

Allergens Policy

1. Introduction

The legislation places upon us a statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of our pupils. The following document is written with reference to the Children Act (1989), the 1996 Education Act, the 2002 Education Act, 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' July 2018, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' September 2023, 'Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions' August 2017 and changes to requirements for labelling prepacked for direct sale (PPDS) food, October 2021.

When considering this policy on allergens and anaphylaxis, regard should also be given to the linked policies on Safeguarding and Child Protection, Educational Visits, Health and Safety, Behaviour, the Staff Code of Conduct and the advice provided by the Anaphylaxis Campaign <https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/> and Food Standards Agency.

The school makes reasonable adjustments for pupils with particular requirements, for example to reflect medical, dietary and cultural needs.

2. What is anaphylaxis?

Whilst there are a range of reactions to allergens, anaphylaxis is the most acute allergic reaction requiring immediate medical attention. It usually occurs within seconds or minutes of exposure to a certain food or substance, but on rare occasions may happen after a few hours.

The following 14 food allergens have been identified as public health concerns in the UK:

- Peanuts
- Nuts
- Fish
- Eggs
- Crustaceans
- Sesame seeds
- Milk
- Soya (sometimes known as soybeans)
- Celery
- Mustard
- Lupin
- Added sulphur dioxide and sulphites
- Cereals containing gluten
- Molluscs

Of these, peanuts and nuts are believed to be the most concerning allergens.

Different people can be allergic to different allergens and therefore it is critical that parents inform the school of any allergies. Other examples of allergens might include insect stings, drugs etc.

During an anaphylactic reaction, the blood pressure falls dramatically and the patient loses consciousness. Fortunately, this is rare. More commonly, there may be swelling in the throat, which can restrict the air supply, causing severe asthma. Any symptoms which affect breathing are serious. An ambulance must be called immediately.

Less severe symptoms may include tingling in the mouth, hives anywhere on the body, generalised flushing of the skin or abdominal cramps, nausea and vomiting. Even when mild symptoms are present, the child should be monitored carefully and taken to the medical room.

3. How can we reduce the risk of anaphylaxis?

It is not possible to provide an environment that is totally free of all allergens or even free of peanuts/nuts. However, the school aims to manage the risk of allergens by:

- a. Limiting the possibility of peanuts/nuts on the school sites.
- b. Display notices advising pupils to talk to the catering staff if they have any questions regarding ingredients in the food
- c. Providing signs where allergens may be present.
- d. Providing advice, on request, to staff, pupils and visitors with allergies.
- e. Assisting in the education staff and pupils with allergies.

Emanuel School has a number of pupils allergic to certain foods, insect stings or drugs. To minimise the risk of anaphylaxis occurring, the school has taken precautions and is working towards being as nut safe and allergy aware as possible. The success of this policy requires the co-operation of the whole Emanuel community.

4. Parent/Carer Responsibilities

4.1 Responsibilities for all parents (including parents of non-allergic children)

The school has a number of children at school who have food allergies so would like to remind **ALL** parents of the danger that even small amounts of an allergen can pose to these children.

Most severe allergic reactions are the result of ingestion, but other reactions can be triggered by touching surfaces, such as computer keyboards, books or a piano, if these surfaces have previously been used by someone who has eaten nut products.

Nuts and seeds are part of a healthy diet for those without allergy, but the school would appreciate that such pupils eat them at home rather than bring them into school, since there are pupils who do have severe nut/seed allergies. Note that the catering department provides pumpkin and sunflower seeds which can be added to soups and salads. The catering department knows where they have been produced and so these particular seeds are unlikely to cause an allergic reaction. This may not be the case of seeds bought by the general public.

The school asks all parents and carers NOT to provide their children with school snacks which include nuts or seeds, including products which contain nut or seed-based oils, like hummus.

