**Allergy Awareness Policy**

**Spring 2022**

**Aims of the policy.**

To safely support children and adults with severe allergies and anaphylaxis.

To develop and maintain health care plans when dealing with children and adults who have life threatening allergies.

**Introduction.**

Our aim is to provide a safe learning environment for everyone in our school community. To support this, Russell Lower School is an ‘Allergy Aware School’. This policy aims to increase our community awareness via risk minimisation and education in order to protect both students and staff who have life threatening allergies.

**Background.**

Anaphylaxis is a severe and potentially life-threatening form of allergic reaction. The symptoms can be systemic and potentially fatal, resulting in a swelling that shuts off the airways or a dramatic drop in blood pressure and therefore should be seen as a medical emergency.

Anaphylaxis is preventable and avoidance of specific triggers is by far the best option. Management is via immediate injection of adrenaline and possible transfer to hospital.

Food allergies affect approximately 1 in 50 children. It is likely that school children will encounter and may accidentally ingest one of the many products that can cause an allergic reaction. Students with a food allergy may react to tactile (touch) exposure or inhalation exposure. Not every reaction will result in anaphylaxis but the potential always exists.

Whilst a peanut allergy is the most likely to cause anaphylaxis, eight foods (peanut, tree nut, egg, milk, soy, wheat, fish and shellfish) account for the vast majority of total food allergies.

This means that we encourage parents, children and staff to avoid bringing foods that contain documented allergens to school. These include:

* Nuts
* Peanut butter
* Nuts spreads such as Nutella
* Some fruit and nut bars and muesli bars
* Some biscuits and cakes (which contain nuts – please check packaging)
* Chocolates
* Any other products that have nuts listed in the ingredients

**This includes ‘birthday sweets and treats’ that are sent into class by parents.**

**Prevention strategies**

School community:

* As an ‘Allergy Aware School’ our catering service provides nut free meals and no peanuts, peanut paste, peanut butter, nuts, Nutella type spreads or nutty muesli bars are provided by school. We ask parents to be considerate when sending in snacks /packed lunches for their child
* Parents are informed of this through a variety of means including: letter, website and induction meetings
* Prior to entry into school (or, for a child who is already in school, immediately after the diagnosis of a potentially life-threatening condition) the parent/carer should meet with the school to develop an individualised care plan to address the specific needs of the child
* All staff, volunteers and students will be educated about food allergies and all adults in a classroom setting will be notified if there is a child with a life-threatening food allergy in their classroom and the foods that cause this allergy
* Keep updated Health Care Plan information and a photo in the classroom, staff room and medical room

**Other policies that this links to:**

* Health and Safety Policy
* Equal opportunities and Inclusion Policy
* Equalities Duty Statement and Objectives
* Supporting Pupils with medical conditions