



> Background

- Trinity is a Church of England School in Lewisham, in the Diocese of Southwark.
- Currently there are approximately 600 pupils across the primary and secondary schools.
- Their aim is to be a place where children and adults flourish within a strong Christian community, achieving the very best educational standards and developing character and strength of personality.
- As a relatively new school, they do not have an established allergy policy at this stage.
- While they currently have low numbers of pupils with allergy, they are thinking ahead and want to be prepared with correct policy to ensure good practice.

> Priorities

- To produce a sound allergy management policy.

> Difficulties

- School nurse infrequently on site.
- Canteen staff are aware of food allergies and do cater for them e.g. providing gluten free alternatives; ensuring they adhere to guidelines around using separate utensils for serving allergenic foods eg fish. However, it was agreed that this is an area that could be developed further.

> Key findings from first SAAG meeting July 2015:

- Only first aiders receive training to prepare for anaphylactic shock.
- The AAIs are in a locked cupboard, in a locked room, with only staff access and the keys are with reception next door.
- Pupils are taken to reception when ill, only if they are physically able to do so. Discussions were had about the issue of moving a pupil who may be suffering from anaphylaxis. Since exertion can precipitate anaphylaxis, it is preferable that first aid help would be taken to them.
- Discussions took place about where AAIs could be kept but it was felt that they should be locked so they couldn't be accessed inappropriately.
- Signs and symptoms of allergies are taught in food technology.
- Catering staff did not attend the first SAAG meeting and the baseline audit showed a lot of confusion about allergy management.
- Based on the results of the survey and the discussions at the meeting, it was agreed by all that the school needs more involvement from canteen staff.
- Currently there are simple ingredient lists available in the refectory.
- Sometimes there are no allergen free options available.

- It was suggested that parents should be asked to provide a medical letter for the school to make the necessary arrangements.
- Teachers and pupils feel anyone with allergies would be confident to talk about it
- Nuts are not used in food technology and science lessons.
- PE staff have to make sure that they are aware of allergies of their pupils as they are away from the school so need to carry medication.
- Some pupils carry Adrenaline Auto Injectors (AAI) such as Epipen, but they have to be responsible enough.
- Discussions took place around the issue of using food as a reward (pupils with allergies receiving prizes that were unsafe for them to have) and suggestions for other types of rewards. Certificates are already used and the school supplies pens for students to use in class.
- Care plans are only developed for pupils with medical conditions which need input from the school such as severe allergies.
- The school nurse attends the school once per week for half a day.
- Analysis of the baseline audit, showed some apparent differences between responders regarding current policy and practices within the school.
- Whilst Trinity do not have discrete PSHE lessons the content of that curriculum is taught during Trinity time (family group time) which happens three times a week or via drop down days. Allergy information could easily be taught or disseminated at that time. In addition it was agreed that assembly time could be utilised to teach about allergies. Staff raised concerns however regarding the already busy curriculum.
- Next SAAG meeting scheduled for October 2015.

> Key findings and action points from the SAAG meeting December 2015:

- Following our last SAAG meeting and telephone survey there was further discussion around appropriateness of moving pupils who may be in anaphylactic shock. Best practice is NOT TO MOVE. Trinity policy will be changed to: *a pupil having an allergic reaction must not be either left alone or moved, another student is sent for help.*
- Catering staff are aware of the presence of allergens in their menu, although they need also to be made aware which pupils have what allergies.
- Discussed putting photos of pupils with allergies in staff room and kitchen. Encourage pupils to discuss menu with catering staff, preparing them for life after school.
- Medical conditions of the current Year 7 pupils are listed on the staffroom wall, and these are replaced at the beginning of each academic year with new intake of pupils.
- Some uncertainty surrounding who receives a list of pupils who have allergies. Is there a system in place for supply teachers, visiting music/sports teachers etc being able to identify which students have an allergy – they could be informed during risk assessment.
- Trinity to ensure that all students with allergies have personal care plans- the BSACI form is available and recommended. For new pupils to the school, as soon as an application form is received stating pupil has an allergy, a BSACI form should be sent out straight away for completion by parents, so this is in school prior to the pupil starting.
- Pupils with allergies are not restricted from going on trips. However, although First Aid kits are taken on trips, it was not clear if they include AAIs; or if staff are trained in First Aid or in administering AAIs. This has now been resolved by training being put in place to ensure all staff can recognise the symptoms of anaphylaxis and know how to administer an AAI. Also pupils to be asked

to make sure they have the correct medicine with them when going on a trip.

- Pupils are encouraged to carry their own inhalers, but not AAIs as it was felt that other pupils may take the AAIs or tease them. AAIs are stored in the medical room. This was discussed - best practice was that AAI's should be carried by the individuals with allergies as they could have a reaction at the other end of the school to the medical room, hence, saving crucial time in administering medication. It is not clear how many AAIs each student has on the premises, so content of pupil's medical boxes to be reviewed by next meeting.
- A pupil attending the SAAG meeting said: "I have no problem speaking to my peers about my allergy, there is no shame and making them aware is probably better."
- Teacher felt SAAG resources would be very useful to utilise in lessons.

