Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy

LORD LAWSON OF BEAMISH ACADEMY

WHOLE SCHOOL ALLERGY SAFETY POLICY

Originator: Louise Doran

Revision: 001

Reviewed by Governing Body: October 2026

Date of next review: Autumn 2027 (or in the event of a serious incident or 'near miss')

1.0 Introduction

An allergy is a medical condition in which the body reacts to substances such as food, insect stings, contact allergens and airborne allergens. An allergic reaction occurs when a susceptible person is exposed to an 'allergen' to which they are allergic. Some individuals with allergies are at risk of anaphylaxis, which can be serious and, in severe cases, fatal.

At Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy, we are committed to ensuring the safety of our students, staff and visitors with food allergies during daily school life. All allergies are serious and some can be life threatening, therefore daily management and awareness of risks to all our students, parents / carers, staff and visitors is critical to creating a safe environment in school. We recognise that allergies can take many forms, including food allergies, hay fever, skin allergies, and asthma.

Our school has developed this policy further to the publication in March 2026 by the Department of Education of a consultation on 'Benedict's Law', which (when adopted) will replace existing statutory guidance on 'Supporting students with medical conditions' at school.

Benedict's Law intends to reduce the risk of allergic reactions in schools and requires schools to have a dedicated allergy safety policy.

Severe allergies can fall within the definition of disability and are therefore subject to the statutory duties on local authorities and education providers under the Equality Act 2010.

2.0 Purpose

We believe schools should be as inclusive as possible and that children with medical conditions have the same right to education as their peers. We recognise that allergies (and anaphylaxis) present a specific risk, and Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy wants to ensure our students, parents / carers, staff and visitors with allergies feel confident coming to our school every day.

This policy outlines the measures we will take as part of our 'whole school' approach to allergy management to minimise the risks of exposure to known allergens, ensure staff are trained in allergy awareness and emergency response, outline the use of adrenaline devices, and generally promote awareness around allergy management. We aim to work in partnership with all relevant stakeholders to create a culture of safety and inclusion.

3.0 Scope

This policy refers the allergy management and emergency procedures that Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy has in place for daily school life at Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy whilst also considering additional activities such as special events, school trips, classroom feeding and packed lunches. It does not cover lifestyle preferences or religious choices to food.

This policy refers to food provided in the dining hall, as well as the 'whole school' approach. Note that a separate policy on catering for medical diets is available from our school food catering provider, Chartwells, which can be provided on request, or is available on their website.

4.0 Our school has a number of responsibilities in relation to allergies, including to:

- ensure a robust and transparent 'whole school' allergy policy is in place.
- make sure staff who oversee children (including teaching staff, support staff, catering staff) receive comprehensive allergy training, including training on emergencies involving an allergy. Training is covered at section 12.0 of this policy.
- hold emergency adrenaline autoinjector (AAIs) 'pens' at school.
- nominate a designated Allergy Lead within our school as a main point of contact for all stakeholders. The role nominated for this is the **Health Unit Officer**.
- ensure individual health care plans (IHPs) are in place for students with serious/complex allergies who are more likely to require emergency intervention due to their condition (such IHPs to include emergency contact details, photograph, known allergens, allergy action plan where relevant, details of prescribed adrenaline devices, prior consent for use of spare adrenaline or asthma device where relevant, and whether asthma also relevant).
- support the school food catering provider, Chartwells, with allergy management procedures for medical diets in the dining hall.
- ensure effective communication with students, parents / carers, staff, visitors and governors to promote awareness and compliance with this policy.
- record and review all allergen incidents and near-misses and, where proportionate, discuss with the relevant local authority and stakeholders (Chartwells will support with this where the incident or near miss occurs in connection with its catering provision)

In addition:

- **Parents / carers** of students with allergies are responsible for providing up-to-date medical information to the school about the nature of the student's allergies and any requirements.
- **Members of staff** have a duty to familiarise themselves with the contents of this policy, to attend all required training sessions relating to allergy identification and management, and to respond accordingly in case of an emergency.
- Where practicable, we expect **visitors** to our school with known allergies to communicate their requirements to us in advance of their visit.

