

Coldstream ELC

Allergies and Allergic Reactions Policy

Date: September 2024

Review Dates: January 2026

1. Purpose

Coldstream ELC is committed to ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of all children in our care. This policy outlines the procedures in place to:

- Minimise or, where possible, prevent allergic reactions.
- Ensure all staff are fully informed about children with known or suspected allergies.
- Provide appropriate and timely support to any child experiencing an allergic reaction.

This policy aligns with current national health guidance and Scottish Borders Council (SBC) procedures.

2. Principles

We recognise that children may experience allergies to a range of triggers including food, insect stings, dust mites, plants and environmental factors. Staff will work in partnership with parents/carers, health professionals and SBC to ensure appropriate management and response.

3. Recognising Allergic Reactions

All staff must be able to recognise the signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction, including when it is a first-time or previously unknown reaction. Symptoms may include:

- Rash, hives or itchy skin
- Nausea, vomiting or diarrhoea
- Stomach pain
- Runny or itchy eyes
- Swelling of the lips, mouth or tongue
- Swelling of the airways
- Shortness of breath or wheezing
- Chest pain
- Anaphylaxis

Staff must respond promptly and in accordance with the procedures outlined below.

4. Information Sharing and Care Planning

- Parents/carers must provide full information regarding any known or suspected allergies.
- A personalised **Allergy Care Plan** will be created for each child with an identified allergy.
- Care plans will include triggers, symptoms, required actions and prescribed medication.
- All staff will be made aware of each child's allergy and care plan during induction and through regular updates.
- Information will be shared sensitively and in line with data-protection requirements.

5. Medication and Specialist Treatment

- Where a child requires specialist treatment (e.g., an EpiPen or other adrenaline auto-injector), **a minimum of two staff members** will receive specific training from an appropriate medical professional.
- Medication will be stored safely, be clearly labelled and be readily accessible to staff in an emergency.
- Staff must be familiar with the child's medication, including dosage and administration procedures.

6. Food Safety and Prevention of Exposure

To reduce the risk of exposure to allergens:

- An up-to-date **Allergy Information Sheet** will be displayed in the kitchen area (on the inside of the cupboard door with signage on the front). This will be reviewed **termly** or sooner if required.
- Staff and parents/carers will work together to ensure the child does not receive any food that may cause an allergic reaction.
- Adjustments may include menu modification or the provision of alternative snacks.
- Food for children with allergies will be prepared in a **separate area**, using equipment that has not been in contact with the allergen to prevent cross-contamination.
- Staff responsible for food preparation must follow current SBC food-handling guidance.

7. Responding to an Allergic Reaction

If a child shows signs of an allergic reaction:

1. A **first aid trained** member of staff will respond immediately.

2. The appropriate treatment will be administered as outlined in the child's care plan.
3. Parents/carers will be contacted as soon as possible.
4. The incident will be recorded using the appropriate SBC incident form.

If the reaction is severe:

- An ambulance will be called immediately.
- Staff **must not** transport the child in their own vehicle.
- A senior member of staff will accompany the child in the ambulance, taking:
 - The child's enrolment details
 - The allergy care plan
 - Any relevant medical information
 - The child's medication

While waiting for emergency services:

- Parents/carers or the emergency contact will be informed of the incident, the child's condition and where they will be taken.
- Arrangements will be made for them to meet at the appropriate location.

8. Supporting Children and Staff

- Staff must remain calm and provide reassurance to the child.
- Consideration will be given to other children who may witness the incident, and appropriate emotional support will be provided.

9. Recording and Review

- All incidents will be recorded clearly and shared with parents/carers at the earliest opportunity.
- Parents/carers must sign incident forms upon review.
- Allergies, care plans and staff training requirements will be reviewed regularly, and updates made as needed.

10. Related Policies and Guidance

This policy should be read alongside:

- Health and Safety Policy
- First Aid Policy

- Medication Policy
- SBC Health and Safety Guidance for ELC Settings
- National Guidance for Child Health and Wellbeing

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