4.2 Responsibilities for parents of pupils known to have allergies:

- to notify the school of the pupil's allergies on entry to the school (and immediately should there be any changes or updates to this during the pupil's time at the school). This information should include all previous allergic reactions, history of anaphylaxis and details of all prescribed medication. This should be done before the start of the school term.
- for providing the school nurse with a treatment plan, two adrenaline auto-injectors and any emergency medication, which is in date and clearly labelled with the pupil's name.
- for ensuring any required medication is supplied, in date and replaced as necessary.
- to educate their child in self-management of his/her allergy, including:
 - which foods are safe and unsafe,
 - the symptoms of allergic reaction,
 - how and when to tell adults about a reaction,
 - how to read food labels.
- for providing up-to-date emergency contact information.
- for informing the school of any changes in allergy management.
- to ensure their child carries their emergency medication (adrenalin auto-injector, inhaler), with them at all times during the school day and for all off-site sports fixtures and trips. Each child has a spare adrenalin auto-injector in a labelled plastic folder in the nurse's room, but it is unlikely to be easily available outside school hours. It is therefore particularly important that the pupil carries their own adrenalin auto-injector at all times and also tells their friends where it is in case of an emergency.
- to provide their child, if at all possible, with a medical talisman.

Pupil Responsibilities

The school encourages all pupils with a food allergy to be proactive in the care and management of their allergies and reaction; in particular:

- not to swap food with other pupils.
- to know where their medication is kept in the medical room.
- to understand that they are responsible for carrying their medication with them and to make sure they do so at all times.
- to tell their peers of their allergies so they know, should an emergency arise.
- to wear their medical talisman at all times, if they own one.
- to notify an adult immediately if they eat something they believe may contain the food they are allergic to.
- to notify an adult immediately if they believe they are having an allergic reaction, even if the cause is unknown.

Staff Responsibilities

The school's responsibilities are:

- to educate staff on the warning signs of an allergic reaction, the risks, prevention and responses to anaphylaxis,
- to provide first aiders and some catering staff with appropriate training, ensuring they can recognise the signs of an allergic reaction and act appropriately. This includes the recognition of the symptoms of anaphylaxis and how to deal with an emergency; additionally, the nurse is available to show all staff how to use adrenaline auto-injectors,
- to advise all staff that if they have any concerns about a pupil presenting with even a minor reaction, they must send them, accompanied by an adult or another responsible pupil, to the medical room or to summon the school nurse,
- It is the parent's responsibility to ensure all medication is in date, however, the school nurse will check medication kept at school on a termly bases and remind parents if medication is approaching expiry,
- to implement procedures to mitigate the risks presented by anaphylaxis:
 - no department is to use nuts in their lessons,
 - allergic pupils' names are flagged on the school database.

A nurse is on duty from 08.00–17.00 Monday to Friday during term time. In the event of a nurse being unavailable during these times, the identity of a qualified first aider will be made clear outside the medical centre.

Catering Staff Responsibilities

The catering manager ensures that children with allergies are introduced to the catering staff. Additionally, the catering staff:

- hold information on pupils' allergies.
- are trained to ensure they are clear on what to do if asked about allergens.
- maintain records of allergens included in food made on site.
- do NOT knowingly add nuts or tree nuts as an ingredient to their cooking. However, the school cannot guarantee that some of the constituent ingredients used are wholly nut free because of the possibility of cross contamination in factories, etc.
- do NOT serve bought-in products with nuts as a listed ingredient. However, the school cannot guarantee that some of the constituent ingredients used are wholly nut free because of the possibility of cross contamination in the production process.

- display signs at all food outlets asking individuals with allergies to ask for advice if unsure about the contents of the food.
- discuss menu choices with parents who have concerns or wish to discuss their child's needs.

Sodexo ask that their Allergy Request Form is completed by a parent for each pupil who is known to have a food allergy. The details of the allergy must be supported by either a doctor's letter or a letter from a nurse or a dietician regarding the required diet.

The school does accept that products will be prepared, served and brought on site that have advisory labelling stating 'May contain nuts' or 'May contain traces of nuts' or similar.

Emanuel does not aim to be a nut-free school. However, aims to be nut safe and allergen aware. To do this, the school encourages parents and carers' support in the education of their child, helping him/ her to make appropriate food choices at all times, regardless of the activity.

