



Allergens in Food Policy

(see also the Allergy Policy for the management of allergic reactions)

Policy Statement

Allergic reactions can make people very ill and can sometimes lead to death. We want to ensure that we avoid anyone getting ill by making sure that they don't eat foods to which they are allergic.

It is important that we take food allergy seriously. Under the Food Information Regulations (FIR) we have legal responsibility to provide the correct allergen information about the ingredients in the food that we make or serve to the families who use the nursery.

The law has listed 14 allergens that must be identified if they are used as the ingredients in a meal or snack. This means that we need to provide information about these allergens used in all foods that we serve or provide. (See Appendix 1 for the 14 allergens).

We must supply information for every item on our menus that contain any of the 14 allergens as ingredients.

Dealing with allergen information: Your quick checklist.

1. When someone asks you if a food contains a particular ingredient, always check every time – never guess.
2. If you are providing a meal or a food that contains one or more allergens, list them on the chart and menu – and make sure that the information is kept up to date and accurate.
3. Keep up-to-date ingredient information for any ready-made foods that you use (for example, ready-made sandwich filling). The ingredients are usually on the label or invoice.
4. When making food, keep a record of all the ingredients (and what they contain), including cooking oils, dressings, toppings, sauces and garnishes.
5. If you change the ingredients of a food / menu, make sure you update your ingredient information and tell your staff about the change.
6. If someone asks you to make food that doesn't contain a particular ingredient, don't say yes unless you can be sure that none of that ingredient is in the food.
7. If you're making food for someone with an allergy, make sure that work surfaces and equipment have been thoroughly cleaned and wash your hands thoroughly before preparing that food. Control the risks.

Procedures

It is our responsibility to know which allergens are present in the food we make and serve. Therefore, staff must:

1. Record information about all ingredients used in meals and snacks on recipes
2. Provide written allergen information on menus
3. Compile and update an Allergen folder
4. Display information about allergens on the parent's noticeboard
5. Keep staff trained and informed

1. Recording information about ingredients

When preparing a meal, the cook must think about the ingredients used in each recipe, and then carefully record the allergens contained in each meal on the recipe. Although the recipes are produced by CSO the ingredients / brands differ from nursery to nursery and therefore it is important that the cook / chef identifies the allergens from the ingredients s/he uses.

(If the cook is using pre-packed foods as an ingredient in the meal, please remember that some products (such as tinned or dried foods) have a long shelf life. This means that you may see both types of labelling (old and new) being used on these products for a few years after December 2014. Always remember to read the label.)

To help identify which ingredients contain allergens:

- Make sure that your kitchen staff use the same recipes every time.
- Keep a photocopy of the ingredient information on labels of pre-packed foods for example, sauces, desserts etc. in an Allergen Folder
- Keep ingredients in the original containers where possible.
- Where ingredients are delivered in bulk, and then transferred or stored in smaller containers ensure that containers are clearly labelled with ingredient and allergen information.
- Make sure that all staff are aware of where allergen information is stored and how it is kept.
- Ensure that the allergen information is kept up to date (for example, if recipes are changed or products substituted).
- Always check deliveries to make sure what is delivered is what was ordered.
- Ensure that the relevant labelling information is provided with the order
- Make sure that any records are updated, to help trace back to the source of your information
- Check that the food delivered is the same brand that is normally used, as different brands might have different ingredients.

2. Menus

Written allergen information should be provided on menus. For example:

Chicken Korma – Contains: Milk, Almonds (nuts)

Carrot cake – Contains: Milk, Egg, Wheat, Walnuts (nuts)

Where you have a group of foods such as cereals containing gluten, crustaceans, fish, nuts and molluscs, you will need to say what they are, for example, wheat, prawns, cod, almonds and mussels.

If you use part-prepared ingredients, make sure you know what's in them and make sure they are clearly labelled.

3. Allergen Folder

The Cook should keep an Allergen menu folder that contains.

