

The American School in London

Management of allergies and anaphylaxis

The current version of any policy, procedure, protocol or guideline is the version held on the ASL website. It is the responsibility of all employees to ensure that they are following the most up-to-date version.

Responsible party	Director of Operations
Approved by	Board of Trustees
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Guidelines for management of allergies and anaphylaxis

Anaphylaxis

Anaphylaxis is an allergic reaction at the extreme end of the allergy spectrum. The causes of allergic reaction can include food items, such as nuts, seafood, eggs, wheat, insect stings and drugs but, on rare occasions, there may be no obvious cause. The whole body is affected by the allergen, often within minutes of exposure, but sometimes hours later.

How can the risk of anaphylaxis be reduced?

Some schools choose to enforce bans on nuts. The Anaphylaxis Campaign, a British charity, highlights several problems with declaring a building entirely nut-free.

- It would be impossible to provide an absolute guarantee that the School is completely nut-free without searching everyone who enters the building daily
- Those with allergies may be led into a false sense of security
- Parents may ask for similar bans in relation to other foods.

The Anaphylaxis Campaign presents the case that food-allergic children gain a better awareness of their allergies, learn to be vigilant and adopt avoidance strategies, if they inhabit an environment where allergens turn up unexpectedly. To minimize the risk of anaphylaxis occurring in those with allergies in our community, ASL has taken precautions and continually works towards creating a nut-safe and allergy-aware environment. This requires the collaboration of all parents/guardians, students and employees.

Management of allergies at ASL

The school's responsibilities are to:

- Educate employees on the risks surrounding, prevention of and appropriate responses to anaphylaxis.
- Provide employees with appropriate training:
 - First-aid training is offered on site to all employees. This includes the recognition of the symptoms of anaphylaxis and how to deal with an emergency.
 - The nurses are available to answer questions and show employees how to use EpiPens.
- Implement procedures to mitigate the risks presented by anaphylaxis:
 - Employees are provided with up-to-date medical information on each student
 - Photos and names of students with severe allergies are flagged on the school database
 - Employees are advised that if they have any concerns about a student presenting with even a minor reaction, to send the student, accompanied by an adult or another responsible student, to the medical department or call for help
 - Where possible, the school nurses will hold a spare set of emergency medications for students with severe allergies
 - Teachers are encouraged to promote the importance of regular hand washing
 - All areas of the School are cleaned regularly throughout the day.

- Ensure students have ready access to their emergency medication (EpiPen) during the school day and during school-related off-campus activities.

Catering

- Catering staff are informed of student allergies.
- Photographs of students with allergies are displayed in the kitchen.
- Catering staff are offered first-aid training that covers the causes and symptoms of anaphylaxis and food allergies.
- The School cannot guarantee bought-in, ready-made products, brought in from outside manufacturers, such as bread and cakes, are nut-free.
- The school catering team will not knowingly use any peanut products in their cooking. Other nuts, such as flaked almonds, may on occasion be used but will always be visible and a note will be displayed to advise staff and students of their presence.
- [School menus are displayed on the school website](#) and choices that use dairy, fish or nut products will be marked so parents/guardians can discuss the menus with their children.
- Any parent/guardian who wishes to discuss menu choices can email or meet with the catering manager.

School trips and sports fixtures

- Student allergies are highlighted on the school intranet and the allergy is identified by a medical alert icon. Relevant staff and coaches are informed of students' medical conditions.
- Students are encouraged to inform employees of the location of their EpiPen/inhaler, and to collect the spare set from the medical department, prior to taking part in activities.
- Students' emergency medication will be collected from the medical department by the trip leader prior taking students off campus.

Nut allergies and school bake sales/birthday cakes

ASL high school students regularly run bake sales for charity. Students with nut/peanut allergies who buy cakes at the sales cannot be guaranteed that these cakes are completely nut free.

We ask parents/guardians and students who bake cakes for charitable sales not to use nuts or nut derivatives in their preparation. Students with food allergies need to know the ingredients in everything they eat; even a trace of nuts in a product could cause a

severe reaction. A list of all the ingredients used must be displayed on the wrapping before cakes are provided for sale. If cakes are purchased from shops, these must have labels with the list of ingredients on the wrapping.

Even though nuts may not be listed as ingredients, cross contamination may have taken place during preparation.

Organizers of bake sales will be required to display a sign to remind students with allergies to check ingredients.

To prevent the risk of an adverse reaction, students with nut/peanut and/or food allergies should avoid buying cakes at these sales.

Family input

We ask the parents/guardians of students with allergies to:

- Notify the School of their children's allergies before the start of the school year.
- Provide the medical department with a treatment plan and EpiPen, clearly labeled with the student's name.
- Replace any medication after use or upon expiry. Parents/guardians will be informed by the medical department of the expiry date of EpiPens/autoinjectors.
- Educate students in self-management of their allergy, including:
 - which foods are safe and unsafe
 - the symptoms of allergic reaction
 - how and when to tell adults about a reaction
 - how to read food labels or to ask an adult to read the label
- Provide emergency contact information and inform the School of any changes.

Students' role

We ask each student with a food allergy to be proactive in the care and management of their food allergies and reactions and in particular:

- Not to exchange food with others
- Eat only food that is labeled with ingredients and to read the label before eating
- Be aware of other people eating around them and always to wash their hands before eating in case of contamination
- Know where their medication is kept in the medical department and that they are responsible for carrying their medication with them and to make sure they do so at all times

- Tell their friends of their allergies, so they are knowledgeable if an emergency arises
- Wear a Medic Alert talisman at all times, if appropriate
- Notify an adult immediately if they eat something they believe may contain the food they are allergic to
- Notify an adult immediately if they believe they are having a reaction, even if the cause is unknown
- Know that cakes and biscuits brought into school may have been contaminated in preparation and therefore students with nut/peanut and/or food allergies should avoid buying goods at bake sales.

Note:

In line with the Human Medicines (Amendment) Regulations 2017, schools in the UK are permitted to buy adrenaline auto-injector devices (known as AAls), without prescription, to use in an emergency on children who are at risk of a severe allergic reaction (known as anaphylaxis) but whose own device is not available or not working. This may be because their AAl(s) are broken, or out of date. These generic auto injectors are held at key points in the School and at Canons Park. Auto injectors for both younger and older children are held to ensure the correct dose can be administered in an emergency. All expiry dates are checked regularly by the school nurses.

Auto injectors are kept along with asthma inhalers next to the AEDs at the following locations:

- Lower School
- Waverley Place Reception
- Aquatic & Fitness Center
- Canons Park

References

[Department for Education allergy guidance for schools](#)

[The Anaphylaxis Campaign advice to help schools manage severe allergic conditions](#)

[Allergy UK. Supporting people living with allergy](#)

