**The Winns Primary School – Our Commitment as an Allergy-Aware School**

**Introduction**

The Winns Primary School is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment for all children, including those with allergies. We recognise the increasing prevalence of allergies among school-aged children and the potential severity of allergic reactions, including anaphylaxis. As an **Allergy-Aware School**, we follow best practices from **The Natasha Foundation**, **Anaphylaxis UK**, and schools with strong allergy-awareness policies to minimise risks and promote understanding among staff, pupils, and parents.

**What Does It Mean to Be an Allergy-Aware School?**

Being an allergy-aware school means that we take proactive steps to reduce the risk of exposure to allergens while ensuring that all children can fully participate in school life. While we cannot guarantee an entirely allergen-free environment, we aim to create a safer space by raising awareness, implementing preventative measures, and being well-prepared to respond to allergic reactions.

**Minimising Risks – Our Key Actions**

**1. Raising Awareness Among Staff, Pupils, and Parents**

* We educate pupils about allergies through PSHE lessons, assemblies, and awareness campaigns to foster understanding and empathy.
* Parents and carers are provided with information on our allergy-awareness policy, including clear guidance on **which foods should be avoided** in packed lunches and snacks.
* Clear signage is displayed in relevant areas, including the school kitchen and dining hall, to highlight allergens present in meals.
* Staff members remain vigilant and encourage children not to share food to prevent cross-contamination.

**2. Staff Training and Emergency Preparedness**

* All staff receive **annual training on allergy awareness and anaphylaxis management**, including how to recognise symptoms and administer emergency medication such as adrenaline auto-injectors (e.g., EpiPens, Jext, or Emerade).
* Key staff members, including first aiders, undergo **enhanced training** to ensure rapid response in case of an emergency.
* Pupils with known allergies have **individual healthcare plans (IHPs)**, developed in collaboration with parents, healthcare professionals, and school staff.
* Emergency medication is stored securely yet easily accessible, and staff are trained on its location and use.

**3. Managing Food and Allergen Risks**

* The school works closely with our catering provider to ensure that **school meals are prepared safely**, with clear allergen labelling and avoidance of cross-contamination.
* We strongly advise that **certain allergens should not be included in packed lunches** or after-school snack boxes to protect children with severe allergies. This includes requesting that parents do not send in products containing:

Nuts and nut-based products, (including peanut butter, Nutella, cereal bars containing nuts),

Sesame seeds or sesame-based products (e.g., hummus, sesame crackers, tahini and sesame seeded breads)

* Other common allergens such as milk, wheat, shellfish and egg-based products are monitored, and we encourage parents to be mindful of these when preparing food for school.
* Food-based classroom activities (e.g., baking or celebrations) are planned carefully, with **full allergen risk assessments** and alternatives provided where needed.

**4. Safe Classroom and Learning Environments**

* Staff check ingredients in classroom activities such as **arts and crafts, science experiments, and play materials**, ensuring they do not contain allergens like dairy, wheat, or latex.
* Cleaning procedures are in place to reduce the risk of allergen cross-contamination in shared areas.
* We ensure that children with allergies feel included and have safe alternatives during activities involving food.

**5. Communicating with Parents and the School Community**

* We request that parents **inform the school of any allergies** their child has upon enrolment and update us if their needs change.
* Regular updates and reminders are shared through newsletters, emails, and the school website regarding **allergy-safe lunchbox guidance and upcoming events** where food may be present.
* The school liaises with families of children with allergies to ensure that they feel confident in the school’s approach and that their child’s needs are met.

**6. After-School Clubs and Trips**

* After-school clubs follow the same allergy-awareness practices as during the school day, ensuring safe snack options and trained staff.
* School trips and residential visits include **pre-trip allergy assessments**, with emergency plans in place and medication carried as required.
* Staff accompanying children on trips are trained to respond to allergic reactions and are aware of the allergens that need to be avoided.

**Guidance for Parents – What Not to Include in Packed Lunches & Snacks**

To help protect children with allergies, we ask parents to avoid sending the following items in packed lunches and snacks:

**Nuts and nut-based products** (including peanut butter, Nutella, cereal bars containing nuts)

**Sesame-based products** (e.g., hummus, sesame crackers, tahini)

**Shellfish and seafood**

Highly processed foods with unclear allergen information

Where possible, parents are encouraged to check packaging for allergen warnings such as “may contain traces of nuts” and opt for safer alternatives.

**Conclusion**

At The Winns Primary School, we are dedicated to maintaining a **safe and inclusive** environment for all our pupils, particularly those with allergies. By working together as a school community—staff, parents, and children—we can **minimise risks, raise awareness, and be prepared** to act in an emergency. Our allergy-aware approach ensures that every child can learn, play, and thrive in a safe school environment.

For any questions or to discuss your child’s specific needs, please contact the school office.

*This policy is reviewed annually to reflect best practices and updates in allergy guidance.*