

Northfield Primary School Food Awareness Policy



Overview

Northfield Primary School and Northfield Preschool have some students with a life threatening food allergy. This is a medical condition that causes a severe / even fatal reaction to specific foods. These reactions can be triggered by contact, ingestion or inhalation. There is also a huge concern in regard to contamination of equipment whether it is play equipment, desks or other classroom materials. For example: Food which contain nuts or eggs are life threatening foods.

Purpose

To raise the awareness of all members of the community regarding severe allergies to food and to provide a safe learning environment for all members of the Northfield Primary community.

Management

The Food Awareness Policy will be managed by:

- Parents are to provide a Health Care Plan from the doctor for children who have allergies to food that require medication.
- Parents and caregivers are requested not to send food such as nuts, nut products and eggs to school for recess or lunch. This includes peanut paste, Nutella, all nuts and cooking oil containing peanut oil, eggs, as well as foods containing nuts or eggs. This will apply in particular to the classroom the student is in.
- Signs will be posted near the classroom door to remind parents that a child with allergies is in this classroom.
- Staff are to supervise at all eating times. This maybe at times of brain breaks, recess, lunch and other times when children are required to eat. If a child has brought food containing nut or egg products, this child will be asked to eat their food away from other students and to wash their hands before going to play.
- Students advised **NOT** to share food.
- Staff are trained in First Aid to understand and respond to Anaphylaxis (severe allergic reactions) as the need arises. Medication kept at hand is checked for an expiry date regularly.
- School activities such as fundraising, camps and excursions complying with the Nut Awareness Policy

Promotion

The policy will be promoted by:

- Parents and carers being informed via Seesaw, Newsletter, School Stream, signs at the classroom or notes from the teacher

- New families to the school being informed via the Enrolment Information Pack
- Governing Council being informed and has given approval and support
- Staff being informed and provided with allergy training through 'ASCIA' and 'Provide First Aid in an Education and Care Setting'

MANAGEMENT OF STUDENTS WITH FOOD ALLERGIES

Students who have been identified by a doctor as having anaphylaxis as a result of a food allergy will be required to submit to the school a Health Care Plan.

Clear instructions as per Health Care Plan are distributed in the:

- Information of the child is given to the teacher at the beginning of the year
- Information of the child's health needs in the TRT folder with the student photo
- First Aid duty bags contain a photo of the child and instructions of what to do when a reaction occurs
- To follow the First Aid Procedure regarding Anaphylaxis

EpiPens are stored in the front office under each child's name and out of reach of small children. There is a spare EpiPen in the front office for emergencies. An anaphylaxis audit is done every 6 months and the audit record is sent to Education.health@sa.gov.au.

All staff are trained in 'Provide First Aid in an Education and Care Setting' (HLTAID012).

Reference information

This policy has been implemented by Northfield Primary School in line with the Department for Education's 'Anaphylaxis and allergies procedure' and 'ASCIA how to give an EpiPen'.

** Northfield Primary School acknowledges that due to food processing practices it is impractical to eliminate certain products entirely from an environment where there is food.*

Review date: May 2029

ANAPHYLAXIS AND ALLERGIES AWARENESS

What Is Anaphylactic shock?

An anaphylactic reaction is a very severe and sometimes life threatening reaction that occurs when some people are exposed to e.g. peanuts, dairy, eggs, fish, shell fish, sesame seeds also bee stings just to name a few.

Allergic Reaction

An allergic reaction happens when the immune system reacts to substances in the environment that are harmless to most people. These are known as allergens. They are found in foods, insects, pollen, mould, dust mites and some medications.

Most allergic reactions are mild and do not involve the airways or circulation. Mild reactions such as itching may require Antihistamine medication.

Anaphylaxis

Anaphylaxis must always be treated as a medical emergency.

Anaphylaxis is a potentially life threatening, severe allergic reaction. It's characterised by rapid onset airway breathing or circulatory problems or both, and is usually associated with skin symptoms and swelling.

Not all people with allergies are at risk of anaphylaxis.

How do you treat a severe reaction to an allergy?

All children who have an anaphylactic reaction have an Emergency Plan that we also use at school to ensure the most effective treatment is provided for any of the children concerned.

A bad case of allergy can cause a condition called anaphylaxis. This is a sudden, potentially severe allergic reaction that can involve various systems in the body to react. This can cause a person's blood pressure to drop, airways to narrow, and tongue to swell, resulting in serious breathing difficulty, loss of consciousness and in some cases even death. When a severe reaction occurs an Adrenaline Auto-injector (EpiPen) is administered and an Ambulance is called.

Why we are a food aware environment.

We currently have children who have anaphylactic reactions to certain foods such as eggs or nuts. These reactions can be triggered by contact, ingestion or inhalation. There is also a huge concern in regard to contamination of equipment whether this is play equipment, desks or other classroom materials. For example if a child ate a peanut butter or Nutella sandwich and touched the play equipment, a child with a severe allergy could suffer an anaphylactic reaction from touching the same equipment. Minimising the exposure to nuts or eggs can avoid a medical emergency.

What happens when a person has a severe allergy?

People have different reactions to foods they are allergic to, and to the environment around them. When they have an allergic reaction their immune system unleashes an army of chemicals to protect the body. The release of these chemicals can affect the respiratory system, gastrointestinal tract, skin, and the cardiovascular system causing symptoms like wheezing, nausea, headache, stomach-ache, vomiting, swelling of the face, lips or eyes and hives.