

# Allergy Policy

***play-to-learn***

MONTESSORI NURSERIES AND PRE-SCHOOLS



## **Statement of Intent:**

This policy is concerned with a whole setting approach to the health care and management of those members of the setting community suffering from specific allergies.

The setting is aware that children who attend may suffer from food, bee/ wasp sting, animal or nut allergies and we believe that all allergies should be taken seriously and dealt with in a professional and appropriate way.

We cannot guarantee a completely allergen free environment, rather: we seek to minimise the risk of exposure, encourage self-responsibility, and plan for effective response to possible emergencies.

**Updated: Feb 13, Jan 16, March 17, June 2019, May 2021**

***Next annual review date: September 2022***

## **Introduction**

The [Early Years Statutory Framework](#) (DfE) states that the provider must obtain information about special dietary requirements, preferences, and food allergies that the child has, and any special health requirements. As such parents are asked to provide details on the child's Enrolment form and will be asked to complete a Healthcare plan /Food Allergy/Intolerance plan which is discussed with the parents before the child starts attending the setting.

An allergic reaction to nuts is the most common high-risk allergy, and as such demands more rigorous controls.

This policy applies to all members of the setting community:

- Staff including cover staff
- Parents / Guardians
- Volunteers
- Students

## **Purpose**

The setting is committed to establishing an effective risk management practice to minimise children, staff, parent and visitor exposure to known allergens. The setting educates and trains staff to ensure an effective emergency response to any allergic reaction situation.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

Everyone in the setting has a responsibility to ensure the safety and welfare of the children.

The setting manager has an overview of ensuring the involvement of parents in completing individual children's Healthcare/Food Allergy/Intolerance plans and each key person regularly updates and maintains information and ensures in date medication is stored for each child.

The setting manager ensures the establishment and maintenance of practices for effectively communicating a child's healthcare plans to all staff and that staff understand anaphylaxis management, including awareness of triggers and first aid procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency.

All staff support and guide age-appropriate education of the children with severe food allergies.

Parents/carers are responsible for providing, in writing, ongoing accurate medical information for their child, to the setting.

The setting will ensure that other parents/carers are regularly reminded that snacks and lunch box contents should be nut free and be in the original packaging that detail the ingredients. The setting will monitor the contents of children's lunchboxes and snack.

## Procedure

Upon registering the child at the setting, parents should declare that their child has additional/medical needs. The setting manager will request additional information before the child starts at the setting.

Parents/carers will need to provide written confirmation from a doctor or consultant, which explains the condition, defines the allergy triggers and any required medication.

The Setting Manager will ensure that a Healthcare/Food Allergy/Intolerance plan is established for each child with a known allergy.

Children can wear a medic-alert bracelet at the setting.

## Parent/Carer Involvement

Parents **must** complete a Healthcare/Food Allergy/Intolerance plan confirming and detailing the nature of the allergy/allergen, including:

- **The allergen** (the substance the child is allergic to)
- **The nature of the allergic reaction** (from rash, breathing problems to anaphylactic shock)

### Possible Symptoms

**Symptoms of food allergy range from mild to life threatening.**

- Abdominal pain/cramps
  - Bloating
  - Tingling/itching in the mouth
  - Metallic taste in mouth
  - Nausea and vomiting
  - Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
  - Wheezing
  - Swelling of the tongue
  - Trouble swallowing
  - Dizziness
  - Weak pulse/drop in blood pressure
  - Symptoms of shock such as skin rash (hives) and flushed skin
  - Anaphylaxis which can be life threatening
- **What to do in case of allergic reaction**, including any medication to be used and how it is to be used.
  - A list of food products and food derivatives the child must not encounter.
  - Doctor's surgery contact details

Parents **must** supply:

- In date medication/equipment clearly labelled in the original container as dispensed by a doctor/pharmacy
- In the case of life saving medication e.g. Epi-pens, the child will not be allowed to attend without it. Where an EpiPen (Adrenalin) is required:
  - Parents/ guardians are responsible for the provision and timely replacement of the EpiPen.
  - The EpiPen is stored securely in an easily accessible area, known by all staff.
- Up to date emergency contact information

### **Staff Responsibilities**

All staff are required to read and understand a child's medical/additional needs information and to adhere to Health & Safety regulations and EYFS guidance regarding food and drink within the setting.