5.0 Allergy student information and notification

For many people, allergies develop during school age, so it is critical that parents / carers provide Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy with timely information about students' allergies, so we can communicate this as needed with staff and our catering providers. This section outlines how Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy will deal with receiving new information about new and existing students' allergies.

<u>New Intake Student Notification</u>

As part of the enrolling process, we ask parents / carers to confirm whether prospective students have any known allergies or intolerances. When a new student with a diagnosed allergy joins our school, we work in partnership with their parents/carers to ensure that all allergy information is gathered in a timely manner as part of our admissions process ahead of the student's start date.

Additionally, we may ask any previous setting for a child or young person for relevant information, such as an Individual Healthcare Plan and Allergy Action Plan.

We will ensure that any student information on allergies we receive is kept in line with data protection regulations and held on an allergy register at the school office. This information will be shared in line with UK General Data Protection Regulation **(GDPR)** with the appropriate stakeholders such as class teacher, classroom supervisors, dining room staff and volunteers

supporting school trips to ensure the safety of the student throughout the school. Should a student request a school dinner, we will work in partnership with parents / carers and the school food catering provider, Chartwells, to ensure that a suitable meal is available for the student.

Existing Student Notification

If an existing student receives a new allergy diagnosis, we require parents / carers to notify the school as soon as possible with all relevant information. If the student had been receiving a school dinner, this should be substituted with a packed lunch provided by the parents / carers until the student is added to the school allergy register and the school catering provider, Chartwells, has received all appropriate documentation in line with their medical diet policy.

Student Information Required

Due to the complexity and seriousness of allergies, we must ensure that all information received and shared with us as a school is transparent and accurate. An allergy notification form should be completed by a parent / carer alongside supporting medical evidence confirming the allergy from a professional medical source before we add a student to our school allergy register. This can include written confirmation from a GP, dietician, nurse or other qualified NHS professional.

Staff and Visitors

We will also gather allergy information from new staff and make arrangements for when they commence work. Wherever possible, visitors should be asked for information on allergies ahead of any visit to our school.

Risk Assessment

In some cases, to manage risk effectively, it may be appropriate for Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy to conduct a risk assessment for an individual student, for example, if the student's allergy is complex or severe. The risk assessment will consider hazards to the student's safety in all parts of school life, including, but not limited to, classroom activities, special events, school trips, food from home and dining hall supervision. Considered alongside compliance with the Equality Act 2010, Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy may need to introduce additional control measures to reduce the risk. We will work in partnership with all relevant stakeholders to ensure adaptations are appropriate and do not impact students' health or wellbeing whilst at school.

6.0 Allergy Management – School Dining Hall

Once Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy has been notified of a food allergy or intolerance, we will work in partnership with our school food catering provider, Chartwells, to ensure a safe meal is available for any student, staff or visitor requiring a meal from the dining hall or any other catering outlet on the school grounds.

In addition to this whole school policy for Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy, all stakeholders are required to comply with the individual Medical Diet Policy and by Chartwells, which ensures the safety of the student at all relevant mealtimes.

In the period between the notification of an allergy to Chartwells, and their provision of suitable meal options (which may take up to three weeks) either (1) a restricted list of meal options can be agreed, or (2) students should bring in a packed lunch from home. Once all correct information is received by Chartwells, they will ordinarily provide a specific medical diet menu to suit the needs of the student in line with the Chartwells Medical Diet Policy.

We will require our catering provider to make available allergy reports (detailing the presence of 14 EU allergens that are mandatory to declare) for all items served in the dining hall.

The school will support Chartwells in ensuring there is always sufficient staff supervising in the dining hall during mealtimes and that these staff, whether school staff or lunchtime supervisors, receive appropriate allergy training as per section 12.0 of this policy.

