



TIMU ACADEMY TRUST

Policy Document for: Food allergens

Approved: February 2021

Due for Review: February 2022

Prepared using [Allergy guidance for schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Introduction

The Trust recognises that a number of community members (pupils, parents, visitors and staff) may suffer from potentially life-threatening allergies or intolerances to certain foods.

We are committed to a whole school approach to the care and management of those members of the School community.

The School's position is not to guarantee a completely allergen free environment, rather to minimise the risk of exposure by hazard identification, instruction and information. The Trust encourages a nut-free environment (this is set out later in this document).

This will encourage self-responsibility to all those with known allergens to make informed decisions on food choices and to provide help and assistance for our youngest pupils.

Aims and Objectives

The Trust 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.
- Supporting pupils with the management of food allergies and intolerances.
- The encouragement of self-responsibility and learned avoidance strategies amongst those suffering from allergies.
- Working with catering providers to ensure that food labelling, menu planning and all aspects of food preparation support the needs of those within our school community who have food allergies.
- 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 school or attending any school 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 school and of parents and other individuals, in informing the school 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:

- Cereals containing Gluten
- Celery including stalks, leaves, seeds and celeriac in salads
- Crustaceans, (prawns, crab, lobster, scampi, shrimp paste)
- Eggs - also food glazed with egg
- 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
- Nuts, (almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, pecan nuts, Brazil nuts, pistachio, cashew and macadamia (Queensland) nuts, nut oils, marzipan)
- Peanuts - sauces, cakes, desserts, ground nut oil, peanut flour
- Mustard - liquid mustard, mustard powder, mustard seeds
- Sesame Seeds - bread, bread sticks, tahini, hummus, sesame oil
- 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 School has clear procedures and responsibilities to be followed in meeting the needs of pupils with medical needs relating to food allergies or intolerances.

See the **First aid** policy and children with **medical conditions including food allergies** policy.

Initial Information Provided Regarding Food Allergies or Intolerances

The parents or carers of all new starters to the school are required to inform the school of any details of any food intolerances or allergies and their management should be described by completing the **anaphylaxis risk assessment**. If details are unclear or ambiguous, the school will follow this up with a phone call to parents for further information which will be recorded by the school.

For children starting in the reception classes, information regarding food allergies will be discussed at the initial parent-teacher meeting along with any other medical needs, and where necessary an **anaphylaxis risk assessment** completed. A meeting can be arranged with school staff and / or food providers such as breakfast club staff or catering staff in order to further discuss a child's needs.

It is parents' responsibility to ensure that if their child's medical needs change at any point that they make the school 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.

See also the **first aid** policy and the **children with medical needs including food allergies** policy.

How the School Uses this Information

All medical needs forms will be 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 in order to ensure that medical needs can be properly managed, information is shared with school staff.

This is done in several ways:

- Before the start of a new academic year Health Care Plans, including details of food allergies (and associated risk assessment), are shared with the receiving class teacher as part of our transition process. It is the class teachers' responsibility to ensure that they are familiar with the information provided, that they read the RAP and Health Care Plans and that any other adults working with the children are aware of their needs as well.
- The Trust Deputy Head teacher ensures that the children with Health Care Plans and anaphylaxis risk assessments receive at least an annual review and these are shared with Child's Play wraparound care staff and any children with allergen concerns/food requirements are shared with the caterer.
- Epi-pens are kept in accordance to the risk assessment for each child
- Where a food allergy significantly impacts on a child's day to day activity, a care plan might be put in place with consideration to the risk assessment e.g. a child who requires tube feeding or is required to eat at a separate time. This will be constructed in conjunction with school staff, parents and healthcare professionals.
- Key medical needs information will be available when children are taken off site. At lunchtime Children are able to have a school dinner or bring a packed lunch from home. Staff support children with their menu choices. The menus are also available online so that parents can help children make choices before they come into school.
- Where children have food allergies, a lanyard is worn for identification when the children go into the dining hall. The school kitchen caters for a range of food allergy needs.
- Where needs are very specific, it may be beneficial for a meeting to be arranged between parents, school staff and catering staff to discuss dietary requirements. Sometimes menu substitutions can be made to accommodate allergy needs – this is at the discretion of the school kitchen and is dependent on resources available.
- If children have a food allergy which can be triggered by contact with certain food substances, as well as ingestion, the school will ensure that due consideration is given to where the child

is seated in the dining hall and the cleaning of tables. This will be set out in the anaphylaxis risk assessment for the child

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

Wrap-around care – Child’s Play

- Child’s Play staff are made aware of any food allergies that the children attending the club might have through the use of the health care plans (setting out food intolerances) and anaphylaxis healthcare plans.
- Breakfast club are able to cater for a variety of food allergy needs e.g. use of soya milk or gluten free bread; separate equipment (e.g. toasters) will be used to avoid cross contamination
- All Child’s Play staff undertake food allergen training every 3 years
- Parents are advised to discuss any particular food allergy requirements with the staff in order to ensure needs can be met.

School Staff Responsibilities

Key school staff responsibilities are outlined below -

- Assistant Head Teachers and/or SENCo will liaise with parents regarding the management of food allergies
- All class facing staff have read and be fully aware of the needs of any child with an anaphylaxis health care plan and/or other health care plan setting out food intolerances in their class, or any class they are asked to work with
- All class facing staff will consider activities and whether these would need to be adjusted to ensure that all children with anaphylaxis healthcare plans can safely take part

First aid

- A number of staff have also had training in how to administer an epi-pen to those children who have an anaphylaxis healthcare plan
- The school has a number of first aiders who would be called assist in cases of allergic reaction including anaphylaxis
- The school will contact parents and the emergency services, if required, in the event that a child suffers an allergic reaction.
- The school’s **first aid** policy outlines the school’s response to medical emergencies.