- Where a child has been identified as having a life-threatening allergy, a team meeting will be set up as soon as possible where all staff concerned attend to update knowledge and procedures.
- A risk assessment will be carried out by the Health & Safety officer and Setting manager and any additional procedures will be put in place. A copy of the risk assessment should be with the child's Healthcare/Food Allergy/Intolerance plan.
- All staff will know what treatment/medication is required by the child and where any medication is stored. As part of the Paediatric First Aid training, EpiPen use, and storage has been discussed and administering the EpiPen demonstrated.
- Staff are required to supervise and monitor children at snack time. An allergy/medical needs list will be stored securely with a recent photograph of children, for staff to refer to during snack time. Staff are required to check the ingredients of snack items to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the children. It is the responsibility of the staff to ensure that the contents are safe for the child to consume.
- Staff are to promote hand washing before and after eating.
- Children are not permitted to share food, unless directed by staff.
- A child's Key Person will seek updated information from parents/carers, for the Healthcare/Food Allergy/Intolerance plan at the commencement of each academic year but any change in a child's needs during the year must be reported immediately by parents/carers.
- Staff should discuss food related activity safety with parents prior to the activity
- Staff should ensure that emergency medication is easily accessible, especially at times of high risk.

### **Action to be taken in the event of an emergency:**

#### **In the event of a child suffering an allergic reaction:**

- We will delegate a member of staff to contact the child's parents.
- If a child becomes distressed or symptoms become more serious, the manager or deputy manager will telephone the emergency services.
- Staff to keep calm and make the child feel comfortable and give the child space.
- Medication should be administered as per the Healthcare/Food Allergy/Intolerance plan and in conjunction with the "Administering Medicines Policy" guidance.
- If parents have not arrived by the time ambulance arrives, a member of staff will accompany the child to hospital.

#### **The following setting policies and procedures in relation to this policy are:**

- Food and Drink
- Health & Safety
- Risk Assessment

#### **Guidance**

[Food allergy and intolerance | Food Standards Agency](#)

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Definitions**

**Allergy** - A condition in which the body has an exaggerated response to a substance, also known as hypersensitivity. The response may be mild, or in rare cases it can be associated with the severe and life-threatening reaction called anaphylaxis. When someone has an allergy, they can have many different physical reactions when they are exposed to allergens. The type of reaction and the severity of it depends on the individual and the severity of their allergy, miniscule amounts of allergens, such as nuts, can cause severe adverse reactions including potentially fatal anaphylactic shock.

**Healthcare/Food Allergy/Intolerance plan** - A detailed document (s) outlining an individual child's condition/treatment, and action required.

**Allergen** - A normally harmless substance that triggers an allergic reaction in the immune system of a susceptible person.

**Anaphylaxis** - Anaphylaxis, or anaphylactic shock, is a sudden, severe and potentially life-threatening allergic reaction to food, stings, bites, or medicines.

**Control measures** –how the child can be prevented from getting into contact with the allergen.

**EpiPen** - Brand name for syringe style device containing the drug, Adrenalin, which is ready for immediate inter-muscular administration.

**Food allergy** - abnormal response to a food triggered by a body's immune system. There are several types of immune responses to food.

**Food Intolerance** - is not so clear cut and although not life threatening, it can and often does, make the sufferer feel extremely unwell and can have a major impact on the person. Symptoms can affect different people in different ways but usually last for many hours or days depending on the symptoms.

**Minimized Risk Environment**- An environment where risk management practices. (e.g., risk assessment forms) have minimised the risk of (allergen) exposure.