



Nut Free School Policy

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Fatal allergic reactions in school-aged children can happen while at school. Schools therefore need to consider how to reduce the risk of an allergic reaction.

NUT-FREE POLICY

This policy serves to set out all measures to reduce the risk to those children and adults who may suffer an anaphylactic reaction if exposed to nuts to which they are sensitive. The school aims to protect children who have allergies to nuts yet also help them, as they grow up, to take responsibility as to what foods they can eat and to be aware of where they may be put at risk. We do not allow nuts or nut products in school lunch boxes. Our 'Nut-Free Policy' means that the following items should not be brought into school:

- Packs of nuts
- Peanut butter sandwiches
- Fruit and cereal bars that contain nuts
- Chocolate bars or sweets that contain nuts
- Cakes made with nuts
- Any other food item which may contain nuts or nut products. Please note that some food products may state 'may contain nuts' as the product may have been made in factory where products which contain nuts are made. Please be mindful of this as sensible when deciding if this should be consumed on the school grounds.

The school kitchen staff (Solihull Catering) do not use nuts in any of our food prepared on site at our school.

DEFINITION

Anaphylaxis (also known as anaphylactic shock) is an allergic condition that can be severe and potentially fatal.

STAFF

Staff and volunteers must ensure they do not bring in or consume nut products in school and ensure they follow good hand washing practice. All Merstone education staff are EpiPen trained. Pupils with any allergies, including nut allergies, names and photos have been shared across school with all relevant staff including the school kitchen.

PARENTS AND CARERS

Parents and carers must notify staff of any known or suspected allergy to nuts and provide all medical and necessary information. Homemade snacks or party food contributions must have a label detailing all ingredients present and the kitchen environment where the food was prepared must be nut free. The school requests that parents and carers observe the nut-free policy and therefore do not include nuts, or any traces of nuts, in packed lunches.

CHILDREN

All pupils are reminded where appropriate about the good hygiene practice of washing hands before and after eating or preparing food which helps to reduce the risk of secondary contamination. Likewise, this is also covered during PSHE and food preparation lessons.

HEALTH PLANS AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE

The school has individual healthcare plans for children with allergies and emergency medication (medication will be stored, administered and documents in accordance with our Administering Medicine Policy).

SYMPTOMS

The symptoms of anaphylaxis usually start between three and sixty minutes after contact with the allergen. Less commonly they can occur a few hours or even days after contact. An anaphylactic reaction may lead to feeling unwell or dizzy or may cause fainting due to a sudden drop in blood pressure. Narrowing of the airways can also occur at the same time, with or without the drop in blood pressure. This can cause breathing difficulties and wheezing.

Other symptoms can include:

- Swollen eyes, lips, genitals, hands, feet and other areas (this is called angioedema)
- Itching
- Sore, red, itchy eyes
- Changes in heart rate
- A sudden feeling of extreme anxiety or apprehension
- Itchy skin or nettle rash (hives)
- Unconsciousness due to very low blood pressure
- Abdominal cramps, vomiting or diarrhoea, or cramps and fever.

Anaphylaxis varies in severity. Sometimes it causes only mild itchiness and swelling, but in some people it can cause sudden death. If symptoms start soon after contact with the allergen and rapidly worsens, this indicates that the reaction is more severe.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND FURTHER GUIDANCE

Managing Medicines in School and Early Years Settings (DfES 2005) Guidance of the use of adrenaline auto-injectors in schools (Dementia and Disabilities team 2017)