7.0 Allergy Management – Packed Lunches

It is important that any food from home, including packed lunches, consider the use of common allergens to keep all students, staff and visitors safe. Packed lunches consumed in a shared dining environment may present a risk to food allergic students, staff and visitors and therefore we stress the importance to parents / carers / staff / visitors that all foods contained within a packed lunch are, where possible, appropriately wrapped, labelled or (where relevant) kept in original packaging in order to (i) help identify ingredients and (ii) minimise risk of cross contamination.

Packed lunches should not contain any nuts or items containing nuts, or any other allergens identified as high risk following individual risk assessments.

Food from a packed lunch should not be shared with any other student, visitor, or member of staff. To support this message to students, Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy will deliver a series of classroom workshops and/or assemblies throughout the academic year to educate students. We ask that parents / carers support this messaging at home.

Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy will ensure there is always sufficient staff supervising during mealtimes.

Students with allergies who are consuming a packed lunch must feature on the school's allergy register and comply with section 5.0 of this policy. The school will ensure additional safety measures are introduced in the dining hall and other common areas for students with allergies consuming packed lunches or other food from home.

8.0 Allergy Management – School Trips

It is important that students with allergies enjoy the same opportunities for trips as students without allergies. Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy will ensure that allergies and intolerances are appropriately managed on any extracurricular activities, such as school trips including away days, residentials or any other off-site visits.

Staff leading the trip will carry an up-to-date copy of the school's allergy register in line with GDPR. All staff, visitors or volunteers supporting the supervision of the trip will be informed by the trip lead of any students with allergies in their group and, if not previously communicated should inform the school of any individual allergies of their own.

The school will complete a risk assessment at least 7 days prior to any school trip to identify any necessary control measures to minimise the risk of exposure to allergens. This assessment should consider transport, activities and food.

Where food is to be provided by a third-party venue (i.e., not packed lunch from home nor meal provided by the school) for consumption on a school trip, the school will send allergy and intolerance requirements to the venue a minimum of 7 days prior to the trip. Written

confirmation will be requested from the provider to confirm receipt of the information. The trip supervisor should also request allergy reports for the food provided and trained staff members will double-check the food served to ensure suitability before consumption. Where available, this information will also be shared with parents / carers of food allergic and intolerant students in advance of the trip.

If packed lunches are provided by parents / carers for a school trip, the requirements set out in section 7.0 of this policy should be adhered to.

If packed lunches are provided by the school catering provider, Chartwells, notice should be given to the catering manager a minimum of 2 weeks in advance of the trip. Any packed lunches provided by the school food catering provider for food allergic students, staff or visitors should be clearly labelled with the individual's name and packed lunch contents, and an allergy report should be provided. Any packed lunch bags handed to food allergic or intolerant students, staff or volunteers should be double checked for suitability by trip leader or appropriate member of staff before consumption.

No additional snacks will be provided on the trip without prior consultation with parents / carers and additional food from home should not be provided unless requested.

Suitable arrangements will be put into place to make sure food allergic students, staff or volunteers can join in all aspects of the trip without jeopardising safety and enjoyment for all.

Students with AAI prescriptions are required to carry them during the duration of the trip. The trip supervisor will also carry spare AAI in line with section 12.0 of this policy.

9.0 Allergy Management – Other School Food (classrooms, birthdays, events and fundraisers)

Classroom Activities

All school staff members are trained on allergy management as per section 12.0 of this policy. It is the responsibility of the teacher to consider when food items are necessary in the classroom. The teacher should ensure that any food items used in the classroom for crafts, experiences or lessons is appropriate for all students, staff and visitors with allergies or intolerances. It is best practice to avoid food items that contain allergens that may pose risk to an individual in that setting, e.g., avoid using strawberries in the classroom if a student has a strawberry allergy.

