Downham Market Academy
Allergy Management Policy

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Eastern Learning Alliance

Allergy Management Policy

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Document Control

New Version Number	Key changes from previous version	Date of ratification by Trust Board

Aims

Downham Market Academy is committed to providing a safe environment for all pupils with allergies and intolerances.

The aims of this policy are to ensure that:

- Pupils with allergies are protected and supported at all times;
- Staff understand their responsibilities regarding allergy management and emergency response;
- Appropriate preventative measures are in place to reduce the risk of allergic reactions;
- Emergency procedures are clear, effective and consistently followed;
- Catering and food service arrangements comply with legal requirements;
- Parents, pupils and staff work collaboratively to support allergy safety; and
- The requirements of Benedict's Law and Natasha's Law are fully implemented.

Legislative Framework

This policy has been developed in accordance with:

- The Children and Families Act 2014;
- The Food Information Regulations 2014;
- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974;
- The Food Safety Act 1990;
- Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions statutory guidance;
- Natasha's Law (Food Information (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2019); and
- Benedict's Law statutory guidance (effective September 2026).

Benedict's Law

Benedict's Law is a landmark piece of UK legislation which is named after five-year-old Benedict Blythe, who tragically died in 2021 after a severe allergic reaction to milk at school. In March 2026, the government confirmed these protections would become mandatory, with statutory guidance coming into effect in September 2026.

<u>What Benedict's Law Requires</u>

The law moves allergy safety from "optional advice" to a legal requirement for all schools in England. It covers:

Downham Market Academy must have a clear, published policy for managing allergies and emergencies.

All Downham Market Academy staff present during times when pupils are scheduled to be on site should receive allergy awareness training. This includes permanent staff, temporary staff, supply teachers, peripatetic staff, agency workers and regular volunteers. It includes catering staff and others who may oversee children and young people at breakfast or after school clubs. It is not intended to include contractors carrying out work with no pupil-facing role such as builders, electricians or other ad hoc maintenance personnel.

Downham Market Academy is required to keep "spare" adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs) on-site for emergency use.

Every child should have an Individual Healthcare Plan (IHPs) if:

- They have an allergy which has a functional impact of them in their school, college or setting;
- They are at risk of harm as a result of their allergy and
- They require arrangements which are additional to or different from those made generally

One of the most significant shifts is that external catering providers are now legally bound to the school's specific allergy policy. If Downham Market Academy uses a third-party catering firm, that firm must prove they are following the school's safety protocols, not just their own internal ones.
Catering staff will need real-time access to the Individual Healthcare Plans and photos of children with severe allergies to ensure a meal is never handed to the wrong child.
While Natasha's Law (2021) already requires full ingredient labelling on pre-packaged food, Benedict's Law focuses on the process:

Downham Market Academy will ensure that there is rigorous "zoning" in kitchens to prevent accidental contact.

Downham Market Academy kitchen staff may participate in "mock" allergy emergencies to ensure they know where the spare AAIs are kept and how to use them.

Downham Market Academy will be required to record and report "near misses" or allergic reactions. This data will be used nationally to identify high-risk foods or common procedural failures in school dining halls.

Downham Market Academy will comply fully with Benedict's Law by ensuring that:

- A published allergy management policy is maintained and reviewed annually;
- All staff receive allergy awareness and anaphylaxis response training;
- Spare adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs) are kept on-site and readily accessible;
- Every pupil with a diagnosed allergy has an Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP);

- Catering providers comply with the school's allergy procedures;
- Kitchen and serving areas operate strict allergen-control procedures;
- Allergy incidents and "near misses" are formally recorded and reviewed; and
- Communication between school staff, catering teams and parents is maintained effectively.

Natasha's Law

From 1st October 2021, the requirements for prepacked for direct sale have changed as a result of a new ruling passed in September 2019 known as 'Natasha's Law.' The Food Standards Agency say, "the new labelling requirements will help protect consumers by providing potentially life-saving allergen information on the packaging of the food."
Prepacked for direct sale (PPDS) food can include the following:

- Sandwiches and bakery products which are packed on site before a consumer selects or orders them;
- Fast food packed before it is ordered, such as a burger under a hot lamp where the food cannot be altered without opening the packaging;
- Products which are pre-packaged on site ready for sale, such as pizzas, rotisserie chicken, salads and pasta pots;
- Burgers and sausages pre-packaged by a butcher on the premises ready for sale to consumers;
- Samples of cookies given to consumers for free which were packed on site;
- Foods packaged and then sold elsewhere by the same operator at a market stall or mobile site; and
- PPDS food provided in schools, care homes or hospitals and other similar settings will also require labelling.

