



Allergies and Dietary Needs Policy

Available in Staff & Visitor Policy Folders

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Policy context

Previously, this policy was apart of the Food, Drink and Allergy Policy.

As of September 2026, this policy has been split back into two separate policies: one for Food and Drink, and the other for Allergies and Dietary Needs. This is due to the new Benedict's Law that came into force as of September 2026 for schools.

As this policy covers our allergy and dietary needs, please read the Food and Drink policy to understand how your child and family may be affected..

What's the difference between an allergy and an intolerance?

An allergy is where your entire body reacts to something that is normally harmless like pollen, dust, insect bites or animals. The symptoms can be mild, but for some people they can be very serious. Allergies trigger immune system responses.

Whereas an intolerance is where your digestive system encounters something that it cannot process properly. Small amounts can often be eaten without trouble, however if consumed a lot, could lead to diarrhea, nausea and sickness. Intolerance triggers digestive or metabolic system responses.

Standard Practice of Dietary Needs:

To ensure the safety and wellbeing of children in our care, staff must ensure the following points occur:

- During settling in sessions, staff must obtain information from families about any allergies their child may have and record the information. Then pass on the information to all the room staff, Management and the office team.
- Staff should check regularly with parents as to whether the information has changed, any new allergies etc. and pass on the information as before.
- The Administrator sends out reminders via email / ClassDojo once a term, however staff also need to remind families to update their records if they are aware of any changes.
- Every classroom must have a clear, discretely displayed record of children's allergies in their room and check it regularly.
- All staff and helpers must be fully aware of any and all children with allergies in their room, in relation to the actual day and what days the child will be in over the course of the week.
- If any child in the room has a Health Care Plan, staff must be aware of it and have read it, so they know what to do in case of emergency.

Lunches

The nursery chef will go around to all classrooms to confirm which children are in for the day, and what allergies, intolerances or dietary needs they have. The chef will use this information to cater meals appropriately.

When lunch is delivered, staff serve any specially prepared meals first to avoid cross-contamination and **always use red plates or red bowls**. This is a signal for colleagues in the room so they can monitor the child closely as they eat.

When handing out meals, staff check and double check they are going to the right child.

A member of staff should sit next to children with allergies in order to ensure they only eat their own food.

Snack Times

Snack is specifically prepared by the nursery practitioners in each classroom. All nursery practitioners have Food Hygiene Training alongside Allergies in Education Training as of September 2026, so they are capable of preparing safe meals for all children.

Before preparing snack, staff must check whether any of the children in their classroom at the time have any allergies, intolerances or other dietary needs.

Upon doing so, staff should select appropriate snack foods in line with said dietary needs.

Staff must check the ingredient list of any pre-packed food for listed allergens. This information should be listed in **BOLD or other obvious distinction** under the Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Article 21, 1b AND Natasha's Law (UK Statutory Instrument 2019 No. 1775 / Food Information (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2019). Staff must not use previous knowledge that a product is "safe" for future reference, as ingredient lists may change without the packaging going through an obvious change.

Once it is confirmed the ingredients are safe, staff must prepare any snack specifically for children with allergies, intolerances or dietary needs first. Clean boards and utensils must be used, and must be cleaned afterwards to prevent cross-contamination.

This prepared snack must be placed on a red plate or bowl, depending on size and properties. This should then be put aside whilst staff prepare food for the other children.

Once all snack is prepared and the children are sitting down, staff to serve the child with the allergy, intolerance or dietary need first and then the others. Staff must sit next to the child with the dietary need to ensure they only eat their own food. A member of staff **MUST** sit with the group whilst they eat. Staff are not allowed to leave children unsupervised whilst eating, whether for lunch or snack times.

Staff are otherwise advised to use the café snack system as it is easier to monitor individual children. Recommended for no more than 4 children at a time, and a member of staff will need to sit with the snack.

Purchasing Food (Shopping Lists)

Staff must indicate on the weekly shopping list if you require any specific dietary items or alternatives. For example, dairy-free chocolate, gluten-free bread, etc.

Packed Lunches

Staff supervise lunch times carefully, especially if a child has dietary needs.

Children must only eat their own food provided by home or nursery, and any items that are pre-packed should be checked by a member of staff before being given to the child. For example, Lunchables packets, yoghurts, etc.

In the event a member of staff finds a food item or product that they believe the child is allergic, intolerant to or otherwise have been advised by parents to avoid, said item should be removed. This will then be discussed during feedback with the main carer and any changes to that child's dietary needs will be updated in their paperwork files and any physical notes.

Moving Classrooms (Transitions)

Staff in the new room must not accept the Allertree card if there any written changes. This card should be given to the Main Office so that it can be checked and updated as soon as possible.

Staff in both new and old rooms must ensure that the allergy paperwork is up to date before the child moves rooms.

Room Leader from each new room must meet with parents and complete a transition update form.

In the event of wrongful consumption of a prohibited food item:

Should an error occur and a child is given the wrong food/drink item, staff must immediately check the child's health care plan and follow advice within. A summary of this information can be found within Allertree cards for daily reference.

Staff must then inform Management immediately who will inform parents (with an apology and explanation). It is important that the Management Team know what item was consumed, when and if the child is showing any symptoms of an allergic reaction, and intolerance reaction or just general discomfort.

Staff will then record this event in an incident form.

If the event of a severe allergic reaction (ANAPHYLAXIS)

Regardless of the circumstances, if a child begins to develop a severe allergic reaction and staff suspect anaphylaxis, staff must immediately inform the office so an ambulance can be called.

Symptoms of anaphylaxis include:

- Swelling of the tongue, throat and/or mouth, accompanied by noisy breathing, wheezy or severe trouble breathing.
- Itchy skin with a raised red rash (hives), and swelling of the eyes, lips, hands and feet.
- Sudden dizziness, light-headedness or feeling faint, along with a rapid, weak pulse or sudden drop in blood pressure.
- Abdominal pain, nausea and vomiting.

In the event of anaphylaxis, the first aider on site must be sent for however all nursery practitioners have Paediatric First Aid training to assist in the meantime.

If the child in question has an Epi-Pen and it is part of their Individual Healthcare Plan, a member of staff must immediately administer it to the child on their right thigh or left if the right is not accessible. An epi-pen can be used with clothes on so removing clothes is not needed. The administration must follow the child's Individual Healthcare Plan.

In the event the ambulance does not arrive within 5 minutes and the child is still having a severe reaction, another dose of adrenaline should be administered.

Whilst all this is happening, a member of Management will be contacting the child's primary contacts and if no response, an emergency contact. The family will be advised from there if it would be best to come to nursery or start heading to a named hospital.

Signatory, Review & Update Section:

Signed by the Manager, on behalf of GBDN:

C. Buscambé.

Previously:	12 th September 2024	Updated?	YES / NO
Updated on:	15 th September 2026	Updated?	YES / NO
Reviewed on:		Updated?	YES / NO
Reviewed on:		Updated?	YES / NO

Notes: If your child has an especially complex dietary need or metabolic disorder such as Phenylketonuria (PKU), you will be asked to provide your child with suitable meals as directed by their doctors and healthcare plan you have arranged with them.

The nursery chef cannot guarantee meals provided by them will be suitable for children with complex dietary needs and/or metabolic disorders.