

Updated guidance: Allergy safety in schools – Adrenaline Auto-Injectors (AAls)

The [Allergy safety in schools statutory guidance](#), published by the Department of Education in July 2026 highlights that ‘schools (*though not colleges or early years settings*) are permitted to stock “spare” adrenaline devices for emergency use, and should do so’.

What does this mean for Community Pharmacies?

You may see an increase in requests from schools for AAls as they prepare to implement this new guidance. Schools are permitted to obtain AAls for emergency use under the Human Medicines (Amendment) Regulations 2017.

How do schools obtain AAls?

Schools can obtain supplies of AAls from a Community Pharmacy via a signed order, signed by the principal or head teacher.

Ideally, the signed order should be written or printed on the school’s letter headed paper; however, this is not a legal requirement.

The signed order must contain the following information:

- Name and address of the school
- Product name (for example EpiPen® **or** Jext® adrenaline auto-injector device)
- Strength
 - 150 micrograms (for children under 6 years of age), or
 - 300 micrograms (for individuals over 6 years of age)
- Purpose for which the product is required
 - For example: The adrenaline auto-injectors will be used in line with the manufacturer’s instructions, for the emergency treatment of anaphylaxis in accordance with the Human Medicines (Amendment) Regulations 2017. This allows schools to purchase “spare” back-up adrenaline auto-injectors for the emergency treatment of anaphylaxis.
- Total quantity required
- Signature of the principal or head teacher

A template letter (signed order) can be found in the Department of Health’s [Guidance on the use of adrenaline auto-injectors in schools: ANNEX](#) or an editable version downloaded at [Spare Pens in Schools](#).

Which brand of AAI should schools purchase?

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) advises schools to purchase a single brand of an AAI device to avoid confusion in administration and training. It is up to the school to decide which brand(s) to purchase. Where all pupils are prescribed the same device, the school should obtain the same brand for the spare AAI. If two or more brands are prescribed to pupils, the school may wish to purchase the brand most commonly prescribed to its pupils. However, the decision as to which brands to purchase will depend on local circumstances and is left to the discretion of the school.

How many AAIs should the school request?

The number that can be obtained by individual schools is not specified in legislation; however, only a reasonable number can be obtained, on an occasional basis and the school must not intend to profit from the purchase. Quantity purchased by each school should consider the size of the school, number of pupils at risk, building layout and ability to reach a device within 5 minutes. The shelf-life of an AAI tends to be only 12-18 months before expiry, and overstocking could lead to expensive wastage. Schools will need to have robust stock monitoring processes in place and have plans to replace stock nearing its expiry date.

The [Allergy safety in schools statutory guidance](#) advises on the quantity of AAIs that schools should stock, highlighting that “spare” AAIs should always be stocked and stored in pairs.

School type	AAIs for children under 6 years of age (150 micrograms) e.g. EpiPen Junior®, Jext 150®	AAIs for individuals over 6 years of age (300 micrograms) e.g. EpiPen®, Jext 300®
State-funded nursery school	One pair of “spare” AAIs	N/A
Primary school	One pair of “spare” AAIs	One pair of “spare” AAIs
Secondary school	N/A	One or two pairs of “spare” AAIs [†]
Special school	One pair of “spare” AAIs	One pair of “spare” AAIs

[†] Secondary schools with large sites should consider having two pairs of “spare” AAIs, so that a pair of “spare” AAIs are available within five minutes of wherever they may be needed.

Where schools operate across more than one site, they should ensure there are spare AAIs of the appropriate dosage on each site as required.

Pharmacists should exercise their professional judgement when responding to requests from schools.

What additional advice can Community Pharmacies provide to schools at the point of supply?

Schools are expected to provide allergy awareness training which includes how to respond in an emergency and how to use the AAI. However, Community Pharmacies can offer additional support at the point of supply in the following forms:

- Demonstration of how to administer the AAI, if appropriate, to the person collecting the item.
- Signposting to the AAI patient information leaflet and to the demonstration videos hosted on the manufacturers' website.
- Advice on the correct storage of the AAIs. They should be easily reached within 5 minutes and not kept in locked storage.
- Raise awareness of the expiry dates on the AAIs supplied and the need for robust stock checks, stock rotation and stock replacement procedures. This will aim to ensure shorter dated AAIs are used first to reduce wastage and ensure the AAI has not exceeded its expiry when needed in an emergency.

How should the school dispose of used and expired AAIs?

Used AAIs can be given to the ambulance paramedics on arrival or disposed of in a pre-ordered sharps bin for collection by the local council. Schools will need to contact their local council to see what arrangements are in place. Expired AAIs should be disposed of in the pre-ordered sharps bin, or they can purchase one from the pharmacy.

Contrary to the published guidance, AAIs **cannot** be returned to a Community Pharmacy for disposal.