Context

At Seacliff Community Kindergarten we aim to be an Allergy Aware Centre that works with children and families to create a safe environment for all children including those with allergies.

Seacliff Community Kindergarten has prepared and implemented this Allergy Aware Policy to ensure that staff and parents are familiar with some common serious allergies and that they understand the processes and procedures required to support children with allergies. The policy also aims to support all children, staff and families to become more allergy aware.

Some children are at risk of an anaphylaxis reaction if exposed to certain allergens and therefore need to have appropriate measures in place as they begin kindergarten. As a number of children with nut allergies have attended and continue to attend the kindergarten the Governing Council has determined Seacliff Community Kindergarten a “nut-free centre”.

Common allergens are:

- Foods (peanuts and tree nuts, shellfish and fish, milk, egg, strawberries)
- Insect bites (bees, wasps, jumper ants)
- Medications (antibiotics, aspirin)
- Latex (rubber gloves, balloons).

Common reactions include hives, swollen eyes, wheezing and asthma symptoms. Some reactions are life-threatening.

What is Anaphylaxis?

This is the most severe form of allergic reaction and can result in death. An anaphylactic reaction (or full body shock) can occur within seconds of exposure to an allergen or it may occur as a delayed reaction several hours after initial exposure. Anaphylaxis is a critical medical emergency that requires immediate treatment with adrenalin by injection to prevent injury or loss of life. (Adrenalin opens up airways and blood vessels in the body).

Allergy Aware Practices and Procedures

Required Practices

The kindergarten must be informed by parents of all allergies, if any, upon enrolment, and at any time during the child’s kindergarten year if an allergy is identified.

The staff, in consultation with the parents, will conduct a risk assessment and develop a Health Support Plan for the child. Health support Plans outline any accommodations that may need to be made within the kindergarten to support the child’s safety while at kindergarten. Additional training for staff may be identified at this time.

Parents of children with allergies will be required to provide a Health Care Plan from the child’s treating health professional if medication is to be administered while the child is at kindergarten.

Parents will be required to ensure that any medication that is required, including an auto injector, is supplied to the kindergarten and that the medication provided has a current expiry date.

All relevant staff including relief staff will be informed of the needs of children with allergies.

Parents of other children will be notified when a child who has an allergy with potential for anaphylaxis attends the kindergarten. Information regarding foods or items to be excluded will be communicated to families in accordance with the child’s Health Support Plan.
Information about the kindergarten’s Allergy Aware Policy and nut-free status will be provided to all new families and communicated from time to time through the kindergarten’s newsletter and other communications. When children bring products that contain nuts, the staff will place the snack in a container in the kitchen and the child will be able to take the product home at the end of the day. Parents will be alerted to the reason for the product being sent home. Where the child has no alternative the parent may be contacted to bring in alternative food.

**First Aid**

All staff are encouraged to undertake first aid training including training in responding to anaphylaxis. At least one staff member who holds a current Senior First Aid Certificate will be on site at all times.

Procedures will be in place to ensure the safe storage of and immediate access to first aid equipment, including any autoinjectors required for particular children. Children’s autoinjectors will be clearly labelled and kept with their Health Care Plan [and Health Support Plan?].

**Curriculum**

Children identified as susceptible to anaphylaxis will not be supplied with food unless prearranged and agreed with the child’s family.

Discussion with families of children with allergies will occur in planning for kindergarten activities eg cooking and excursions, or in situations where children may be at risk if exposed to particular allergens eg insects or latex.

Staff will incorporate education about food allergies into the food and nutrition program so that all children become more allergy aware.

Children will not share or swap food, unless under supervision (eg for special occasions as pre arranged and agreed with families). They will be required to sit in designated areas when eating.

Parents of children with food allergies will be encouraged to supply a safe alternative that can be given to their child in the case of special events eg for birthdays.

Staff will monitor such areas as the collage area where exposure to allergens may occur eg egg cartons and milk cartons. Where a specific allergy is identified parents will be requested not to send such items to kindergarten.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

**Director**

Ensuring implementation of this policy.
Inform parents / guardians of the requirements of these procedures.

**Staff**

Follow all reasonable instructions in relation to this policy.
Inform parents / guardians of the requirements of this procedure.

**Parents**

Will ensure that they adhere to the requirements of the policy and procedures.

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