

Stronger Allergy Protections Coming to UK Schools

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Schools across England will soon be required to introduce stronger protections for pupils with allergies under new government plans aimed at improving safety and reducing preventable medical emergencies in education settings.

The Department for Education has announced proposals that would require schools to stock life-saving adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs), ensure staff receive allergy awareness training, and introduce dedicated school allergy policies supported by Individual Healthcare Plans.

The measures are part of updated statutory guidance on supporting children and young people with medical conditions in schools, which is currently open for consultation ahead of its planned introduction in **September 2026**.

Life-Saving Medication in Schools

Under the proposed changes, schools will be required for the first time to keep spare adrenaline auto-injectors on site so staff can respond quickly if a pupil experiences a severe allergic reaction.

Teachers and school staff will also receive mandatory allergy awareness training, including how to recognise symptoms of an allergic reaction, administer emergency medication and follow appropriate incident procedures.

The guidance will also require schools to maintain clear policies for supporting pupils with medical conditions, including Individual Healthcare Plans that outline specific arrangements for pupils with allergies and other health needs.

The government says these measures will help ensure consistent support across the education system and provide schools with clearer guidance on managing medical risks.

Improving Safety and School Attendance

Allergies affect a significant number of children in England, and medical conditions related to allergies can have a substantial impact on school attendance.

Government data indicates that around 500,000 days of learning were lost last year due to allergy-related illness or medical appointments, highlighting the importance of improved support within school environments.

The new guidance aims to standardise practices already being adopted by many schools, while signposting reliable training and resources that education staff can use to support pupils safely.

The government has also issued an open call for businesses and organisations to help support the costs associated with these changes, including providing access to adrenaline auto-injectors.

Giving Parents Greater Confidence

Announcing the proposals, **Olivia Bailey, Minister for Early Education**, said the changes are designed to ensure parents can feel confident that schools are equipped to respond to serious allergic reactions.

“No parent should have to send their child to school worried that a life-threatening allergic reaction won’t be handled swiftly.

We have listened to the families and organisations who have campaigned tirelessly on this issue, and we are acting.

These new requirements will give parents the confidence that every school has the training, the plans and the equipment in place to keep their child safe.”

The plans follow campaigning from families and advocacy groups, including **Helen Blythe**, whose son Benedict tragically died after an allergic reaction at school.

Helen and Peter Blythe, founders of the **Benedict Blythe Foundation**, have spent several years campaigning for improved allergy protections in schools.

“For four years, we have campaigned for Benedict’s Law so that no child faces the preventable gaps in allergy safety that cost our five-year-old son his life,” they said.

“Knowing that future children will enter a system far safer than the one he did is a powerful and lasting legacy for our son Benedict.”

Schools Already Strengthening Procedures

Many schools have already begun introducing stronger allergy procedures and staff training programmes to ensure they are prepared to manage medical emergencies.

Danielle Thackray, School Business Manager at Walbottle Village Primary School in Newcastle, said structured training and policy improvements have helped strengthen her school’s approach.

“Investing in allergy training has been absolutely necessary for our school. We have eight children with allergies, including one severe case, and while we always had healthcare plans in place, the structured training, emergency drills and support with policies have taken our procedures to the next level.”

She added that the training provides reassurance for both staff and families.

“The AAI’s and training are an expense, but they are worth every penny for the peace of mind they give parents and staff, knowing we are fully prepared should the worst happen.”

Wider Support for Pupils with Medical Conditions

The updated guidance will also include expanded information covering other medical conditions commonly supported in schools.

For example, Individual Healthcare Plans for pupils with epilepsy will be expected to include details such as seizure types and emergency response procedures.

The guidance also recognises the increasing number of children living with type 1 and type 2 diabetes, with schools expected to support pupils using technologies such as continuous glucose monitors and insulin pumps, including devices that operate through mobile phone apps.

Dr Zubir Ahmed, Health Innovation and Safety Minister, said improving collaboration between health services and education settings is essential for supporting children with medical needs.

“Every child deserves to feel safe and supported at school, regardless of their medical needs.”

Allergies and other conditions affect hundreds of thousands of children across England, and it is right that we give schools the tools, training and clear guidance they need to respond confidently in an emergency.”

Creating Safer School Environments

Organisations supporting children with allergies have welcomed the new guidance and the opportunity to improve consistency across schools.

Tanya Ednan-Laperouse OBE, founder of the **Natasha Allergy Research Foundation**, said the changes represent an important step forward.

“Ensuring children with food allergies are safe at school is critical. We welcome this statutory guidance and the confidence it can bring to schools, teachers, pupils and parents.”

As the consultation progresses, education leaders, families and organisations are being encouraged to share their views before the new guidance is finalised.

If implemented as planned, the measures will mark a significant shift in how schools manage allergies and medical conditions — helping ensure that pupils with health needs are **safe, supported and fully included in school life**.