Allergy Awareness and Management Policy

Overview
This policy is concerned with a whole school approach to the health care management of those members of our school community suffering from specific allergies.

Rationale
The Armidale School (TAS) is committed to ensuring that all students, staff and volunteers in our care are safe and that their well-being is maintained. Allergies are becoming a more frequent occurrence in our community, consequently we must respond to the needs of those students, staff and volunteers with identified allergies.

Given the variety of possible allergens, banning products does not safeguard the school community from environmental risks with confidence.

TAS' position and the intent of the policy is to minimize the risk of exposure to allergens to any adult or student suffering allergy-induced anaphylaxis whilst at school or attending any school related activity, encourage self responsibility, and plan for effective responses to possible emergencies.

The common causes of allergies relevant to this policy are nuts, dairy products, eggs, wasps, bees and ants. An allergic reaction to nuts is the most common high-risk allergy, and as such demands more rigorous controls throughout the policy.

TAS is committed to applying 5 key principles in developing an Allergy Aware Environment and in the management of allergic reactions, and they include:

- Obtaining medical information relevant to known allergies
- The establishment of effective risk management practices to minimise the student, staff, parent and visitor exposure to known triggers where possible.
- Staff training and education to ensure effective emergency response to any allergic reaction situation.
- Age appropriate student education on allergy awareness and self-responsibility.
- Regular review and monitoring of all Health Management plans.

Scope
This policy applies to all members of the TAS community including:

- Students
- School Staff
- Parents/Guardians
- Volunteers
- Canteen
- Casual Staff
- Homework Centre
- Catering staff in Dining Room
The Armidale School – Allergy Awareness and Management Policy

Definitions

**Allergy**
A condition in which the body has an exaggerated response to a substance (e.g. food & drug). This is also known as hypersensitivity.

**Allergen**
A normally harmless substance that triggers an allergic reaction in the immune system of a susceptible person.

**Anaphylaxis**
Anaphylaxis or anaphylactic shock is a sudden, severe and potentially life-threatening allergic reaction to food, stings, bites or medicines.

**EpiPen**
Brand name for syringe style device containing the drug Adrenalin that is ready for immediate inter-muscular administration.

**Minimised Risk Environment**
An environment where risk management practices (e.g. Risk assessment forms) have minimized the risk of (allergen) exposure.

**Health Management Plan**
A detailed document outlining an individual student’s condition and treatment, and action plan for location of the Pippen.

Key Strategies

**General Strategies**

- The involvement of parents, staff and the student in completing Individual Health Care Plans and establishing Anaphylaxis Action Plans.
- The establishment and maintenance of practices for effectively communicating individual student medical plans to all relevant staff.
- The incorporation of allergy management strategies into the risk assessments for all school events, excursions and sporting activities.
- Staff training in anaphylaxis management, including awareness of triggers and first aid procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency.
- Age appropriate education of the children with severe food allergies.

**Nut Related Strategies**

- The canteen, catering staff, parent support groups (P&F) and outside caterers are made aware of the Allergy Management Policy and requested to eliminate nuts and food items with nuts as ingredients from their operations.
- Teachers promote hand washing before and after eating.
- TAS is committed to a no food and drink sharing policy.
- All parents are asked to not send foods in school lunches that contain nuts, peanuts or nut traces.
- Age appropriate education of the children with severe nut allergies – peanut and tree nut.

**Dairy and Egg Related Strategies**

- Students with dairy products or egg allergies are managed by the school in consultation with the parents/guardians on a case-by-case basis.
- Age appropriate education of the children with the severe dairy/egg allergy
Insect Related Strategies

- Diligent management of wasp and ant nests on school grounds
- Education of students to report significant presence if insects in play areas
- Age appropriate education of the children with severe insect allergies

Procedures and Responsibilities for Allergy Management

1. Medical Information

Parents of students are responsible for providing, in writing, ongoing accurate and current medical information to the school. The school will seek updated information via medical form at the commencement of each calendar year. Furthermore, any change in an employee’s, volunteer’s or students medical condition during the year, must be reported to the Medical Centre.

For students with an allergic condition, the school requires parents/guardians to provide written evidence from a doctor (GP), which explains the condition, defines the allergy triggers and any required medication. The school will ensure an effective system for the management of the medical information.

The school will ensure that an Anaphylaxis Action Plan is established and updated for each child with a serious allergy.

Teachers and teacher aids of those students and key staff are required to review and familiarise themselves with the medical information.

Each class teacher will receive an Individual Health Care Plan in his/her class folder. Anaphylaxis Action Plans with a recent photograph for any students with allergies will be posted in relevant rooms (including canteen) with parental permission.

Where students with known allergies are participating in camps and/or excursions, the risk assessments and safety management plans for those camps and excursions will include each student's individual allergy action plan.

2. EpiPens

Where EpiPens (Adrenalin) are required in the Action Plan:

Parents/Guardians are responsible for the provision and timely replacement of the EpiPens. The EpiPens are located securely in relevant locations approved by the Medical Centre. Student EpiPens will be located in relevant classrooms and in the Medical Centre.

3. Minimised Nut Environment

TAS will promote, where ever and whenever possible its food allergy information.

Whole School: Food from Home

Parents are urged to pack student snacks and lunches that do not contain:
- No peanuts
- No nuts of any type
- No foods with peanut or nut derivative or ingredient (e.g. Nutella)
- No foods that contain some trace of peanuts (where possible)
Dining Hall
The Catering staff will use ingredients containing
- No peanuts
- No tree nuts
- No nut derivatives
- No foods that contain some trace of nuts

Boarding Houses
Boarding staff are to supervise students bringing food into the house to ensure that the food contains:
- No Peanuts
- No nuts of any type
- No peanut derivatives
- No trace of nuts (where possible)

Canteen
Canteen management will be consulted and work with the Medical Centre in preparing foods under the following guidelines:
- No peanuts
- No nuts of any type
- No foods with peanut or nut derivative or ingredient (e.g. Nutella)
- No foods that contain some trace of peanuts (where possible)

It is expected that staff are made aware of the risk of cross-contamination when preparing foods. Parents are expected to make themselves aware of foods and train their children to avoid any products they consider ‘unsafe’.

Camps/Excursions
The teacher so-coordinating the activity shall check with any food provider and ensure ‘safe’ food is provided, or that an effective control is in place to minimise risk of exposure.

Where a student is prescribed an EpiPen, all staff present during the activity shall be made aware of the appropriate medical treatment as outlined in the students individual Health Care Plan.

BBQs and Celebrations
Where a BBQ or celebration is planned, the coordinating group (e.g. P&F) are responsible for ensuring the peanuts, peanut products or peanut oil are not used.

Homework Centre
The director and staff member co-ordinating the activity shall check with any food provider and ensure ‘safe’ food is provided, or that an effective control is in place to minimise risk of exposure.

Where a student is prescribed and EpiPen ask staff present during the activity shall be made aware of the appropriate medical treatment as outlined in the students individual Action Plan.

References
St Therese School SA
Department of Education and Children’s Services (DECS) website
Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCIA) website
Anaphylaxis Guidelines for Schools
Anaphylaxis Australia Organisation
Anaphylaxis in Education and Children’s Services publication

Review Date:
February 2013