> Key findings and action points from the SAAG meeting January 2016:

- Since our last meeting pupil medication has been checked and catalogued, and stored in clearly labelled envelopes. The updated medication list is available in the office, the student office, and a copy has been given to the SENCo. Parents were informed about out of date medication.
- Teaching staff are generally aware of who has allergies in school via a detailed email with medical information and information is also available on the schools electronic pupil database. Must always check stored medication matches what is recorded on pupil database.
- To help students to make safe food choices the caterers are exploring how menus could display allergens.
- The SAAG discussed the possibility of stopping food rewards altogether for health reasons and replace with non-food reward that wouldn't come out of the school budget. This is to be discussed with the Trinity Student Voice.
- Allergens are used in cooking lessons, with a risk assessment carried out in advance to educate pupils eg keep allergens separate, hand washing etc.
- The allergy policy must include a renewal date, to ensure regular review.
- Concerns were raised about liability insurance for First Aiders – it was thought some staff may not be insured eg temporary staff, supply teachers and outside staff; and only substantive staff was insured off the premises, such as on trips. School is going to look into this and reassure staff.
- Discussed curriculum links with allergy in science, food tech and assemblies.
- Subcommittee to draft a new allergy policy prior to next SAAG (March 2016).
- will be repeating their AAI and De-fib training for staff at induction and INSET next term.

> Key findings and action points from the SAAG meeting March 2016:

- At the beginning of this process, catering provided a basic description of what the dishes were, but pupils did not feel confident to ask catering staff in more detail about the allergens in dishes.
- New pupils will now be invited to meet with catering staff in the second week of the academic year, to help pupils feel more confident to discuss their allergy.
- The contract caterers will produce menus with the 14 major allergens showing where applicable. This will be available to parents and pupils.
- It was agreed that symbols on menus would be a better idea than the catering department having photos of pupils with allergy- given this is a secondary school.
- AAI instructions to be displayed around school – suggested one on each floor/each department.

- In order to help prepare students for when they leave school, the school will plan lessons and an assembly to make sure that all pupils have a better understanding of allergies, the symptoms of an allergic reaction and the treatment.
- It was felt that if pupils were able to recognise symptoms, they could help friends should they need assistance while having a reaction.
- Assembly: rather than mention names, it would be better to state the number of pupils with allergies as this would show pupils they are not the only ones with allergies and having to carry AAI's.
- Pupils with severe allergies carry their own medication, but would need to be monitored to check that they are able to administer their own AAI. If not confident, they would need to be referred back to their Allergy Clinic.

Pupils were asked what they found useful about the SAAG meetings:

- Tips and advice on allergies.
- Pleased to see that comments made by pupils have been noted and put in action plan.
- To see an actual AAI and how to use it.
- All pupils enjoyed the activities.
- All students thought the Take the Kit video was very powerful.

> Key findings and action points from the SAAG meetings March 2016-December 2017:

During the SAAG process, Trinity's policies and practices have been further updated to include the following:

- The allergy policy is part of the medical policy, which is signed off by governors;
- There are processes in place to obtain medical information on pupils and this is updated on the system eg parents/guardians of students with an allergic condition must provide written advice from a doctor (GP) explaining their condition, defining their allergy triggers and any required medication. This information is then shared with staff;
- School leaders must ensure that a Health Care Plan is established and updated for each child with a known allergy;
- Any key staff working with students with allergy are required to review and familiarise themselves with their medical information;
- Action plans include a recent photograph for any students with allergies and are posted in relevant rooms with parental permission;
- Where students with known allergies are participating in school excursions, the risk assessments must include this information and all trips are accompanied by a training first aider;
- Pupils are allowed to wear medic-alert bracelets;
- Medication is in date, easily accessible and clearly marked;
- More staff have been trained in administering adrenaline auto injectors and the school knows who is trained;
- The curriculum covers allergies across science, PSHE and food technology;
- Pupils with allergies meet with the catering manager at the beginning of their school career at secondary school to learn how to find out which dishes contain allergens;
- Food rewards are no longer used, instead the school uses book tokens, stickers, pens, etc;
- These achievements are shared in the school newsletter.

Trinity will continue to have regular SAAG meetings to improve allergy awareness in their school, and are now working on the following:

1. Check Department of Health guidance on spare AAls to ensure Trinity's policy covers all major areas.
2. Invest in spare Adrenaline Auto Injectors (AAI).
3. First Aiders to train more staff in basic first aid.
4. A yearly assembly for year 7 pupils and a smaller assembly for pupils with severe allergies and their best friends to take place.
5. Ensure menus on the schools website includes allergy information.

For more information on *Whole School Allergy Awareness and Management* visit <https://www.allergyuk.org/information-and-advice/for-schools>