

Allergy Policy

Statement:

This comprehensive Allergy Policy is of paramount importance to Ellergreen Nursery and Childcare Centre as it outlines our commitment to the healthcare and management of children within our nursery community who have allergies. At Ellergreen Nursery School and Childcare Centre, we recognise that children enrolled may experience food allergies, as well as reactions to insect stings, animal exposure, and other common allergens. We believe that all allergies must be treated with the utmost seriousness and managed with professionalism and care. While we acknowledge that it is not feasible to guarantee a completely allergen-free environment, we commit to implementing all practical measures to minimise the risk of exposure, encouraging an awareness and understanding amongst children, and preparing for effective responses to potential emergencies.

The policy reflects the principles set out in the **Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS, 2026)**. This policy also aligns with expectations outlined in Ofsted's **Education Inspection Framework (2026)** regarding safeguarding and promoting children's health.

Aim:

The aim of this policy is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children in our care, reduce risk and ensure an effective emergency response. We aim to establish a culture of caution, providing comprehensive staff training and education for all staff.

Procedures and Responsibilities for Allergy Management

Parents' Role:

Parents hold the responsibility in providing ongoing, accurate, and current medical information to the nursery in writing. They must complete the registration forms which include a declaration of any medical conditions or allergies and collaborate with staff to establish a Health Care plan or Allergy Care plan commencing attendance at Ellergreen Nursery School and Childcare Centre. Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring that all prescribed medication supplied to the nursery is in date and replaced prior to its expiry date.

This documentation should include:

1. The specific allergen (the substance to which the child is sensitive).
2. The type and severity of the allergic reaction that may occur (ranging from mild symptoms such as rashes to severe reactions like anaphylactic shock).
3. Detailed instructions on the response necessary in case of an allergic reaction, specifying any medications to be administered and the appropriate methods of administration and where medicine will be stored.
4. Risk management that minimises the chance of a child coming in to contact with the identified allergen(s).
5. Up-to-date emergency contact information for Parent/Carers.

We ask that if parents are gradually introducing known allergens to their child's diet or life then this is conducted at home until it is established as safe. Until such introduction is fully accomplished at home, we will not provide products containing known allergens to the child. It is the parent's responsibility to promptly update school with any changes to their child's allergies or management of allergies.

Staff Responsibilities:

All staff members are responsible for thoroughly familiarising themselves with this policy and adhering to the procedures within it. Furthermore, all staff undergo training in anaphylaxis management, ensuring awareness of common triggers, recognising signs and symptoms, and following established first aid protocols in emergencies involving allergic reactions. Allergy awareness and anaphylaxis training will be refreshed at least annually.

Emergency medication is kept easily accessible to all staff members for immediate use. All staff are informed of the storage arrangements for any medication within the nursery. AAIs are stored in the main office next to first aid boxes.

All medicines will be administered in accordance with the Nursery School and Child Care Centres Administration of Medicines Policy, and written records will be maintained each time medication is administered. Any allergic reaction, medication administration or near miss involving allergen exposure will be recorded and shared with parents/carers on the same day.

In the event of suspected anaphylaxis staff will

- Administer the prescribed Adrenaline Auto-Injector (AAI) immediately in accordance with the child's Allergy Care Plan.
- Call 999 and request an ambulance, stating "anaphylaxis".
- Contact parents/carers.
- Record the incident and review risk assessments and procedures following the event.

When a parent/Carer informs us of an allergy or being under investigation for an allergy, immediate action should be taken following the steps below.

- The staff member who has been informed of the allergy alerts the class teacher without delay.
- The class teacher promptly contacts the Parent/Carer to co-produce the allergy plan. If this relates to a new child, then this will be completed and in place before the child begins attending nursery.
- The child is added to the allergy/medical register which is displayed appropriately.
- The child is provided with an allergy placemat to reduce risk at mealtimes.
- All information is shared with staff to ensure all staff are aware of the individual needs of the child. All staff members are well-informed about the required treatments and medications through the child's allergy plan.
- Staff will ensure children's allergy plans and emergency medication will accompany them on all outings, visits and off-site activities.

All staff are responsible for implementing the following Preventive measures to minimise the risk of exposure to allergens.

- All food prepared, stored, handled and served on site will comply with current food safety legislation and allergen information requirements.
- Strict hygiene practices including hand-washing routines before and after eating for staff and children.
- Labels for all snacks provided are checked for allergens before distribution to children. A safe and suitable alternative will be offered to children with allergies where necessary. While we strive to create a nut-free environment, we acknowledge that we cannot wholly guarantee that any snacks will be completely free from traces of nuts.

- All tables will be cleaned and sanitised with an approved solution after each use to further reduce the risk of allergen contamination.
- Children will not be permitted to share food with one another, as this poses a potential risk to those with allergies.

Families/Carers/Visitors:

At the point of registration, all parents will be informed that our nursery is a nut-free environment, which is critical given that we have children with nut allergies. Furthermore, we seek parental commitment to abstain from sending food items that may potentially contain nuts or allergens as birthday treats. We ensure that any birthday cakes or special occasion foods be sourced from reputable stores and are provided in sealed packaging with listed ingredients, never homemade preparations, to ensure a heightened standard of safety.

The Allergy Policy is an essential document that governs the safety and wellbeing of the children within our establishment. It articulates our obligations to meet legal requirements and cultivates an inclusive educational environment. The legislative framework supporting this policy encompasses:

- **The Equality Act 2010:** This act places a duty on schools to make reasonable adjustments, eliminate discrimination, and foster inclusivity for students with allergies.
- **The Children and Families Act 2014, Section 100:** This act imposes a statutory duty on schools to support pupils with medical conditions effectively.
- **The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974:** This act highlights the obligation to maintain the health, safety, and welfare of all staff and pupils.
- **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework (effective September 2026)**

Ellergreen Nursery School and Childcare Centre dedicates itself to fostering a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment for all children through the implementation of this policy. This policy will undergo an annual review cycle and updates will be executed as necessary to ensure our ongoing compliance with current legislation and best practices for allergy management.

To be reviewed September 2027

Definitions:

- **Allergy:** A medical condition in which the body demonstrates an exaggerated response (hypersensitivity) to a substance that may ordinarily be harmless.
- **Allergen:** A substance that typically does not cause a reaction in the majority of individuals but triggers an allergic reaction in susceptible individuals.
- **Anaphylaxis:** A severe and potentially life-threatening allergic reaction that can develop rapidly, requiring immediate medical intervention. Common triggers include food allergies, insect stings, and certain medications.
- **AAI** Adrenaline auto-injectors
- **Epipen/JEXT/Emerade:** Commercially available brands of syringe-style devices filled with adrenaline, intended for immediate intramuscular administration in the event of anaphylaxis.
- **Minimised Risk Environment:** An environment designed with preventive measures and risk management protocols, such as risk assessment forms, to lower the likelihood of allergen exposure.
- **Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP) / Allergy Care Plan (ACP):** Detailed documents outlining a child's specific medical condition, treatment plan, and procedures to follow in the event of an allergic reaction, including the location and management of an adrenaline auto-injector.