Ladygrove Primary School and Nursery

Nut Free Policy

May 2025

To be reviewed May 2027

As a school we have looked at the pros and cons of becoming nut-free. Through this policy, the school aims to protect children who have allergies to nuts yet also empower 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. Although we recognise that this cannot be guaranteed, Ladygrove Primary School and Nursery aims to be a nut-free school. This policy serves to set out all the whole-school 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.

This policy is structured around the principles of confidentiality (where appropriate), fairness, avoiding stigmatisation, and empowerment of those affected. It is in-line with our wellbeing and nurturing values.

Reducing risk: whole-school approach

- We do not use nuts in any of our food prepared on site at our school. Our suppliers provide us with nut-free products. However, we cannot guarantee freedom from nut traces.

- We cannot give out any sweets or food products brought in from home to be given out as birthday treats without them first being checked by the class teacher.

- 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.

- Likewise, children are reminded and carefully supervised to minimise the act of food sharing with their friends.

- Staff and Volunteers must ensure they do not bring in or consume nut products in school and ensure they follow good hand washing practice. Caution must be taken at certain times of year such as Easter and Christmas. If Staff distribute confectionary, care must be taken to ensure that no nuts are included in the product. All product packaging must be checked for warnings directed at nut allergy sufferers and if the following or similar are displayed, the product must not be used in school.

Packaging must be checked for:

- Not suitable for nut allergy suffers
- This product contains nuts
- This product may contain traces of nuts

Parents and Carers

- Are responsible for notifying school staff of any known or suspected allergy to nuts and provide all medical and necessary information. This will be added to the child's medical plan and if necessary, a meeting organised with the school nurse. We are aware that allergies can occur at any point in the life of a child and indeed into adulthood. Therefore, it is important that we are kept up to date of any allergies that have developed so that appropriate steps can be taken.

- Are asked to observe and respect the nut-free policy and we would greatly appreciate it if the following items were not brought into school:
    - Packs of nuts
    - Peanut butter sandwiches
    - Fruit and cereal bars that contain nuts
    - Chocolate bars or sweets that contain nuts
    - Sesame seed rolls (children allergic to nuts may also have a severe reaction to sesame)
    - Cakes made with nuts
    - Homemade snacks or party food contributions containing nuts

Health Plans and Emergency Response

Children that are nut allergic are identified to school staff, especially to catering staff and care is taken to make new or temporary staff aware. We have individual medical plans for children with allergies and allergy lists are displayed highlighting actions to be taken in the event of a child suffering an allergic reaction. All medication is stored, administered and documented in accordance with our Administering Medicine Policy and procedures.

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Named staff First-Aiders are trained in identification of allergic reactions including anaphylaxis and in the administration of adrenaline auto-injectors (commonly known by brand names Epi-pen, Emerade or Jext). We also have additional staff who have been given training in order to maximise any support required.

Understanding anaphylaxis

Anaphylaxis is a severe, potentially life-threatening allergic reaction that can develop rapidly. It is also known as anaphylactic shock. Anaphylaxis is the result of your body's immune system overreacting to a harmless substance, such as food. Substances that trigger allergic reactions are known as allergens.

Anaphylaxis usually develops within minutes of contact with an allergen, but sometimes the reaction can happen up to 4 hours later.

Anaphylaxis is caused by a problem with the immune system, which is the body's natural defence against illness and infection. In the case of anaphylaxis, your

immune system overreacts to a harmless substance and releases a number of different chemicals, such as histamine, to deal with the mistaken threat.

Most rapid onset reactions will only cause mild to moderate symptoms. However, a more severe reaction (anaphylaxis) can occur and cannot easily be predicted. Whilst such a severe reaction is potentially life-threatening - deaths are rare.

Mild to moderate symptoms include:

- Itchy mouth, tongue and throat
- Swelling of lips, around the eyes or face
- Red raised itchy rash (often called nettle rash, hives or urticaria)
- Vomiting, nausea, abdominal pain and diarrhoea
- Runny nose and sneezing

Severe symptoms of anaphylaxis include:

- Swelling of the tongue and/or throat
- Difficulty in swallowing or speaking
- Change in voice (hoarse voice)
- Wheeze (whistling noise) or persistent cough
- Difficult or noisy breathing
- Dizziness, collapse, loss of consciousness (due to a drop in blood pressure)
- Pale, floppy, sudden sleepiness in babies.

Any one or more of the severe symptoms are a sign of a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) and should be treated as a medical emergency.

School EpiPens are in the main school office in a clearly identifiable box. Children individual EpiPens are always in the classroom and easily accessible and a copy of their care plan is stored with it.

If the child is not in the classroom their EpiPen should always be with them. i.e. school trips, outside activities.

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