Classroom Feeding

It is the responsibility of the teacher to ensure that any food used in the classroom for consumption (e.g. birthday cakes, celebration events) is suitable for the dietary requirements of their students. Teachers should refer to the school's allergy register ahead of any planned celebration and ensure any food provided is suitable for all students. If food is not suitable, teachers should provide a suitable safe alternative for students on the school's allergy register and take steps to minimise any cross-contamination risk, where appropriate. These items should be double checked by another staff member and parents / carers informed at least 24 hours ahead of the event.

Fundraising Events

Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy recognises the importance of fundraising events such as cake sales and tuck shops to be a traditional part of the school community throughout the

academic year. All food and drinks provided during fundraising events will, where possible, be provided in its original packaging. If the original packaging is not available, a manual allergy report should be created for the items, manual allergy reports will be provided to parents who are providing food items as part of the fundraiser and should be returned to school alongside the item on the day of the event.

Parents / carers of students with food allergies should be told a minimum of 24 hours before a fundraising event is to happen in school.

If the fundraiser happens before or after school, parents / carers are responsible for supervising their children to make safe choices.

If the fundraiser happens during school hours the trained class teacher or appropriate member of staff should supervise any food allergic students throughout the fundraiser and double check any food chosen for safety and suitability before consumption.

To minimise the risks of exposure to known allergens, it is the policy of Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy that no nuts, of any kind, should be used in any food item provided during a fundraiser event.

Celebration Events

Throughout the academic year, the school may host celebration events, including but not limited to Christmas shows, summer fairs or sports days.

Where these are hosted as part of the school day allergy management processes outlined in section 6.0 of this policy will be followed.

Where these are hosted for our school community, outside of the normal school day, the parents / carers are expected to supervise their children to ensure safe, suitable food choices are made.

In the event of any external vendors or catering the school will commit to ensuring that allergy reports are available on the day of the event from each vendor to allow parents / carers, students and visitors to make informed food choices.

Any food provided to students during celebration events should be double checked for safety and suitability before consumption by at least two members of school staff.

10.0 Allergy Information for all food provided in school

Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy is responsible for ensuring that allergy information in line with Food Information Regulations (2014) is always available for all food provided outside of the dining hall.

The school food caterers, Chartwells, will ensure allergy reports are available for all food produced by Chartwells in the dining hall or at any other catering outlet at the school.

Due to matters outside of the school's control e.g. supplier information and supply chain disruptions allergy information for food provided in school and in the dining hall is subject to change and up to date versions of allergy reports should be requested by students (or parents or carers, as appropriate) on each occasion required.

Allergy information can be provided to parents, carers or visitors on request. Allergy reports can be provided either via hard copies or electronically.

11.0 Staff Training

Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy will ensure that all school staff (including teaching staff, support staff, catering staff) receive appropriate allergen management training. Training needs will be assessed by the Health Unit Manager at a minimum frequency of once per term, or when new staff are appointed.

Training will be provided by the Chartwells and will be repeated at least once a year. For new staff, relevant training will be included within induction arrangements. For supply and cover staff this will be included in their induction with the Cover Manager. The training will ensure that all staff have the right tools and knowledge to safely support students, staff and visitors with allergies or intolerances and will include:

- General understanding of allergies and intolerances
- Overview of common allergies
- Signs and symptoms of allergic reaction
- Spotting risk and how to minimise it
- Contents of this 'whole school' Allergy Policy
- Contents of school food catering policy
- Overview of relevant allergy legislation
- How to read labels for food allergens
- Measures to prevent cross-contamination during handling, preparation and serving of food.
- Emergency procedures including anaphylaxis
- Use of adrenaline pens
- Impact of allergy on wellbeing
- How to report an allergic reaction or case of anaphylaxis (or 'near miss')

The above training will be provided in addition to any specific training needs involved in supporting a child or young person with an IHP, as identified in such IHP.

Catering staff in the school dining hall will receive separate allergen management training specific to food handling from the school catering provider, Chartwells, which is repeated every six months.

Additional training to staff on how to safely administer an adrenaline auto injector pen will be provided by an external provider, supported by the Health Unit Manager.

