

Food Allergy Policy

Introduction

Amesbury welcomes all children with a food allergy to be part of our community. Our aim is to maintain the school as a nut-free zone and all parents and carers are made aware of this when their child is admitted to the school.

The School cannot guarantee a completely allergen free environment but seeks to minimise the risk of exposure where reasonable able to do so, to encourage self-responsibility, and plan for an effective response to possible emergencies. Protocols are in place to try to ensure that foods containing nuts are not used in the catering department.

Policy Aims

We aim to:

- Ensure that the appropriate personnel have considered the needs of food-allergic pupils and have developed appropriate procedures.
- Work in partnership with the parents/carers of children with food allergies, build trust, effective communication and individualised care around their child's specific needs.
- Educate children to take responsibility for managing their own allergy as is appropriate to their age and development.
- Minimise the risk of any child experiencing food allergy-induced reactions especially anaphylaxis where we are reasonably able to do so.
- Ensure that affected children are not exposed to food allergens such as nuts during school hours, or at times when the school organises ad hoc practices and rehearsals outside of normal school hours.
- Ensure that staff are properly prepared to manage emergency situations should they arise.
- To consider the needs of food-allergic pupils when handling foods as part of the school curriculum.

Background

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. Whilst almost any food protein can cause an allergic reaction in some people, the most common food allergens include:

- Cereals containing gluten
- Seafood
- Eggs
- Fish
- Peanuts
- Tree nuts (almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, brazil, cashew, pecan, pistachio and macadamia nuts)
- Fruit such as kiwi, strawberries, apples and pears
- Pine nuts
- Milk
- Soya
- Sesame seed/oil
- Celery

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.

N.B. Coeliac disease is not an allergy. Whilst it is classified as food intolerance it is not like other intolerances in that it is an autoimmune 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; leading to a decreased surface area for absorption of nutrients from food.

Procedures

Parents

- Provide the School Nurse with detailed information about their child's allergy to be recorded on the medical questionnaire; this is to include past reactions, triggers and recommended treatments. We also require copies of letters from their doctor/allergy consultant.
- Take responsibility for ensuring that their child's adrenaline pens are within date. *It is recommended that they sign up with the 'Epipen renewal reminder' text facility.* Expired adrenaline pens will be disposed of by the School Nurse; this may lead to your child being unable to partake in away matches/visits if they do not have an in date supply of their medication at school.
- Refrain from sending their child into school with any food/sweets (including birthday cakes which will be provided by the Catering Department) as they may not be aware that they contain ingredients which represent a significant risk to other pupils. Also bringing food/snacks in for their children to eat when collecting after school.
- Refrain from providing foods/sweets for day / residential trips. If these are required the school will provide them.

- Where the school cannot give guarantees around policies and protocols in place at other settings such as schools, residential settings, restaurants etc, parents are responsible for determining the level of risk by contacting the particular setting directly, and having done so for deciding whether they are prepared to allow their child to attend given the level of risk involved.

School Nurse Responsibilities

- All staff will be alerted to which children in school have an identified food allergy. Each child's name, photograph and allergy will be displayed in the kitchen, snack area and during charity cake sales for reference.
- Relevant information can be found on pupil's individual Schoolbase records.
- An individual care plan is in place for all children with a severe food allergy that may cause anaphylaxis and require the administration of an adrenaline pen. All adrenaline pens are kept with a copy of the child's care plan, outside the Medical Department (in EY building for Pre-Nursery to Reception classes) and are accessible at all times. Parents will be asked to provide an insulated carry case for them to be kept in.
- The school nurse will ensure that any staff responsible for accompanying an adrenaline pen user off site for the purposes of a school trip/match are aware of the child's allergy and care plan. A list of children with adrenaline pens is given to the teacher when the first aid bag is collected.
- All teachers will be trained how to administer an adrenaline pen during the regular Common Room updates and prior to residential trips or on request.
- The School Nurse will liaise with parents, teachers and catering staff with regard to any changes in a child's dietary needs and the food allergy list/medical records will be updated.
- The responsibilities of the School Nurse are strictly limited to the above. For further advice, guidance and support parents are advised to contact their family GP

Catering Staff and Catering Manager's responsibilities

- Catering staff will try to ensure that foods prepared and served are nut-free. It is understood that some foods are labelled as having been prepared or manufactured in an environment that may previously have been used for preparing products containing nuts.
- Catering supplies are kept separate to the kitchen area until they have been checked and signed off.
- Catering staff will ensure that they are able to support children with food allergy by being able to help a child to identify the foods they should/should not eat.
- Each child with a food allergy will be provided with alternative food choice.
- Allergy free birthday cakes will be provided for each child as will cakes for the school cakes sale which are advertised well in advance; these will be sold from a separate table.

- The School Nurse will liaise with parents, teachers and catering staff with regard to any changes in a child's dietary needs.

Teaching staff

- In addition, any teachers who have an adrenaline pen user in their care will be responsible for familiarising themselves with the child's allergy status and care plan.
- Staff need to request a first aid bag prior to any match or trip to ensure that the correct medication is provided by the School Nurse.
- Staff should inform catering staff at away matches of any children will allergies. They cannot form a judgement on the robustness of protocols in place at other schools.

Additional Risks

- There are numerous visitors to the Amesbury site on a daily basis and we cannot guarantee that they will comply with our requests relating to Amesbury being a Nut Free Zone. There are significant exposures on Wednesday and Thursday afternoons during inter school sport matches, after normal school hours and at weekend due to 3rd party visitors and at special annual events such as Athletic Sports Day.
- Charity cake sales are held. Although we ask parents to be careful about the ingredients in the cakes we cannot guarantee they will be. As a consequence the Catering Department will provide 'allergy free' cakes for children who require these.
- The school cannot guarantee that coaches, hotels, cafes and restaurants etc., we frequent during school trips will be 'nut free'.
- Pupils are sometimes allowed to purchase their own food and sweets on school trips. Staff will remind pupils that other members of the touring party might have an allergy and that they should avoid purchasing products that heighten risks. However the school cannot guarantee that pupils will not purchase and / or consume products containing nuts, either accidentally or intentionally.