

## ALLERGY POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Deira Private School strives to provide a safe and healthy environment to all students attending the school by having a robust Allergy Policy and Procedure in place at all times.

### **PURPOSE:**

Deira Private School aims to keep students safe and healthy at the setting and takes utmost care to document all the allergies of the students to minimize the accidental exposure to the allergens at the institution.

### **TARGET COMMUNITY:**

Applicable to Deira Private School and Deira Private School nursery including all employers, students and parents.

### **PROCEDURE:**

- The common allergens reported in United Arab Emirates by multiple food regulatory authorities include:
  - **Crustaceans** (seafood including crab, lobster, prawn, shrimp)
  - **Tree nuts** and their products (almonds, hazelnuts, Brazil nuts, cashews, walnuts, pistachios, pecans, macadamia nuts, pine nuts, almond butter, Nutella etc)
  - **Peanuts** and their products (peanut butter)
  - **Soybean** and their product
  - **Sesame seeds** and their products (Tahina, hummus etc)

Hence the above products are **strictly prohibited** to be brought into the school. Parents should be communicated that any food containing the above mentioned allergens should not be sent in the lunch box.

- Deira Private School is a “**NUT FREE ZONE**” at all times i.e all types of nut (almond, peanut, walnut, hazelnuts, pistachio, cashews etc) and products containing nuts (for example Peanut Butter, Nutella, Sweets/cakes containing nuts, cookies, muffins, nuts bar, protein bar etc) are strictly prohibited on the school premises.
- If a student brings any food item containing the prohibited item, the food will be removed from the classroom by the teacher, handed over to the School Nurse and parents will be reminded by the teacher of the school policy.

- Deira Private School strictly prohibits food sharing between the students, or between staff and students and observes a strict **NO FOOD SHARING** policy.

### **DOCUMENTATION OF ALLERGENS:**

- The management and well being of a child with known allergy is the responsibility of the parents/guardian.
- When a student is first enrolled into the school, it is mandatory for parents to provide full medical details of any allergies or medical condition in the provided medical forms.
- Parents are responsible to state the severity of the allergy and submit the course of action to be followed to the school medical team in the hour of need as per the treating pediatrician/physician. These documents should be updated and re-submitted to the School Clinic on an annual basis (before the commencement of new academic year) or as per any change in the health status of the student.
- Parents are responsible to submit the medicines to be used in emergency as per the action plan devised by the treating pediatrician submitted to the school clinic. The school nurse shall clearly label the medicine with the name of student, class and one more point of identification.
- School nurse shall remind the parents to provide new emergency medication if they are approaching their expiration date in the next 2 months. This communication should be documented.
- Students CANNOT start attending school without submission of filled and signed medical forms.
- The medical team shall update the allergic list periodically to ensure all teachers, teaching assistants, head of years and helping staff are aware of the students with allergy profile. Medical team shall educate all the staff members to identify the signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction- from mild to severe.
- Allergy List to be posted in all classrooms of the relevant students only to maintain confidentiality.
- School Nurse to keep Antihistamine (injection, tablet, syrup) and EpiPen at the School Clinic.
- For any child who has a history of severe allergic reaction, An EpiPen to be submitted to the School Clinic by the parents labeled clearly with the child's name along with the instructions for its usage from the treating physician/pediatrician.

### **FOOD RELATED ACTIVITIES (ECA AND FIELD TRIPS):**

- A comprehensive risk assessment form should be completed for each and every activity (field trip, celebration at school) mentioning full details of all planned activities by the leading personnel, reviewed by the head of year and health and safety officer.

