



# FOOD ALLERGY POLICY

Academic year 2021 – 2022

## **INTRODUCTION**

Creative Minds Nursery recognises that Children, staff, and Visitors may suffer from potentially life-threatening allergies or intolerances to certain foods.

Creative Minds Nursery is committed to a whole Nursery approach to the care and management of those members of the Nursery community. This policy looks at food allergies and intolerances.

The Nursery's position is not to guarantee a completely allergen free environment, rather to minimise the risk of exposure by hazard identification, instruction, and information. This will provide help and assistance for our pupils. It is also important that the Nursery has clear plans for an effective response to possible emergencies.

## **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **Policy Scope**

The Nursery is committed to proactive risk food allergy management through:

- Ensuring that robust systems in place to ensure accurate and timely sharing of information relating to food allergies and intolerances with clearly defined responsibilities.
- Provision of staff awareness on food allergies/intolerances, possible symptoms (including anaphylaxis) recognition and treatment.

The intent of this policy is to minimise the risk of any person suffering allergy-induced reaction, or food intolerance whilst at Creative Minds Nursery or attending any nursery related activity.

The policy sets out guidance for staff to ensure they are suitably prepared to manage the day to day needs of pupils with food allergies and to address emergency situations should they arise. The policy also outlines the expectations of all those involved in the preparation or distribution of food within the nursery and of parents and other individuals, in informing the nursery of any food allergies.

## **ALLERGY INFORMATION**

True food allergies are reproducible adverse reactions to a particular food that involve the immune system. Virtually all known food allergens are proteins. They can be present in the food in large amounts and often survive food-processing conditions. Allergic reactions are characterised by the rapid release of chemicals in the body that cause symptoms, which can occur within minutes or up to an hour or more after ingestion of the allergen. The proportion of the population with true food allergy is approximately 1-2% of adults and about 5-8% of children, which equates to about 1.5 million people in the UK.

The common causes of allergies relevant to this policy are the 14 major food allergens:

- Eggs - also food glazed with egg
- Nuts, (almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, pecan nuts, Brazil nuts, pistachio, cashew and macadamia (Queensland) nuts, nut oils, marzipan)
- Sesame Seeds - bread, bread sticks, tahini, hummus, sesame oil
- Peanuts - sauces, cakes, desserts, ground nut oil, peanut flour
- Cereals containing Gluten
- Celery including stalks, leaves, seeds, and celeriac in salads
- Crustaceans, (prawns, crab, lobster, scampi, shrimp paste)
- Fish - some salad dressings, relishes, fish sauce, some soy and Worcester sauces
- Soya (tofu, bean curd, soya flour)
- Milk and dairy - also food glazed with milk
- Mustard - liquid mustard, mustard powder, mustard seeds
- Sulphur dioxide/Sulphites (dried fruit, fruit juice drinks)
- Lupin, seeds and flour, in some bread and pastries
- Molluscs, (mussels, whelks, oyster sauce, land snails and squid).

The allergy to nuts is the most common high-risk allergy however, it is important to ensure that all allergies and intolerances are treated equally as the effect to the individual can be both life-threatening and uncomfortable, if suffered.

Coeliac disease is not an allergy. Whilst it is classified as a food intolerance it is not like other intolerances in that it is an 'auto-immune' disease, which means that the body produces antibodies that attack its own tissues. In coeliac disease this attack is triggered by gluten, a protein found in wheat, rye and barley.

This intolerance to gluten causes an inflammatory response that damages the gut. Villi (tiny, finger-like projections that line the gut) become inflamed and then flattened (villous atrophy), leading to a decreased surface area for absorption of nutrients from food. People with undiagnosed coeliac disease can, as a result, have a wide range of digestive symptoms and can suffer from nutritional deficiencies. Other food intolerances may also require management and awareness.

## **PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Nursery has clear procedures and responsibilities to be followed in meeting the needs of pupils with medical needs relating to food allergies or intolerances.

### **Initial Information Provided Regarding Food Allergies or Intolerances**

The parents or carers of all new starters to the Nursery are required to complete a medical needs questionnaire on which the details of any food intolerances or allergies and their management should be described. If details are unclear or ambiguous, the Nursery will follow this up with a phone call to parents for further information which will be recorded by the Nursery.

