

Nut & Seed Safe Environment Policy

Norman Street Primary School



Approved by Governors:

Chair of Governors: Rev K Teasdale

Acting Headteacher: K Hodges

Date: 09.02.2022

Review Date: January 2025

Norman Street Primary School aims to practice a Nut & Seed Safe Environment Policy, although we recognise that **this cannot be guaranteed** due to outside contamination and processing methods of food. This policy serves to set out all measures to reduce the risk to those children and adults who may suffer an allergic and anaphylactic reaction if exposed to nuts/seeds to which they are sensitive. The school aims to protect children and staff members who have allergies/intolerances to nuts and seeds, yet also help children, 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.

Definition

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

Anaphylaxis is your body's immune system reacting badly to a substance (an allergen), such as food, which it wrongly perceives as a threat.

The whole body can be affected, usually within minutes of contact with an allergen, though sometimes the reaction can happen hours later.

This policy refers to all nuts and seeds and associated products and includes: **peanuts, peanut butter, walnuts, almonds, brazil nuts, cashew nuts, pistachio nuts, sesame seeds, pine kernels, sunflower seeds, cereal bars containing specific nuts, cake containing specific nuts, marzipan, Nutella, seeded bread etc.**

Symptoms

The symptoms of anaphylaxis usually start between 3 and 60 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 a drop in blood pressure. This can cause breathing difficulties and wheezing.

Other Allergy symptoms:

- swollen eyes, lips, genitals, hands, feet and other areas (this is called angioedema)
- itching
- a strange metallic taste in the mouth
- 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 nausea and fever

Anaphylaxis varies in severity. Sometimes it causes only mild itchiness and swelling, but in some people, it can cause sudden death.

Anaphylaxis can lead to death if breathing becomes severely obstructed or if blood pressure becomes extremely low (known as shock).

If symptoms start soon after contact with the allergen and rapidly get worse, this indicates that the reaction is more severe.

Staff

The onus falls on all staff to read and follow this policy, both in school and when out on trips and outings. Also:

- Extra caution must be taken at certain times of year such as Easter and Christmas. If staff distribute any food to children, care must be taken to ensure that no nuts or seeds are included in the product. Particular products that are a cause for concern are: Celebrations, Roses, Heroes, Quality Street
- All product packaging should, where those products are being distributed to children by staff in school, be checked for warnings directed at nut/seed allergy sufferers and if the following or similar are displayed: 'Not suitable for nut allergy sufferers' or 'This product contains Nuts and/or Seeds'
- All staff and parents are aware of the need to complete an Allergen Information sheet for any cakes and/or cookery which is distributed to children. These sheets are located in the school office. Staff are also aware of the need for supervised hand washing (*if unsure, please see Mrs Lightfoot who is the Allergen trained member of staff*).
- Staff are requested to ensure that nuts/seeds are not directly present in any food they bring from home to eat on school premises.
- Staff all have an Allergy Medical Register, if they are unsure about any children they must seek advice from the Food First Aid and Health and Safety Lead, Mrs Hodges.

Parents

We ask parents not to bring in any food or treats (such as for birthdays) unless they have checked the ingredients carefully. Packaging must be checked for: 'Not suitable for nut allergy sufferers' or 'This product contains Nuts/Seeds', indicating this is unsuitable for school consumption. There are plenty of alternatives available. If a celebration cake states that it 'May contain Nuts/Seeds due to manufacturing processes', then an appropriate allergen sheet must be completed by the parent. These are available from the class teacher or school office. If the food or treats are homemade, we ask that nuts and seeds are not present in the recipe and again that an appropriate Allergen Sheet be completed.

Children

All children are regularly reminded about the good hygiene practice of washing hands before and after eating, which helps to reduce the risk of secondary contamination.

Children will also be reminded not to swap any of their packed lunch food with other children, especially those prone to allergic reactions.

Those children, visitors, staff and others with nut allergies should be aware that although the school is attempting to foster a nut/seed safe environment, it cannot be guaranteed to be a nut or seed free school. It is important that all usual precautions are still observed by staff, children and visitors with allergies.