**Food Sharing and Allergies POLICY 2020**

**Purpose**

\*To raise awareness of anaphylactic conditions for all members of the school community.

\*To provide a safe learning environment for all members of Le Page Primary School community.

\*To continually review awareness of allergies at Le Page PS.

\* To be clear on what is allowed into school for special days eg Birthdays, food gifts.

**Overview**

This policy is concerned with a whole school approach to the health care and management of those members of the school community suffering from specific allergies.

An Allergy occurs when a person's immune system reacts to substances in the environment that are harmless for most people. These substances are known as allergens and are found in foods, insects, some medicines, house dust mites, pets, and pollen.

Common allergens include:

* peanuts
* tree nuts such as cashews
* eggs
* cow's milk
* wheat
* soy
* fish and shellfish
* sesame
* insect stings and bites
* Medications.

Signs of a mild to moderate allergic reaction include:

* hives or welts
* swelling of the lips, face and eyes
* Tingling mouth.

Signs of anaphylaxis (severe allergic reaction) include any one of the following:

* difficult/noisy breathing
* swelling of tongue
* swelling/tightness in throat
* difficulty talking and/or hoarse voice
* wheeze or persistent cough
* persistent dizziness or collapse
* pale and floppy (young children)
* abdominal pain and/or vomiting (these are signs of a severe allergic reaction to insects).

Mild to moderate allergic reactions (such as hives or swelling) may not always occur before anaphylaxis.

. The school acknowledges that it is impractical to eliminate all food which cause allergies from an environment where food is commonplace. The emphasis is therefore on minimising risk of exposure, raising awareness, and encouraging self-responsibility.

**Scope**

This policy applies to:

* all staff, including casual relief staff and volunteers
* all students who have been diagnosed with anaphylaxis, or who may require emergency treatment for an anaphylactic reaction, and their parents and carers.

**Management –**

Parents:

* Will be informed of this policy at the commencement of each new school year and at enrolment.
* Are requested to follow the classroom guidelines when sending in foods which may cause potential allergies. Eg Nuts
* Will provide a medical plan and medication if their child has been diagnosed with an allergy. These are to be kept up to date by the paren. Parents will also teach and encourage the child to be aware of their allergies/anaphylaxis.
* Will provide individual, store bought and labelled treats for students if they wish to provide treats for celebrations eg Birthdays.
* Will consider having a ‘treat box’ kept in the class for their child to have when special food is brought in for celebrations, so that they are now excluded from the celebration.

Students:

* Will receive age appropriate education about food safety and the seriousness and potential life threatening nature of allergies in the classroom environment.
* Are encouraged to wash their hands before and after eating.
* Who bring in food that relates to a child with an allergy are encouraged to inform the classroom or duty teacher, and will eat that food away from the child with allergies and will wash their hands before and after eating.
* Are not permitted to swap or share food.

Staff:

* Will be aware of students who have anaphylactic responses.
* Will supervise students during lunch eating time and be vigilant in regards to this policy.
* Will participate in training twice yearly to understand procedures related to Anaphylaxis as the needs arise, including identification of their signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction and the use of appropriate medication.
* Will educate parents of any allergies in the classroom.
* Will promote information to students and parents, through signs, dojo etc
* Will ensure all camps, excursions and incursions provide ‘safe’ food and that there are effective controls in place to minimise the risk of exposure.
* Will hand our celebration food provided to students by another peer at the end of the day, making sure to check labels for allergy students.
* It is important to be aware that some students with an allergy may not wish to be singled out or be seen to be treated differently so discretion is advised.

**Further information and resources**

* School Policy and Advisory Guide:
  + [Anaphylaxis](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/Pages/anaphylaxis.aspx)
  + [Anaphylaxis management in schools](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/pages/anaphylaxisschl.aspx)
* Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia: [Risk minimisation strategies](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/Schools/teachers/health/riskminimisation.pdf)
* ASCIA Guidelines: [Schooling and childcare](https://allergyfacts.org.au/allergy-management/schooling-childcare)

Royal Children’s Hospital: [Allergy and immunology](https://www.rch.org.au/allergy/about_us/Allergy_and_Immunology/)

**Review cycle and evaluation**

This policy was last updated on 1/12/2020 and is scheduled for review in December 2021