An extra meeting can be arranged with staff to further discuss a child's needs. Where a child transfers from another nursery, the nursery will try and obtain any relevant information regarding how the previous setting managed the food allergy to provide continuity.

It is parents' responsibility to ensure that if their child's medical needs change at any point that they make the Nursery aware, and a revised medical needs form must be completed.

Members of staff or volunteers will be asked to disclose any food allergies as part of their induction.

## **HOW THE NURSERY USES THIS INFORMATION**

All medical needs forms are stored confidentially yet centrally so they can be accessed by appropriate members of staff as required.

Medical information for pupils is private and confidential however to ensure that medical needs can be properly managed, information is shared with Nursery staff. This is done in several ways:

- Before the start of a new academic year, medical needs information, including details of food allergies, are shared with the receiving room staff as part of our transition process.
- This information is collated and recorded on a list that is displayed in all kitchens and rooms.
- It is all room staff's responsibility to ensure that they are familiar with the information provided and that any other adults working with the children are aware of their needs as well.
- Where pupils or staff have an allergy which may result in anaphylaxis an Epi Pen will be provided for that specific individual and kept in a medical box accessible from the room.
- Where a food allergy significantly impacts on a child's day to day activity, a care plan will be put in place e.g., a child who requires tube feeding or is required to eat at a separate time. This will be constructed in conjunction with Nursery staff, parents, and healthcare professionals.
- Key medical needs information will be available when children are taken off site

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Staff**

The Nursery has first aiders in every room who will be called to assist in cases of allergic reaction including anaphylaxis. Staff have also had training in how to administer an EpiPen to those children who have an Allergy Management Plan. The Nursery will contact parents and the emergency services, if required, if a child suffers an allergic reaction

### **Parental**

- Completing the medical needs questionnaire and ensuring that any information regarding food allergies for their child is included.
- Updating the Nursery if their child's medical needs change at any point. Parents are requested to keep the Nursery up to date with any changes in allergy management with regards to clinic summaries, re-testing, and new food challenges.
- Ensuring that any required medication (EpiPens or other adrenalin injectors, inhalers, and any specific antihistamine) is supplied, in date, clearly marked with chemist's label and replaced as necessary
- The parents of all children who have an EpiPen must complete a written Allergy Management Plan.
- Attend any meeting as required to share further information about their child's food allergy, to plan for food management in Nursery or to complete a care plan.
- If an episode of anaphylaxis occurs outside Nursery, the Nursery must be informed.

## **MANAGEMENT OF FOOD ALLERGIES IN OTHER**

### **AREAS OF NURSERY LIFE**

#### **Birthdays**

We ask that children do not bring Birthday cakes/Treats into Nursery to distribute to classmates when it is their birthday.

This is to avoid disappointing children that may not be able to participate due to food allergies.

#### **Curriculum Activities**

As part of the Nursery curriculum, children may be involved in activities that involve preparing or tasting food (e.g., tasting food from other countries). Staff will take the needs of children with food allergies into account when planning these activities and will make modifications where possible to allow participation.

## **HOME PREPARED PACKED LUNCHES**

All Children are asked to bring a packed lunch from home.

We ask that all parents to pack their lunch boxes with consideration to food allergies.

If children have a food allergy which can be triggered by contact with certain food substances, as well as ingestion, the Nursery will ensure that due consideration is given to where the child is seated and the extra cleaning of tables.

Children are told that they are not allowed to share food at lunchtimes. Staff observe and assist the children at lunchtime to reduce the opportunity for children to share food, although we cannot guarantee that this will not happen.

### **Nuts & Egg free Nursery**

Due to an increased number of children with nut and Egg allergies, we ask that parents do not send children into Nursery with any nut or egg-based products in their lunchboxes This would include items such as peanut butter, lemon curd, mayonaise or packets of nuts.

Any items containing these ingredients will be put back into the child's lunch box and returned home.

### **Additional Notes:**

This year we have a child in the Discoverers who is highly allergic to Nuts, Egg and Sesame Seeds (Aphylactic) so we would ask parents to avoid packing any items that contain these ingredients.

Any items containing these will be left in lunch boxes and returned home

## **MONITORING AND REVIEW**

This policy is formally reviewed by The Nursery Business Manager Annually. The policy review takes into consideration the views of all

Internal use only

<b>This policy was adopted on</b>	<b>Date for review</b>
30.09.2021	August 2022