School Trips and Sports Fixtures

Pupil allergies are highlighted on the school pupil management system and the allergy is identified by a medical alert icon. Relevant staff are informed of pupils' medical condition.

Prior to commencement of Games lessons pupils are advised to inform sports staff of the location of their adrenaline auto-injector.

Prior to school trip departure, all trip leaders will remind pupils with medical conditions, including those with allergies, to take their medication. Pupils who forget their medication will not be able to take part in the trip.

All activities on school trips will be risk assessed to see if they pose a threat to allergic pupils and alternative activities planned to ensure inclusion.

School Food Sales and Birthday Cakes

Occasionally the school will hold a charity food sale. All items sold as part of charity events will be provided by the school's catering team. Signs will be displayed to remind pupils with allergies to check ingredients.

Pupils must not bring onto site any cakes, doughnuts or other food items for their birthday or other celebrations to share with their peers.

Policy Review & Approval

Policy Owner	Deputy Head: Pupils/Designated Safeguarding Lead
Date of last review	August 2023
Approved by	Cabinet: September 2023
Responsible Committee	Pastoral
Date of next review	Summer 2024

Related Documents

- Medical and First Aid Policy
- Medical Room Handbook

Appendix I: List of Major Allergens

Celery	This includes celery stalks, leaves, seeds and the root called celeriac. You can find celery in celery salt, salads, some meat products, soups and stock cubes.
Cereals containing gluten	Wheat (such as spelt and Khorasan wheat/Kamut), rye, barley and oats are often found in foods containing flour, such as some types of baking powder, batter, breadcrumbs, bread, cakes, couscous, meat products, pasta, pastry, sauces, soups and fried foods which are dusted with flour.
Crustaceans	Crabs, lobster, prawns and scampi are crustaceans. Shrimp paste, often used in Thai and south-east Asian curries or salads, is an ingredient to look out for.
Eggs	Eggs are often found in cakes, some meat products, mayonnaise, mousses, pasta, quiche, sauces and pastries or foods brushed or glazed with egg.
Fish	You will find this in some fish sauces, pizzas, relishes, salad dressings, stock cubes and Worcestershire sauce.
Lupin	Yes, lupin is a flower, but it's also found in flour! Lupin flour and seeds can be used in some types of bread, pastries and even in pasta.
Milk	Milk is a common ingredient in butter, cheese, cream, milk powders and yoghurt. It can also be found in foods brushed or glazed with milk, and in powdered soups and sauces.
Molluscs	These include mussels, land snails, squid and whelks, but can also be commonly found in oyster sauce or as an ingredient in fish stews.
Mustard	Liquid mustard, mustard powder and mustard seeds fall into this category. This ingredient can also be found in breads, curries, marinades, meat products, salad dressings, sauces and soups.
Nuts	Not to be mistaken with peanuts (which are actually a legume and grow underground), this ingredient refers to nuts which grow on trees, like cashew nuts, almonds and hazelnuts. You can find nuts in breads, biscuits, crackers, desserts, nut powders (often used in Asian curries), stir-fried dishes, ice cream, marzipan (almond paste), nut oils and sauces.
Peanuts	Peanuts are actually a legume and grow underground, which is why they are sometimes called a groundnut. Peanuts are often used as an ingredient in biscuits, cakes, curries, desserts, sauces (such as satay sauce), as well as in groundnut oil and peanut flour.
Sesame seeds	These seeds can often be found in bread (sprinkled on hamburger buns for example), breadsticks, hummus, sesame oil and tahini. They are sometimes toasted and used in salads.
Soya (sometimes known as soybeans/ products thereof)	Often found in bean curd, edamame beans, miso paste, textured soya protein, soya flour or tofu, soya is a staple ingredient in oriental food. It can also be found in desserts, ice cream, meat products, sauces and vegetarian products.
Sulphur dioxide (sometimes known as sulphites)	This is an ingredient often used in dried fruit such as raisins, dried apricots and prunes. You might also find it in meat products, soft drinks, vegetables as well as in wine and beer. If you have asthma, you have a higher risk of developing a reaction to sulphur dioxide.