Hertfordshire Music Service: Allergy safety and anaphylaxis awareness policy

Version: 1.1

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1. Purpose

Hertfordshire Music Service (HMS) is committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment for children, young people, staff, volunteers and visitors.

This policy explains:

- how HMS supports children and young people with allergies;
- how HMS works with schools, parents/carers and venues;

HMS recognises that the Department for Education's Allergy Safety in Schools guidance applies primarily to schools, academies and pupil referral units.

HMS is not allocated a DfE number, so therefore this policy explains how HMS supports those settings and manages allergy safety within HMS activities.

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2. Scope

For the purposes of this policy, HMS staff refers to all employed staff, self-employed tutors, and volunteers (except those supervised at all times) working directly with children and young people.

This policy applies to all HMS activities in schools and external venues or music centres.

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3. Roles and Responsibilities

Schools

When HMS operates on school premises, the school remains responsible for all aspects of its allergy safety policy.

For out of school activities, allergy safety is included as part of each local risk assessment at music centres or external events and concerts.

HMS

HMS will ensure all HMS staff working directly with children and young people have completed allergy and anaphylaxis training to the expected standards in the DfE guidance.

HMS Staff

All HMS staff must follow school or venue procedures, act promptly in an emergency and report incidents and near misses.

To enable HMS to plan and maintain first aid arrangements that are adequate and appropriate to identified workplace and workforce needs, a trusted and voluntary mechanism for employees to share relevant medical information that may assist emergency response, first aid support and, where relevant, reasonable workplace support is available. For any staff who have a medical condition they previously haven't made HMS aware of, a voluntary medical disclosure form can be completed to inform HMS of any medical needs and emergency support requirements.

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4. Training

HMS expects all staff who work directly with children and young people to have completed allergy-awareness and anaphylaxis training, and/or any relevant refresher course, within the previous 12 months.

HMS may accept equivalent training completed through another employer or recognised provider where:

- evidence of completion is provided;
- training is less than 12 months old;
- content is considered equivalent.

Individuals whose external training is accepted must still complete any school or HMS briefing for activities at a school, music centre or other venue.

Training expectations will be reviewed as national requirements develop.

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5. Working with children and young people with allergies

HMS supports the principle that children and young people with allergies should participate fully in music education opportunities wherever it is safe to do so.

HMS staff should:

- follow information provided by the school or HMS;
- support sensible allergy management arrangements;
- avoid unnecessary exclusion from activities;
- seek advice where there is uncertainty.

Teachers should not make independent decisions to exclude a pupil because of an allergy without discussion with the school and/or HMS manager.

HMS will not store any spare Auto Adrenalin Injectors (AAI) at music centre venues or make them available at external events – however HMS staff will prompt pupils and their families to ensure any prescribed allergy medication is always accessible.

Anyone who requires access to an AAI must ensure that relevant medical information is shared via the lesson management system (currently SpeedAdmin) so that, where relevant, any emergency response and/or first aid support is clearly identified in advance of any activities taking place.

Where an AAI is required, local arrangements will be confirmed on identifying where the AAI should be kept and how to ensure it remains accessible.

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6. Before Teaching

Before beginning regular work within a school or venue, teachers should ensure all local arrangements and procedures are understood.

Any concerns should be raised with the school and the relevant HMS manager.

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7. During Lessons and Activities

Staff should:

- take allergy concerns seriously;
- follow local procedures;
- follow any allergen restrictions communicated by the setting;
- keep relevant medical information confidential.

Staff must not make any food, including sweets, available to children and young people.

For ensembles, concerts, trips and residentials, managers should ensure appropriate risk assessment and planning have taken place.

HMS already requires teachers to be able to access a personal mobile device for completing attendance and accessing learning resources. To ensure that HMS staff can contact help in an emergency, it is expected that these personal mobile devices will not be handed in at reception.

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8. Incidents and Near Misses

All allergy-related incidents and near misses in schools must be reported via the school's local policy and procedure.

For incidents and near misses at any other venues, the existing Hertfordshire County Council incident reporting process will be followed.

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9. Monitoring and Review

The Music Director will oversee the implementation of this policy and is responsible for the review and coordination of policy updates.

The Head of People, Culture & Business Development will implement and manage the ongoing, cyclical training programme linked to this policy.

This is an HMS leadership and governance arrangement and is not intended to replicate the statutory leadership role required of schools under the DfE guidance.

DfE statutory guidance: Allergy safety in schools - GOV.UK