



# Rockwood Nursery School

## Food Allergy Policy

Written November 2025

### **Introduction**

Rockwood Nursery School welcomes all children with food allergies to be part of our community. We aim 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 Nursery.

The Nursery's position is not to guarantee a completely allergen free environment as this would be impossible, but rather to minimise the risk of exposure, encourage self-responsibility, and plan for an effective response to possible emergencies.

### **Policy Aims**

- We aim to ensure that Rockwood Nursery School has considered the needs of food-allergic pupils and have developed appropriate procedures.
- We aim to work in partnership with the parents/carers of children with a food allergy, building excellent levels of trust, communication and individualised care around their child's specific needs.
- We aim to do all we can to minimise the risk of any child experiencing food allergy-induced reactions especially anaphylaxis.
- We aim to ensure that affected children are not unknowingly exposed to food allergens like nuts during school hours.

- We aim to extend these policies to all meals and food consumed in school and during any trips organised by the school.
- We aim to ensure staff are properly prepared to manage emergency situations should they arise.
- We aim to consider the needs of food-allergic pupils when handling foods as part of the school curriculum.
- We aim to educate children to eventually become more responsible for managing their own allergy as is appropriate to their age and development.
- We aim to educate a child's peers to be aware of food allergy and to know what to do in an emergency.

## **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 in Europe include:

The 14 allergens are:

1. Celery and celeriac
2. Cereals containing gluten – wheat, rye, barley, oats, spelt or kamut
3. Crustaceans (e.g. prawns, lobster, scampi, crab, shrimp paste)
4. Egg
5. Fish
6. Lupin (seeds and flour used in Europe for pastries and breads)
7. Milk
8. Molluscs - mussels, whelks, squid, land snails, oyster sauce
9. Mustard
10. Nuts and nut oil
11. Peanuts
12. Sesame
13. Soya
14. Sulphur dioxide and sulphites

Many allergens are hidden where you would least expect them to be. We ensure that our staff are familiar with the constituents of EVERY ingredient (e.g. Worcester sauce usually contains anchovies (fish), many gravy mixes contain milk, celery and gluten). Our staff examine the ingredients list on the packaging carefully and check with the supplier if necessary.

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. 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.

## **Procedures**

### **Parental responsibilities**

- We require parents to provide detailed information about their child's allergy. This is to include past reactions, triggers and recommended treatments. We also require copies of letters from their doctor/allergy consultant.
- We require parents to provide an annual medical update at the beginning of each academic year or earlier if necessary.
- We require parents to register their child's EpiPen expiry date with the EpiPen text alert system accessed via the EpiPen website to act as a back up to the alerts also sent by the school nurses. New EpiPens will need to be provided promptly.
- Parents will not provide food for group consumption – either bought, pre-packaged or home-made.

### **Nursery's Responsibilities**

- All staff will be alerted to which children in school have an identified food allergy. Each child's photograph (with parent's permission) will be displayed in areas where any food/snack is prepared for reference.
- Relevant information can be found in the rooms, kitchen, staff room displays and in the information packs taken on school trips.
- All staff to ensure that they have the knowledge and skills to **CARE** for a child with a food allergy:

**Comprehending** the basic medical facts about food allergies.

**Avoiding** the Allergen.

**Recognizing** a Reaction.

**Enacting** Emergency Care Plan.

- There is a template care plan in place for the care of all children with a mild-moderate food allergy that does not require the administration of an adrenalin auto-injector device (AAI) such as an EpiPen.
- There is an individual health care plan (IHCP) in place for all children with a severe food allergy that may cause anaphylaxis and require the administration of an Automatic Adrenaline Injector (AAI). All AAI's are kept securely in the relevant rooms, along with a copy of the IHCP and are accessible at all times.
- The office staff will ensure that staff have access to all relevant information about any child with a food allergy in the nursery.
- Staff are encouraged to check the school's medical database for any child in their care who may have a food allergy.
- As part of trip planning, the office staff will ensure that they have liaised with the hosts concerning any pupils with food allergies
- All staff will be trained in first aid and be offered the opportunity to learn how to administer an AAI.
- Staff will do their best to ensure that foods prepared and served are allergen-free for each individual. 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. These will not be used.

- 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. If they are not able to do so they will make sure they ask someone who can.
- Each child with a food allergy will be offered alternative food choices.
- The office staff will liaise with parents, with regard to any changes in a child's dietary needs and the school medical database updated accordingly.

### **Product labelling**

On the 1st October 2021, the new Allergen Regulations came into effect. The new "Natasha's Law" requires all pre-packaged foods prepared on site to be labelled with a full list of ingredients highlighting any of the 14 main allergens that are present in the ingredients.

Pre-packaged foods include any items that are prepared on site, packaged up and displayed on a shelf or in a chiller. This includes items such as sandwiches, salads, pasta pots baguettes, cakes etc.

We do not ask parents to provide any of these such items for groups (for parties for example) however staff will buy food for such occasions. Therefore they will be conscious of the ingredients of packaged foods.

Here is the list of Information required on any food item packaged on site.

- **Product Description** – This must be an accurate description of what the product is made from, e.g. Cheese and Chutney Sandwich
- **Use by Date**
- **Full list of ingredients** – This includes listing all ingredients contained in the finished product. So, in the Cheese & Chutney Sandwich for example, all the ingredients would need to be listed that are contained in the sandwich – bread, chutney, cheese, spread and any other foods added. Staff are careful to include all ingredients that may have been added to the finished product – for example chicken marinated in buttermilk will contain milk
- **Identification of any of the 14 main allergens**. These should be identified as follows – flour (gluten), prawns (crustaceans), tahini (sesame), cheese (milk) etc., so it is clear which ingredient is the allergen.
- **Nutritional Value** – this is not currently a requirement; however, it may become so in the future. If the labelling system used includes the ability to detail the nutritional information on the label, it may be a good idea to add this now rather than revisiting it at a later date.

### **Managing Allergy Information**

- All staff are trained in Allergen Awareness.
- A weekly staff briefing informs all staff of any changes to children's allergies etc.
- Stringent preparation procedures are in place as it is important to prevent cross contamination when preparing foods that can cause allergic reactions.
- Details of all children with food allergies or intolerances are provided by the office staff and anyone can access these lists.

### **Administrative responsibilities**

- The school will have adequate insurance.

- Relevant health forms will be sent by Nursery to be completed by parents as part of their child's school admission process.

## **Resources**

<https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/information-training/allergywise-training/for-schools/>

Coeliac UK: <http://www.coeliac.co.uk/>

[www.kidswithfoodallergies.org/resourcespre.php?id=68&](http://www.kidswithfoodallergies.org/resourcespre.php?id=68&)

## **Useful allergy resources for schools:**

<https://www.allergyuk.org/information-and-advice/for-schools/useful-allergy-resources-for-schools>

Presented to Governors for approval – 8<sup>th</sup> December 2025

To be reviewed in the event of the policy being used to address an allergy issue or when new regulations come in to effect.