



Food Allergy and Nutrition Management

Purpose

This policy is designed to manage the different dietary requirements of children who attend our nursery during all meal and snack times as well as curriculum activities. It is directed at all parents and staff including nursery and kitchen staff, and it is the Manager's responsibility to ensure that they are trained and that this training is monitored. Please also refer to the [Food Allergens Guidance](#).

Policy

Dietary Requirements

We have classified different dietary requirements in children as follows:

Food Allergy

When someone has a food allergy, their immune system reacts to a particular food as if it isn't safe. This can cause a life-threatening reaction and could prove fatal, so it is essential that the procedure is followed.

Food Intolerance

Food intolerance doesn't involve the immune system and is generally not life-threatening, but if someone eats a food that they are intolerant to, this could make them feel ill or affect their long-term health.

Religious/Cultural Preference

Some religions have specific dietary requirements that do not allow certain foods to be consumed. If it has been agreed that these can be accommodated by the nursery then it is essential that we do not compromise a family's beliefs.

Parental Preference

Parents have a right to decide on the contents of their children's diet and we will abide by this within reason and at the Manager's discretion. Once parents have reviewed our menus then they may wish some foods to be omitted from the child's diet for reasons that are not due to allergy, intolerance or religious preference. For example, their child may be vegetarian or vegan or they may wish them not to have certain food items.

Menus

We are committed to offering children nutritious meals and snacks which meet individual's needs and requirements. We have a set menu that has been endorsed to ensure the meals are healthy and balanced and adhere to the Children's Nutrition Partnership Guidance.

We will consider accommodating children with the above dietary requirements, however, the details must be documented on a [Dietary Care Plan](#) and the risks fully understood to enable the Manager to make a decision on whether or not we can meet these requirements.

Menus will be made available to parents and displayed in the entrance foyer for parents.

Risk Assessment



Before a child with a dietary requirement can start at the nursery, the Manager will draw up an individual [Allergy/Diet/Preference Care Plan](#) for the child in accordance with an individual [Food Allergy Risk Assessment](#). A risk assessment must also take into account possible reactions to activities that take place in the nursery e.g. junk modeling with food packaging, breakfast club, cooking activities, food tasting etc.

A child may only attend the nursery when it has been agreed by the Manager that we can accommodate their dietary requirements and an effective care plan is in place, which must be in line with our policies and procedures.

Care Plans

Dietary requirements relating to allergies and intolerances must be set out in writing, clearly detailing which foods are not permitted. This must be done on a [Dietary Care Plan](#), to be completed prior to the childcare place commencing. If the child is already in nursery, then as soon as the allergy becomes apparent, an [Allergy Health Care Plan](#) is to be completed. Parental preferences can be detailed on original registration documents.

A care plan is for one child only and siblings should have separate care plans. During settling in sessions, all staff must be informed of any dietary requirements, including the nursery cook.

Care plans must be stored in the individual child's folder & a copy held in the contact details file in the child's room. All staff working in a room that is not where they are normally based must ask, and must be informed, which children have care plans and their dietary requirements, even if covering for a short period.

Care plans must be sent out to all parents to update, check and sign bi-annually. On return these are to be kept within the child's folder and contact details file in the child's room. Parents must be advised to inform us in writing when there are any changes to their children's dietary requirements as and when they occur.

Dietary Requirements Form

Before a child starts in a room, their dietary requirements must be written up on the relevant Dietary Requirement form – either [Red Plate Diet \(Allergy, Intolerance\) form](#) or [Dietary Requirements \(Non-Allergy\) form](#) which includes the child's photograph. All children with a food allergy or intolerance must have their details typed in red; vegetarians in green and religious/cultural and parental preferences in blue. The relevant Dietary Requirement form [Dietary Requirements form](#) is to be laminated/placed in a plastic pocket and displayed on the wall in each room and the kitchen. **This must be updated monthly or when a new child joins the room with special dietary requirements or when a child's requirements change.** It is to be signed by the Manager to confirm that it is the most recent version.

Ingredients

The cook, or whoever is preparing the food, is responsible for checking the ingredients of all foodstuffs before using them and abiding by the Dietary Requirements forms. They should be aware that ingredients may change on packaging so the cook must check every time they are used.

Cook's Dietary Requirement sheet

The cook must complete the [Cook's Dietary Requirement sheet](#) on a daily basis to establish which children with a special dietary requirement are attending nursery that day or have access to up to date information.

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The children's names must be typed in advance and then the cook must tick which children are in during the morning and afternoon sessions. There is also space at the bottom of each room section to include children who are having a 'normal' meal so the cook knows how many to cook for.

The cook must collate/complete this form daily direct from the rooms so that staff do not need to leave the children, or the information needs to be available in the kitchen. The completed form is to be filed in the catering file at the end of each week. The cook is responsible for following the [Food Safety Management guidance](#)

Labels

Labels are to be produced in advance of mealtimes. These are to include names and dietary requirements of children eating that day. Labeling is the responsibility of the cook or whoever is covering the kitchen.