- product specification sheets
- ingredients labels (photocopies are acceptable)
- Recipes with allergens identified
- Menus with allergens identified

4. Display information

- Details of the allergens must be listed clearly on menus displayed in nursery and any copies given to parents/carers.
- A notice on parent's / carers notice board should signpost parents / carers to where information about allergens in food can be obtained.

5. Keep staff trained and informed

- Managers should ensure that all staff, especially kitchen staff receive induction and training which makes them aware of their responsibilities with regards to allergens and of all relevant policies, procedures and forms from their first day in the job.
- The manager must ensure that allergen information is accessible to all staff and is kept up to date.
- When handling and preparing foods, staff must consider and take steps to prevent the risk of allergen cross-contamination.

Telling Parents / Carers about allergens

Allergy information should be discussed with parents/carers at the show round or booking visit or at the time an allergy is diagnosed. Information must be provided in writing.

Procedure for serving food to children with allergies to or intolerances of food ingredients

This procedure is to be followed to minimise the risk of a child who is allergic to or intolerant of any food ingredients coming into contact with specific allergens which could make them ill.

Details about the child's allergy/intolerance will have been obtained from parents and a care plan and risk assessment completed as necessary (please see the allergies policy). These will be reviewed on a termly basis. If a parent has a severe allergy to a food substance and requests that the child doesn't have that food, it will be treated *as if* the child has an allergy / intolerance to that food.

All employees in the room during snack and mealtimes must be made aware of all the food allergies, intolerances and preferences by the Room Leader or person in charge of the room. On a weekly basis, either on a Friday afternoon or Monday morning a computer printout detailing children present in the setting and their dietary requirements will be printed. It is the responsibility of the Manager to ensure that any extra bookings are added to the printout so that the Cook/Chef's information is always accurate.

A Dietary Requirements daily checklist is completed by the room leader or the person in charge of the room listing any children with a food allergy, intolerance or preference for all meals except breakfast when this is prepared and signed by a senior member of staff. This form be handed to the cook/chef together with the daily numbers and labels for each child with a dietary requirement stating the child's name and requirement e.g. Tom Smith – Vegetarian, or John Brown – No Dairy.

All meals for children with food allergies or intolerances must be plated on yellow plates or in yellow bowls separately from other meals to avoid cross contamination. The plated food must be clearly labelled with the child's full name and the allergen(s) which they must not have. This also applies to babies whose food is prepared in the milk kitchen. The Senior Practitioner should always check and sign to confirm a meal is suitable before it is served to a baby.

The cook must confirm that the meal they are handing to childcare staff meets the child's dietary requirements and sign the form. The practitioner checks the information to ensure it is correct and does not include anything the child should not have to eat. The practitioner signs the form to confirm that the correct meal is being given to the child. The form is returned to the kitchen.

A practitioner, preferably the child's key person, should sit near to the child during the meal to ensure that the child eats only their allergen free meal.

If the meal or any of its components do not include allergens, then the child can be allowed to self-serve with the other children. If the meal contains allergens, then a separate labelled yellow bowl can be used to allow the child to self-serve their own meal.

Dietary Preferences

Children who don't have an allergy or intolerance but who are vegetarian or prefer religious or other reasons will have their food served on green plates and bowls and labelled with details of the food they are not allowed to have. All other children will have food plated on white plates and bowls.

Children should have placemats colour coded in the same way as plates and bowls for the avoidance of confusion.

Legal framework

EU Food Information for Consumers Regulation; December 2014

Further guidance

- Allergen Information for Loose Foods; Food Standards Agency; Food.gov.uk 2014
- Free online allergen training can be obtained on: <http://allergytraining.food.gov.uk/>
- For information and advice about food allergies and intolerances, visit the Food Standards Agency website: www.food.gov.uk/allergy
- For information on the EU Food Information for Consumers Regulation 1169/2011 visit: http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/labellingnutrition/foodlabelling/proposed_legislation_en.htm
- For information on gluten, visit the Coeliac UK website: www.coeliac.org.uk
- If you want more gluten-free guidance, please go to: www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/allergy-guide/gluten/

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery
05/02/2025	KellieATye (Area Manager)

