Allergy Awareness Statement
A Nut-Aware School

Rationale: We have children attending St Mary’s School who suffer from an anaphylactic reaction to peanuts/tree nuts. These reactions can be serious and even life threatening. The symptoms of anaphylactic shock may include hives, itching, swelling, watery eyes, runny nose, vomiting, diarrhoea, stomach cramps, coughing, wheezing, throat tightness/closing, difficulty swallowing, difficulty breathing, dizziness, fainting, loss of consciousness or a change of skin colour. The most dangerous symptoms are breathing difficulties or a drop in blood pressure, which can be potentially fatal. At the present time we do have students who require an EPIPEN (automatic injector device to administer adrenalin). Epipens are kept at both campuses. As caregivers, we need to take all precautions necessary to minimize risk of a life threatening anaphylaxis. As a community, we can work together to minimize risks associated with being exposed to these foods which are triggers to such attacks.

What Does This Mean?
For our school
- Our school tuckshop will not have for sale food items that contain nuts. This does not apply to foods labelled “may contain traces of nuts”.
- No food is allowed to be shared between children at lunch time.
- Awards of food/sweets will not be given that contain nut ingredients e.g. chocolates.
- Education for students on food allergies and healthy foods is incorporated into the school curriculum.
- We ask parents to ensure that birthday cakes are peanut and nut free.
- Annual inservice for teachers on using epipens; annual inservice on children who are allergic to peanuts and nuts.
- Pictures of children with plan displayed in the staffroom, classrooms and other appropriate areas (i.e. near eating areas)
- “Nut Aware” Statement to be included in parent handbook, on school website, included as part of information on parent information nights and included in school newsletter once a term.
- Parents being informed which classes contain children with nut allergies.

For teachers
- Avoiding the use of high risk allergens such as peanuts and tree nuts in curricular activities.
- Reviewing curriculum materials to ensure that they do not advocate the use of high risk allergens such as peanuts and tree nuts.
- Being aware that craft items can be risk items (for example, egg cartons, milk containers, peanut butter jars).
- Avoiding the use of party balloons where latex is a known allergen.

For parents
- We ask parents not to send peanut butter on sandwiches, or Nutella (to minimize the risk from person to person contact).
- Emphasize the importance of hygiene when eating food at home and at school – washing hands. While we can never entirely enforce or regulate what comes from home in each child’s lunch box nor where foods contain traces of nut oil, we hope people will assist in working toward minimizing the risks and looking at alternatives from nut products.