Downham Market Academy will ensure that and PPDS food will be labelled with the name of the food and a full ingredients list, including allergenic ingredients emphasised within the list. This will also apply to foods that are packaged before they are ordered or selected. It can also include food that students select themselves, as well as pre-wrapped food items that are kept behind a counter and some hot foods.

Role of the Trust and Executive team

The trust board is responsible for ensuring that the national school food standards are met.

All food and drink provided in Downham Market Academy will meet the national school food standards in England. Where food is provided by the local authority or a private caterer, compliance with the school food standards will be specified within the catering

contract or service level agreement and the caterer should provide the governing body with evidence of compliance with the standards. When Downham Market Academy provides food it will evaluate the food and drink provision against the standards, and produce evidence of compliance.

There will be a process in place to ensure that catering services are coordinated across all food and drink outlets to ensure that compliance with the school food standards is maintained.

Executive team will ensure that it receives regular reports on compliance with the school food standards as well as take-up of school lunches and financial aspects of school food provision.

Executive team will work with the senior leadership team to develop a whole school food policy, including:

- Setting out the school's approach to its provision of food
- Food education (including practical cooking);
- The role of the catering team as part of the wider school team; and
- The school's strategy to increase the take-up of school lunches.

Allergy Management Procedures

Downham Market Academy that allergic reactions can be life-threatening and therefore takes all allergy concerns seriously.
The school will:

- Maintain an up-to-date register of pupils with allergies;
- Ensure allergy information is accessible to relevant staff;
- Implement allergen awareness measures in classrooms and dining areas;
- Minimise cross-contamination risks in kitchens and food preparation areas;
- Clearly label allergens in all food provided; and
- Promote a culture of allergy awareness throughout the school community.

The following 14 allergens will be identified where present in food products:

- Eggs;
- Milk;
- Fish;
- Crustaceans;
- Molluscs;
- Peanuts;
- Tree nuts;
- Sesame;
- Cereals containing gluten;

- Soya;
- Celery;
- Mustard;
- Lupin; and
- Sulphur dioxide/sulphites.

Non-food allergens include:

- Grass, tree, and weed pollens;
- Dust Mites;
- Mold Spores;
- Pet Dander;
- Latex;
- Cosmetics/Skin Care;
- Nickel;
- Insect Bites/Stings;
- Penicillin and related drugs;
- Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs(NSAIDs) like ibuprofen or aspirin;
- Pet Food - this may contain allergens like soy, wheat, or fish; and
- Craft Materials such as wheat-based play dough or nut-shell-stuffed toys.

Individual Healthcare Plans (IHPs)

Every child should have an Individual Healthcare Plan (IHPs) if:

- They have an allergy which has a functional impact of them in their school, college or setting;
- They are at risk of harm as a result of their allergy and
- They require arrangements which are additional to or different from those made generally

The IHP will include:

- Details of the allergy;
- Known triggers;
- Signs and symptoms of allergic reactions;
- Medication requirements;
- Emergency procedures;
- Consent arrangements; and
- Contact details for parents/carers and medical professionals.

IHPs will be reviewed annually or sooner if medical needs change.

All IHPs will be made available to all staff and any other relevant persons in order to ensure the safety of all children with allergies and medical conditions. These are hosted within the Health and Safety folder of the Staff handbook on Teams.

Emergency Response Procedures

All staff must treat suspected anaphylaxis as a medical emergency.
In the event of a severe allergic reaction:

1. Emergency services will be contacted immediately;
2. An adrenaline auto-injector will be administered without delay;
3. Parents/carers will be informed as soon as possible; and
4. The incident will be formally recorded and reviewed.

No pupil experiencing anaphylaxis will be left unattended.

Spare Adrenaline Auto-Injectors (AAIs)

Downham Market Academy will maintain spare AAIs in accordance with Department for Education guidance.
Spare AAIs will:

- Be stored securely but remain quickly accessible;
- Be checked regularly to ensure they are within expiry dates;
- Be clearly labelled; and
- Be accessible during school trips and off-site activities where required.