12.0 Additional Safety Measures

Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy may implement additional safety measures at any point of the academic year to support students, visitors or staff. The purpose of such measures is always to promote safety and ensure allergy students, staff and visitors remain safe in school; we will ensure that any additional safety measure is in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Additional safety measures will be considered on a case-by-case basis dependent on the complexity of the allergy and environment. These may include precautions such as:

- Photographs of food allergic students
- Physical ID methods (lanyards, wristbands, coloured trays etc)
- Double checking processes
- Wrapping and labelling of food
- Additional education workshops for students
- Additional training for staff
- Checks on prescribed adrenaline devices (including make and dosage)
- Prior medical and parental consent for use of 'spare' adrenaline device or emergency asthma reliever inhaler
- Regular meetings with parent / carers, school and catering team.

13.0 Wellbeing support

In addition to practical steps to reduce risk and support the physical health of individuals with allergies Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy will actively support the emotional wellbeing of all pupils, staff and visitors that suffer from an allergy to help reduce any feelings of anxiety, as a result of risk of exposure.

Our school will take all reasonable steps to ensure we create a safe and supportive environment for all individuals with allergies at our school. This may include, but not limited to;

- open communication on allergy policies
- engaging education workshops for all pupils
- engaging staff training sessions
- promoting inclusion at all parts of the school day
- appointing allergy champions within our school
- follow up on any wellbeing concerns in an appropriate and timely manner

Bullying in any form will not be tolerated at our school any bullying will be dealt with in line with our behaviour and bullying policy.

14.0 Adrenaline Auto-Injectors (AAIs)

Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy will ensure the school allergy register logs all children and young people that have been provided with self-administered AAIs. This register is maintained by the Heath Unit Manager and can be accessed on request.
Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy will store and maintain at least two emergency AAIs to be used in case of emergencies by any pupil, staff or visitor who require it by way of showing symptoms of an allergic reaction including anaphylaxis whilst at school. The AAIs are purchased from Omnicare Healthcare Limited and securely stored at room temperature at three key locations within the school, which include main reception, health unit and the food technology classroom. The location of the AAIs will be shared and clearly signposted with all allergy pupils, staff and visitors.

All staff are trained, as per section 12.0 of this policy, on how to recognise symptoms of an allergic reaction including anaphylaxis and how to safely administer an AAI in case of an emergency.

The school will ensure that spare AAIs devices are in date, appropriately stored and replaced as required.

Pupils, visitors and staff who knowingly require AAIs and have personal prescriptions should always carry and have easy access to their own prescribed AAIs whilst on school premises (including lunch area, playground and sports fields) and additionally on any school trips or school transport. Pupils/ parents / carers must ensure that self-administered AAIs remain in-date.

When any AAI has been used during the school day, it must be disposed of safely following requirements for the safe disposal of medicines / hazardous waste.

15.0 Emergency protocols

Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy has clear and effective emergency procedures in place to respond to an allergic reaction.

In the event of a life-threatening anaphylaxis reaction, the school will lie the person flat with legs raised (allow to sit if breathing is difficult) and use the individual's prescribed pen, or the spare AAIs held by the school (in the event that the individual's prescribed pen is not available, or for those who do not have their own prescribed AAI) without delay.

If there is no improvement after 5 minutes, another dose of adrenaline using a second AAI will be given, if available.

The school will ring 999 immediately if there is a suspected anaphylactic reaction in a student, and the staff member will stay with the person until the ambulance arrives, with the person being kept lying down. A suitable member of school staff will accompany any individual suffering an allergic reaction to the hospital until a parent, carer or next of kin arrives.

In the case of an incident involving a pupil, parents or carers will be informed at the first safest opportunity.

Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy will keep a record of any allergy incidents or 'near misses' that occur at our school or during school trips. In the case of an incident involving a pupil, our school will offer a meeting between the relevant stakeholders and parent/carers to discuss the incident.