



## JERRABOMBERRA PUBLIC SCHOOL

# SCHOOL POLICY: NUT/ CHEMICAL/ANAPHYLAXIS AWARENESS (Revised January, 2015)

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### **RATIONALE:**

It is important that the school and community look after all students in its care. Whilst an allergy to peanuts is still a relatively uncommon occurrence, we do have a growing number of students presenting with this affliction. As a school, we would like to provide responsible support for children who have such allergies and suffer severe anaphylactic reactions that may be life-threatening.

To this end, we endeavour to ensure Jerrabomberra Public School is a **nut-aware school** and seek the school community's co-operation in supporting the safety of all students at the school. This has been a policy since the school's inception in 2002 and we believe it has been very successful and well-supported by the majority. We are also endeavouring to be a hypo-allergenic aware school due to anaphylactic reactions to cleaning chemicals. We endeavour to use cleaning products that are safer than most to students and teachers.

### **OUTCOMES:**

- Students with anaphylaxis will be safer and less likely to encounter substances that could initiate an attack.
- Teachers, students & parents will be more aware of the dangers for some students in relation to their allergy.
- A supportive and caring approach by all the school community is evident.
- Ideally, the incidence of anaphylactic attacks is minimised and averted altogether.

### **WHAT IS ANAPHYLAXIS?**

Anaphylaxis is a severe and sudden allergic reaction. It occurs when a person is exposed to an allergen (such as a food, chemicals or an insect bite). Reactions usually begin within minutes of exposure and can progress rapidly over a period of up to two hours or more. Anaphylaxis is potentially life threatening and always requires an emergency response. Fortunately, anaphylactic reactions are uncommon and usually preventable.

*(Reference: Anaphylaxis – Guidelines for Schools)*

### **IMPLEMENTATION:**

- On enrolment, parents should supply the school with as much information as possible regarding their child's condition. For severe anaphylactics, this should include an action plan supplied by a doctor. Parents should also notify the teacher on first meeting them.
- Where necessary, parents will supply all medication and an EpiPen to be kept at the school. This remains in the secure area of the office. Individual arrangements may be made with the teacher if applicable and an EpiPen is required in the room.
- Teachers and office staff need to be fully aware of students who have severe allergies. Action plans need to be visibly displayed for office staff to refer to in an emergency.

- A ‘red card’ system needs to be put into place for teachers to seek emergency help. ‘URGENT! EPIPEN NOW (Child’s name) ROOM (No.)’
- ALL staff need to be made aware of students who have severe allergic reactions at a staff meeting.
- School parents will be asked **NOT** to supply their children with peanut butter sandwiches and other nut products in an effort to minimise the chance of anaphylactic children coming into contact with an allergen. A child who comes to school with a nut sandwich will be offered an alternative from the staffroom.
- At all times, the sharing of food is to be discouraged, especially at lunch and recess.
- Teachers remain with their students for the initial lunch eating time. They need to remain vigilant to this issue.
- The school has been changed to hypo-allergenic cleaning chemicals – Agar “Aerial” product - and teachers are instructed to remove all other chemicals, flysprays, air fresheners, etc from the premises.
- Notices will be published regularly in newsletters to remind families of the commitment to keep the school nut-free and chemical-free and be supportive of others.
- It will be suggested to teachers, parents and classroom helpers that the wearing of strong perfumes and deodorants during school time should be avoided if possible but particularly in the rooms of chemically-induced anaphylactic students.
- A laminated sign will be displayed in all classrooms as a reminder for parents and students.
- Laminated fluoro circles will be placed near light switches in the rooms where there are anaphylactic students present. This is to alert casual teachers so that they seek information should they be in that room for the day.
- The canteen has also made a commitment to provide nut-free products.
- Any birthday treats supplied for the class by a parent should be nut-free.
- Parents of anaphylactic students should be encouraged to provide alternative treats for the teacher to have on hand so that their child does not continually miss out on special occasions.
- Classes, with anaphylactic students in them, need to discuss the issues with students and be alert for potential problems.
- All cakes made for cake stalls should be clearly labelled as to their ingredients.
- **MOST IMPORTANTLY:** Parents must be responsible for educating their children about their anaphylaxis. Students who suffer from anaphylaxis should follow very strict rules as regards their eating habits and environmental hazards as stipulated and instilled by the parents.
- Staff will be trained in the use of an EpiPen annually.
- EpiPens and medication need to accompany students on excursions.

**PLEASE NOTE:**

Whilst we can promote the nut-free / chemical-free policy within the school community, its success is totally dependent on the co-operation of the parent body to assist with its implementation.