The spare autoinjectors in Downham Market Academy are stored at:

- First Aid
- Maths Office
- Athena Hub

Staff Training Requirements

All staff at Downham Market Academy including temporary staff and volunteers, will receive allergy awareness training.
Training will include:

- Recognising signs of allergic reactions and anaphylaxis;
- Use of adrenaline auto-injectors;
- Emergency procedures;
- Allergen awareness;
- Cross-contamination prevention; and
- Responsibilities under Benedict's Law.

Training will be refreshed regularly and recorded centrally.

(NB: Please note that the Handsam e-training course for Allergy Awareness and use of Autoinjectors in Schools is available to achieve this.)

Catering and Food Safety Requirements

Where catering services are provided by an external contractor, the contractor must comply fully with this policy and all legal requirements.
Downham Market Academy will ensure that catering providers:

- Operate effective allergen-control procedures;
- Prevent cross-contamination through appropriate kitchen zoning;
- Maintain allergen information for all meals;
- Ensure catering staff receive appropriate training; and
- Participate in allergy emergency drills where required.

Photographs and allergy information for pupils with severe allergies may be shared securely with catering teams where necessary for safeguarding purposes.

Communication with Parents and Pupils

Downham Market Academy) will work closely with parents/carers and pupils to support allergy management.
Parents/carers are responsible for:

- Informing the school of any allergies or medical conditions;
- Providing prescribed medication where required;
- Updating the school regarding any changes to medical needs; and
- Participating in reviews of Individual Healthcare Plans.

The school will communicate allergy procedures clearly to staff, pupils and parents.

Educational Visits and School Trips

Appropriate allergy arrangements will be implemented for all educational visits and off-site activities.
Risk assessments for school trips will consider:

- Access to emergency medication;
- Food provision arrangements;
- Staff trained in anaphylaxis response; and
- Emergency communication procedures.

Record Keeping and Reporting

Downham Market Academy will maintain records of:

- Diagnosed allergies;
- Individual Healthcare Plans;
- Staff training;

- Allergy incidents;
- Administration of AAIs; and
- Near misses.

Records will be stored securely and managed in accordance with data protection legislation.
N.B: Please note that the Handsam Medical Log is available to achieve this.

Near Miss Reporting

All allergy-related near misses, including incidents involving incorrect food provision or potential allergen exposure, must be reported immediately.
The school will review all reports to identify:

- Procedural failures;
- Training needs;
- Risks within catering arrangements; and
- Preventative actions required.

N.B: Please note that the Handsam Medical Log is available to achieve this.

Health and Safety Requirements

This policy should be read alongside the school's:

- First Aid Policy;
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy;
- Health and Safety Policy; and
- Educational Visits Policy.

All staff must comply with health and safety procedures relating to allergy management.

Equal Opportunities

Downham Market Academy will ensure that pupils with allergies are supported fairly and without discrimination.
Reasonable adjustments will be made where required to ensure pupils can participate fully in school life.

Responsibilities

Trust Board

The Trust board and executive team is responsible for:

- Approving and reviewing this policy;
- Monitoring compliance with Benedict's Law; and
- Ensuring adequate resources and training are available.

Head Teacher/Principal

The Head of School is responsible for:

- Implementing this policy;
- Ensuring staff training takes place;
- Maintaining appropriate allergy procedures;
- Reporting to Executive team; and
- Coordinating emergency planning arrangements.

Allergy Lead

The **Allergy Lead** is responsible for:

- Maintaining allergy records and IHPs;
- Monitoring compliance with procedures;
- Coordinating staff training;
- Managing emergency medication arrangements;
- Conducting risk assessments; and
- Investigating incidents and near misses.

Catering Staff and Contractors

Catering staff and contractors must:

- Follow allergen-control procedures;
- Prevent cross-contamination;
- Ensure food is correctly labelled;
- Participate in training; and
- Report incidents or concerns immediately.

Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy;
- Attending required training;
- Responding appropriately to emergencies; and
- Reporting concerns promptly.

Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored through:

- Incident reviews;
- Staff training records;
- Catering audits;
- Risk assessments; and
- Feedback from pupils, parents and staff.