

Benedicts Law

Benedict's Law is a set of legal reforms and statutory requirements in England designed to standardise allergy safety and emergency responses in schools. Formally introduced via the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026, the framework came into effect in September 2026. It transitions allergy management from optional "best practice" into a strict statutory obligation.

The law is named in memory of five-year-old Benedict Blythe, who tragically died from anaphylaxis at school in 2021 after being mistakenly given cow's milk, an allergen the school was already aware of.

Benedict's Law does not directly apply to VPC as a youth organisation. The new statutory allergy-safety requirements specifically apply to schools in England, including maintained schools, academies, free schools and PRUs. ([GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)) It is also not mandatory for colleges and Further Education establishments, but the guidance is still useful.

If the VPC unit meets inside a school, that doesn't automatically make the VPC itself subject to the school's statutory duties, although the school may have policies that cover activities taking place on its premises.

VPC still has its own responsibilities for keeping cadets safe, including dealing appropriately with known allergies and medical emergencies.

If a cadet has a known risk of anaphylaxis, the unit should have an appropriate individual healthcare/emergency plan, and leaders should know:

- what the cadet is allergic to
- where their prescribed AAI(s) are kept
- how to recognise anaphylaxis