Midday supervisors

- Undertake CPD in food allergen awareness every 3 years, including how to administer an epi-pen
- Have read and be fully aware of the needs of any child with an anaphylaxis health care plan
- Supporting those children who have school dinners with their menu choices.
- Assist children in collecting the correct school dinners for their needs.
- Provide feedback to class teachers of any observations made in relation to food at lunchtime.
- Ensure that surfaces are clean to reduce risks of cross contamination.

Catering Staff Responsibilities

Nourish provide school meals at the School. Nourish have their own policies relating to all aspects of food management and preparation. Nourish are responsible for ensuring that:

- Staff familiarise themselves with the medical needs of our pupils in order for correct meals to be consumed;
- Menus clearly identify ingredients that may pose a risk to allergy sufferers, enabling informed choices to be made;
- Rigorous food hygiene is maintained to reduce risk of cross contamination;
- Suppliers provide information regarding the content of their products;
- As an additional precaution, staff are alerted to food allergies by lanyards worn by the children.

Parental Responsibilities

Parents are responsible for:

- Completing the healthcare plan and any associated anaphylaxis health care sheets, and ensuring that any information regarding food allergies/intolerance for their child is included.
- Updating the school if their child's medical needs change at any point. Parents are requested to keep the school 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 (Epi-pens or other adrenalin injectors, inhalers and any specific antihistamine) is supplied, in date and replaced as necessary. The parents of all children who have an epi-pen in school must complete specific healthcare plan sheets stating the emergency actions to be taken. They should also give permission for the spare emergency epi-pen to be used in the event it is required
- Attending any meeting as required to share further information about their child's food allergy, to plan for food management in school or to complete a care plan.
- If an episode of anaphylaxis occurs outside school, the school must be informed.
- Children of any age must be familiar with what their allergies are and the symptoms they may have that would indicate a reaction is happening.
- Children are encouraged to take increased responsibility for managing choices that will reduce the risk of allergic reaction. Expectations are age appropriate.
- Children are not allowed to share food with each other.

Management of food allergies in other areas of school life

Rewards and Celebrations

On occasions, food items can be used in the classroom, such as for science or DT, or in a class party, or cultural event. On these occasions, staff will endeavour to make suitable adjustments in order to ensure that children with food allergies feel included, e.g. substituting food items.

Sometimes children will bring food items into school to distribute to classmates when it is their birthday. These are handed out at the end of the day so children can take them home and check with an adult before eating.

Curriculum Activities

As part of the school curriculum, children may be involved in activities that involve preparing food (e.g. DT lesson) or tasting food (e.g. tasting food from other countries). Teachers will take the needs of children with food allergies into account when planning these activities and will make modifications where possible to allow participation. When a third party is involved in delivering a food related workshop, the class teacher will be responsible for ensuring that the dietary needs of pupils are taken into consideration.

Educational Visits

The lead member of staff for an educational visit will ensure that food allergy considerations are made in any activity that may involve food. When a child with a food allergy participates in a residential visit, their dietary needs will be planned for, in conjunction with the activity centre.

Nuts

Timu Trust aims to be as nut free as possible. It is impossible to provide an absolute guarantee that no nuts will be bought onto the premises (since nut traces are found in many unusual products such as hand cream), but we will strive to minimise this as much as we can.

- We ask that parents do not send children into school or on a school trip with any nut based products in their lunchboxes or as a break time snack. This would include items such as peanut butter sandwiches or packets of nuts.
- Staff will be alert to any obvious signs of nuts being brought in, but they will not inspect all food brought into school.
- Staff supervising pupils eating at lunchtime
- If a child does bring in a food which contains nuts or nut products, they will not be allowed to eat this in school. The food is taken to the office and parents are called to let them know that this food is not allowed and that the child has been unable to eat it. This can then be made available for parents to collect at the end of the school day as needed.
- Pupils are encouraged **NOT** to share food.
- If any actual nuts are found they will be bagged up and sent home
- Pupils are encouraged to wash hands before and *after* eating.

Charity Events

If the School hosts any 'cake sales' or similar events for charity it is important that no food poses a risk to the end user, however, this is difficult for the school to monitor. Where products are not made on site, but sold by the school, appropriate signage will be put in place. This will state the following: 'This item was not produced at School, therefore we cannot guarantee that it does not contain nuts or any other allergen'. It should be left to the discretion of the person buying the food that they accept the risk that allergens may be present. The same will apply to any cake sales organised by the PTA.

Items for Sale at PTA Discos

The PTA sell a small number of sweets at the school discos which children are able to buy. These are sold in their original packaging. It is the parents' decision whether their children will be allowed to purchase sweets at the disco when they are not present. The school is unable to supervise the purchase of these items with regard to children with food allergies. In these circumstances, parents are advised to speak to a member of staff in order for an alternative arrangement to be considered if possible (e.g. bringing in something from home).

Equal Opportunities

At Timu we are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all members of our school community irrespective of race, religion or belief, gender, gender reassignment, disability, sexual orientation, age, pregnancy or maternity, marriage and civil partnership or socio-economic background. We are determined to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and ability to participate fully in school life. We tackle discrimination through the positive promotion of equality by challenging stereotypes and by creating an environment that champions respect for all. We believe that diversity is a strength that should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit us.

All school policies have an explicit aim of promoting equality and will be reviewed in terms of their contribution and effectiveness in achieving this aim.

The following guidance was used to support this policy

- [Allergy guidance for schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)
- <https://www.highspeedtraining.co.uk/hub/food-allergy-policy-for-schools>