



School Procedures: Food Allergy Awareness
Development: 2014
Renewal Date: 2017
Related Policies and Procedures: *Health and Safety Policy – First Aid*

Procedure Statement

At Hawker School we promote an allergy aware environment. We provide responsible support for students and staff who have food allergies and could suffer reactions that may be life threatening. Hawker School takes all reasonable care when managing students who present at school with food allergies. Allergens may include but are not limited to: nuts, eggs, fish, sesame seeds, soy, wheat and dairy products. We work in partnership with families to ensure that food allergies are well managed at school.

Background

Allergies occur when a person's immune system reacts to substances in the environment that are harmless for most people. These substances are known as allergens. Allergens can be found in house dust mites, pets, pollen, insects, moulds, foods and some medicines. When allergy sufferers are exposed to allergens they can develop an immune reaction that leads to allergic inflammation (redness and swelling).

Anaphylaxis is the most severe form of allergic reaction and is potentially life threatening. It is a generalised allergic reaction, which often involves more than one body system (e.g. skin, respiratory, gastro-intestinal and cardiovascular systems). It must be treated as a medical emergency, requiring immediate treatment and urgent medical attention. Anaphylaxis usually occurs within 20 minutes of exposure to the trigger and can rapidly become life threatening. It is important to understand that any food can trigger anaphylaxis and even trace amounts of food can cause a life-threatening reaction.

Rationale

Hawker School acknowledges that, at times, there are students and staff members within the school community who have identified food allergies. Therefore, we promote a food allergy aware environment. Exposure to foods containing allergens could be very harmful to children and adults with severe allergies. Once a person has experienced an allergic reaction, they are at predictable risk of recurrence.

Procedures

These procedures enable Hawker School to provide a safe teaching and learning environment for all members of the Hawker School community. They also work to promote anaphylaxis awareness across all sectors of our community. It is difficult for schools to enforce the exclusion of various foods. However, these procedures are a proactive measure and have been established to manage food allergies and reduce exposure to risk.

To minimise the risk to allergic individuals, the following management strategies are in place:

- The school has a trained designated first aid officer on site.
- Staff are trained in EpiPen use.
- Staff work in partnership with the families of students with food allergies to ensure information held by the school is current and correct. Clarification will be sought by the school when required.
- Staff remind students on a regular basis to not share food from their lunches with other students.

Allergy Management for Students

- Parents/Carers are required to complete and return to the school the General Medical Information and Consent Form.
- Parents/Carers must specify the allergic trigger where possible on the Medical Information Form. It is recognised that in some children a cause cannot be identified.
- When a student has a severe food allergy a letter will be sent home to all families of children in that student's class or unit. This letter will inform families of the allergy and seek their cooperation in limiting exposure to that food.
- Students will be regularly reminded that certain foods should not be brought to school due to the food allergy.
- The school canteen will take a common sense approach to ordering stock; limiting the ordering of food containing known allergens where possible.
- A common sense approach to managing instances when there is offending food present will be taken. This includes placing distance between the food and the child with the allergy, hand washing and being aware of the ingredients contained in foods before shared classroom experiences such as birthday cakes or special events.
- If there is any doubt about the ingredients contained in foods then the child with the allergy will not participate in the experience.
- The emergency management of a known allergic reaction, including the use of an EpiPen or similar device, will always be part of a strategy that includes calling for medical assistance.
- Parents and carers of a student or students who consistently bring known food allergens into the school environment will be asked to discuss the issue with the principal.

Anaphylaxis Management for Students with Severe Food Allergies

- Staff are trained on how to safely administer an EpiPen.
- Parents/Carers are required to complete and return to the school the General Medical Information and Consent Form together with a completed Anaphylaxis Emergency Treatment Plan signed by both a medical practitioner and a parent/carer, attached to it. The Emergency Treatment Plan must contain:
 - Detail of triggers
 - Early warning signs
 - First aid action to be taken
 - Emergency and medical contact details
- On completing the General Medical Information and Consent Form, parents/carers must signify that the school principal, teacher in charge, first aid officer or other trained person may administer adrenaline to a student using the EpiPen or similar device.
- Any available EpiPen should be used whether supplied by staff or student, providing its use is authorised to be given to the particular student or staff member and is the appropriate dose for that person .
- The EpiPen or similar device will be administered in accordance with the *Health and Safety Policy – First Aid* .
- In the absence of a written and signed Anaphylaxis Emergency Treatment Plan, only standard first aid can be given in an emergency and staff will be unable to administer adrenaline.

Anaphylaxis Management for Employees and Others

- Employees who know they may suffer anaphylactic reactions should provide supervisors and first aid officers with details of “reaction triggers” and the emergency treatment required.

Communication of the Procedures

The procedures will be communicated to Hawker staff through:

- A teaching and administrative staff meeting in the first three weeks of every school year.
- The creation of a Medical Alert Plan display that contains photographs of students with food allergies and a copy of their emergency plan.
- Displaying the Medical Alert Plans in the school staff room, senior office, junior office, kindergarten office and pre-school office.

The procedures will be communicated to relief staff through:

- The Relief Folder that contains administrative and emergency procedures for relief staff. This folder will be provided to each relief teacher in the school on arrival each day. Relief staff are to return it to the front office at the completion of each day.

The procedures will be communicated to canteen staff and volunteers through:

- The Medical Alert Plans display. A copy will be provided to the canteen manager and will be displayed in the canteen.

The procedures will be communicated to members of the Hawker School community through:

- Information in the school newsletter
- Letters home to all families at the start of each school year.
- The enrolment information package and discussion with new families on enrolment.
- Continual staff reinforcement.

If parents are unsure about a certain food, they are encouraged to discuss it with a staff member or the principal.

Status: Approved by the School Board 29th May 2014