondary school and discussing any fears or anxiety?
- Do they have any concerns about your child's transition to secondary school regarding their allergies?



Talk to a healthcare professional

If there is an opportunity to talk to your child's allergy specialist/nurse, school nurse or GP you could discuss:

- That you are starting the process of applying for a secondary school and if they can offer any helpful advice or guidance.
- Your child's Allergy Action Plan and make sure it is up to date.
- How to make sure your child is trained and confident administering their own adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs).



Do your research

You can be better prepared by doing some research to understand what the responsibilities are of the school, parents and pupils.

Our Safer Schools Programme outlines school's best practice guidelines along with the statutory guidance that school's must follow to keep pupils with medical conditions safe.

See the links at the end of this booklet for links to other guidance and resources.



VISIT:

<https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/education/safer-schools-programme/>

Questions to ask when choosing a secondary school

When visiting potential schools, you may feel unsure of the right questions to ask. Below are some suggestions that you might like to think about: -

How does the school manage allergies, anaphylaxis and its treatment?

Where can I find the school's policy supporting pupils with medical needs? Does it include how the school manages allergies and anaphylaxis?

Can a meeting be arranged with staff and my child before they start at the school to discuss the allergies and how these can be managed safely?

Where is the medical room based and will my child be shown this in advance of starting school?



How does my child's allergy action plan/risk assessment/individual healthcare plan get passed to the secondary school and when will it be reviewed/updated for the new school?

Will my child be encouraged to carry their AAls on their person where possible?

If there is a reason my child can't carry their AAls on their person, where will they be kept?

Where will my child's AAls be kept during sports so that they are immediately accessible?





Is the school community educated on allergies, anaphylaxis and emergency treatment to raise awareness.

What is the process for managing allergies in the school canteen? For example, will my child be able to eat canteen food safely and if so, how will they know which food items contain the allergen? How can I communicate with the caterers?

How will my child's allergies affect their ability to join in with extracurricular activities, after school clubs or school trips and events? What steps will the school take to ensure that my child is able to participate safely?

How many staff (including non-teaching staff and volunteers) at the school are given the opportunity to undertake anaphylaxis training?

Does the school choose to purchase spare AAIs each year? If yes, where are they kept?

How will my child receive support in respect of their medical needs where necessary and will these be communicated to me?



Please note that the above list is not exhaustive, and you may have many more questions that you can ask the secondary schools of interest.

Ensuring a smooth transition to your chosen school

In the weeks running up to the start of term it will be important to ensure that actions agreed with the child's new school are put into place.

Points to consider:-

- ➔ How do all the teachers know my child has an allergy?
- ➔ How do the teachers know what to do in an emergency situation?
- ➔ If the school has agreed to purchase spare AAIs, has this been actioned?
- ➔ Have you set up expiry alerts for your child's AAIs?
- ➔ Have you had a meeting with relevant school staff to discuss how your child's allergies can be managed at school safely?
- ➔ Has the school completed an Allergy Risk Assessment for your child?
- ➔ Does the school have a copy of an up to date fully completed and signed Allergy Action Plan?
- ➔ Have the school staff completed any required training in allergy and anaphylaxis as agreed?
- ➔ Are the school staff clear about where your child's AAIs will be?
- ➔ Are the arrangements for catering for the child whilst at school clear and understood by all relevant staff?

Monitoring ongoing allergy management at school

Once your child has settled into their new school check in and make sure all the arrangements are working as expected.



Discuss the management of allergies at school with your child regularly to ensure that they are pro-actively keeping themselves safe at school and whether there are any concerns.

If things are not working out as anticipated or there are any allergy management concerns, follow the schools complaints procedure. It will be available from the school.



Make sure you know how to contact key staff when your child is undertaking any extra curricular activities or lessons involving their allergen.



AllergyWise Training

AllergyWise is the easiest way to learn about anaphylaxis, the risks of serious allergies and how to manage them,

Our online AllergyWise e-learning courses are the perfect way to learn how to manage living with allergies in day-to-day life, recognise the signs and symptoms of a serious allergic reaction and know what to do in an emergency.

Our **AllergyWise for Schools** short, online course is designed for all school staff. This includes teaching, learning support, teaching assistant, lunchtime supervisor, afterschool club, leadership, administrative, catering and site staff.

The course will help staff understand the common causes and signs of an allergic reaction, how to recognise and manage anaphylaxis and provides practical tips for safely managing severely allergic children in school.

Website: www.allergywise.org.uk



Useful Links

Anaphylaxis UK Safer Schools Project

<https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/education/safer-schools-programme/>

Model Policy for Allergy Management at School

<https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/education/safer-schools-programme/>

FAQ in Schools Factsheet

<https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/fact-sheet/frequently-asked-questions-schools/>

Psychological Impact of Anaphylaxis Factsheet

<https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/fact-sheet/the-psychological-impact-of-anaphylaxis/>

Government Guidance England:-

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3>

Scotland:-

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/supporting-children-young-people-healthcare-needs-schools/pages/11/>

Government Guidance Wales:-

<https://gov.wales/supporting-learners-healthcare-needs-1>

Northern Ireland:-

<https://www.eani.org.uk/parents/special-educational-needs-sen/children-with-medical-needs>



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Special thanks to Tracey Dunn, Headteacher and Anaphylaxis UK Education Ambassador,
and Tina Naseem, parent volunteer, for their contributions to developing this guide

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