Children with food allergies or intolerances (including parental choice and religious reasons)

All children with allergies, intolerances or individual requirements must have all meals provided in line with their individual dietary requirements. **Those children with high-risk allergies will have their meal on a RED plate to identify the high risk and safeguard the child.** However, as we would like all children to have the opportunity to self-serve, their meal should be presented to them in a serving dish, covered and labeled with the individual name and dietary requirement, for example. 'child's name, no dairy'. The cook may produce one serving dish for a group of children who the meal is suitable for and this must be labeled with all of the children's names and their dietary requirements.

For babies, bottles must have a laminated white label stuck onto a red card which is attached to the bottle with a rubber band. When staff are feeding bottles, they must always check the label before feeding and again if they put the bottle down mid feed.

Staff are to show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. They would not use a child's diet or allergy as a label for the child, or make a child feel singled out because of his/her diet or allergy. Notwithstanding, children who have allergies or food intolerances may not be able to take part in self-service at mealtimes if the risk to their health is deemed too high, however, alternate options can be considered to encourage their self-help skills such as handing out cutlery etc.

Placemats

All children should have a placemat with their name and, also a photo. Placemats must be red for children with allergies or intolerances, green for vegetarians and blue for parental preference, and contain clear details of the allergy or dietary requirement. **Placemats must remain on the table throughout mealtimes.**

Key Carer/Staff responsibilities

A suitably qualified or experienced key carer must be allocated to a child with a dietary requirement along with a buddy, at the Manager's discretion. During mealtimes a nominated member of staff must closely supervise the child at all times and they must not leave the room until the mealtime has finished. No bank/agency staff or students are to be responsible for children with special dietary needs.



Serving food or bottle feeding must be carefully undertaken, checking the food or drink given against the care plan, checking the label and not assuming that the cook or another member of staff has already checked this.

It is all the staff in the room's responsibility to ensure that the children are not fed incorrect food or drink.

If there is a child with a high-risk food allergy then they must be positioned in a place to minimize any potential risk to them i.e. where they will be unable to reach food from another child's plate, seated next to a nominated member of staff and closely supervised at all times. [Refer to Mealtimes guidance](#)

All staff must be aware never to allow children to eat or drink whilst walking due to the risk of choking. Children must be seated in age-appropriate chairs whilst eating and drinking, or on a staff lap when bottle feeding. Staff should not leave the table until all children have finished eating. Picnics can take place as long as they are managed accordingly and there are sufficient staff to supervise this event.

Dietary Errors/Reactions

If a dietary error should occur, then any treatment required to treat or prevent an allergic reaction (as detailed in the care plan) must be administered by a First Aider without delay and the Manager must be informed immediately.

In an emergency always call an ambulance first before the parents. If the care plan details that an ambulance should be called, then you must do so even if the child is not presenting any symptoms. The child's parents should be contacted as soon as possible in all cases of dietary error whether a reaction occurs or not.

The Manager must complete an [Incident record](#) and then carry out an investigation as to how the error occurred. Advice should be sought from your operations Manager for further action required.

Training

It is essential for all staff to read the [Food Allergy & Nutrition Management Policy](#) and [Risk Assessment](#) as part of the online induction, before they serve any foods.

Where possible, additional training from external agencies will be sought for children who may suffer anaphylaxis, such as how to administer an Epipen. This will be in addition to the Paediatric First Aid training which staff receive regularly. It is our aim to ensure that all staff who are responsible for the care of a child who has an Epipen receive training from a healthcare professional, which is specific to the child on how to administer this, as arranged by the parents (where available). If the child is already in nursery, then a risk assessment must be carried out, and the Manager must discuss the action to be taken with the Operations Manager.

A qualified First Aider must be on site at all times.

Nut Allergies or other Severe Allergies

Our nurseries cannot guarantee a nut free environment as many manufacturers state that products may contain nuts on their packaging. Notwithstanding, we do operate a nut free policy and guarantee that no nuts are brought onto the premises.



Where a child has a nut allergy, we advise all staff not to consume nuts whilst in work, however parents must be aware that other parents and visitors within the nursery may have consumed nuts prior to entering the building and this is not controllable by us.

Where a child has another severe allergy, we cannot guarantee that the environment will be free from this ingredient but will endeavor to meet this requirement as required.

If a child has a protocol sheet provided by the hospital then this must be displayed in the room that the child is based in, in a location that only staff have access to as this information may be confidential.

Birthdays

Due to the serious risk presented to children who have dietary requirements, and the company's commitment to healthy eating, food brought into nursery to share by parents, staff or visitors is NOT permitted, such as birthday cakes, sweets or party bags. Birthdays will be celebrated in other ways within the nursery e.g. birthday hat and song.

Staff food and drink

Staff are not permitted to bring into the rooms/eat in the rooms any food or drink, with the exception of cold water which must be in a cup or bottle. They are encouraged to eat a small portion of the meal provided for the children alongside them at the table, to promote family dining and to display good table manners, social skills and conversation about the meal, where there is sufficient quantity.

Associated Documents

- [Food Allergen Guidance](#)
- [Food Allergies Risk Assessment](#)
- [Allergy/Diet/Preference Care Plan form](#)
- [Medication & Illness policy](#)
- [Food Safety Management guidance](#)
- [Cook's Dietary Requirement form](#)
- [Mealtimes guidance](#)
- [Incident form](#)
- [Blank Risk Assessment](#)
- [Red Plate Diet \(Allergy, Intolerance\) form](#)
- [Dietary Requirements \(Non-Allergy\) form](#)