- If any food related activity is included (food tasting, meal offer on a trip etc), the list of the participant students should be shared with the medical team at least 14 days prior the event. Medical team shall cross check the health record of all participant students and alert the teachers in case any food allergy is positive.
- Parents should select the meal plan for their child/ren if various options are available.
- Adequate replacement meals should be offered to students with food allergies.
- Extra curricular activity involving food should be carefully planned by the leading teacher. All ingredients should be assessed carefully and cross checked with the allergy list before proceeding with their usage in the activity.
- If a child with known food allergy wishes to join cooking ECA, an email with undertaking should be sent to the parents seeking their consent to allow students to participate in the ECA. Parents should also be informed of the ingredients planned to be used in the next class so that they can review and any required amendment can be done.

### **SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF ALLERGIC REACTION:**

- **Eyes:** watery, itchy, pink
- **Skin :** itch, hives, rash
- **Gastrointestinal symptoms:** gastric reflux, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal cramps
- **Respiratory symptoms:** wheezing, cough, difficulty in breathing, difficulty in speaking, trouble swallowing, nasal congestion, nasal block, rhinorrhea, chest tightness.
- **Cardiovascular symptoms:** weak pulse, cyanosis, pale skin, dizziness, fainting, shock, hypotension, loss of consciousness.
- **Other symptoms:** sense of impending doom, irritability, change in alertness.

### **MANAGEMENT OF ALLERGIC REACTION, INCLUDING ANAPHYLAXIS:**

**ASSESS SEVERITY OF ALLERGIC REACTION:** Medical team shall assess the severity of allergic reaction and provide necessary first aid in accordance with the allergy action plan provided by the parents/guardians.

**SEVERE ALLERGIC REACTION (ANAPHYLAXIS):** Difficulty in breathing, severe hypotension, shock, loss of consciousness, cyanosis, swelling, bradycardia or tachycardia suggest severe allergic reaction which can prove fatal, hence prompt use of pediatric Epipen is advised.

Emergency action plan should be activated immediately in such cases, an ambulance should be called by one member of the Emergency Response Team, the parents should be informed of the situation and arrange to meet at the hospital. Emergency contact to be used in case parents are not accessible.

Staff must remain calm at all times; children who witness an allergic reaction may well be affected by it.

**MILD TO MODERATE REACTION:** Rhinorrhea, cough, skin rash, eye irritation etc. Management shall proceed with antihistamine (topical or syrup as per symptoms) and observation in school clinic after informing the parents with their verbal consent.

**INFORM THE PARENTS/GUARDIANS:** Parents should be immediately informed of any allergic reaction encountered at school and an incident report be prepared promptly with accurate documentation. The event should be entered in the health file of the student.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

### Parents:

- Read the policy in detail, understand their responsibilities and fulfill the requirements expected from them.
- Share the medical/health information of the student by providing written documentation from the treating pediatrician, along with an emergency action plan to be used by the school medical team in the hour of need.
- Provide the school with their updated contact numbers and email addresses, including one active emergency contact number.
- Inform the school regarding any change in health condition or treatment plan of the student.
- Submit the medicines prescribed by the treating physician to be used in emergency situations to school clinic and replace them if and when needed (expired or used).
- Educate the child as per age to help him understand his medical condition and the precautionary measures to be taken by him/her (hand hygiene, no food sharing, early recognition of allergic symptoms, reading food labels etc).

### Students:

- Have an appropriate understanding of their medical condition as per age and are aware of the allergens.
- Do not share food.
- Observe good hand hygiene.
- Do not eat anything with unknown ingredients.
- Identify early signs of allergic reaction.
- Inform an adult (teacher or teaching assistant) of a possible accidental exposure to an allergen immediately.

### Teachers and Teaching Assistants:

- Be aware of the students suffering from allergies

- Display a list of students with documented allergies in the classroom while maintaining the confidentiality of the document.
- Able to identify the early signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction.
- Able to provide first aid if needed
- Know the location of the school clinic, have contact numbers of school nurses and school physicians to call for immediate help.
- Inform parents about the ingredient to be used in the cooking ECA well in advance.
- Inform parents and medical team of any field trip being arranged involving food distribution.
- Encourage hand hygiene.
- Forbids food sharing and emphasizes nut free policy.

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