



Food Allergies Policy

Rooted in Christ and Catholic tradition and under the guidance of its patron, St Edmund's aims to realise the God-given potential, in body, mind and spirit, of all members of its community through service and leadership.

Avita Pro Fide

St Edmund's is committed to ensuring the welfare and protection of children in their care and this commitment is a fundamental part of the role of every employee.

Policy

St Edmund's is committed through the Governing Body, our contractors and suppliers to reducing the risk to members of the College community and visitors with regard to the provision of food and the consumption of allergens in food, which could lead to an allergic reaction.

Statement

St Edmund's is not in a position to guarantee a completely allergen free environment, rather to minimize the risk of exposure by hazard identification. This will encourage self-responsibility to those with known allergens to make informed decisions on food choices. It is also important that the College has robust plans for effective response to possible emergencies.

Objectives of this policy

- To promote awareness of the nature of food allergens and bring these to the attention of College staff and students.
- To provide clear guidance to all caterers whether contract or staff of their responsibilities for the provision of food to members of the College community and visitors with a confirmed food allergy.
- To ensure that appropriate education/training is available and implemented for any catering staff involved in providing food to customers with food allergies.
- To ensure appropriate information and support is available for all.

Legislation

The Food Information Regulations 2014 requires all food businesses including school caterers to show the allergen ingredients information for the food they serve. This makes it easier for schools to identify the food that students with allergies can and cannot eat. From October 2021 the Food Information Regulations includes new requirements for labelling prepacked for direct sale (PPDS) food across the UK (also known as Natasha's Law) and applies to any food business that produces PPDS food, primary and secondary schools, colleges, universities, and nurseries that provide food.

What is a food allergy?

A food allergy:

- is a reaction by the body's immune system (the body's defence against infection). The immune system mistakenly treats proteins found in food as a threat
- can trigger allergy symptoms, such as a rash, wheezing and itching, after eating just a small amount of the food (these symptoms usually happen quickly)

- is often to particular foods. Common food allergies in adults include fish and shellfish and nut allergies. Common food allergies in children include milk, eggs, fish, peanuts and other nuts

Although allergic reactions are often mild, they can be very serious. Symptoms of a food allergy can affect different areas of the body at the same time. Some common symptoms include:

- an itchy sensation inside the mouth, throat or ears
- a raised itchy red rash (urticaria, or "hives")
- swelling of the face, around the eyes, lips, tongue and roof of the mouth (angioedema)
- difficulty swallowing
- wheezing or shortness of breath
- feeling dizzy and lightheaded
- feeling sick (nausea) or vomiting
- abdominal pain or diarrhoea
- hay fever-like symptoms, such as sneezing or itchy eyes (allergic conjunctivitis)

In the most serious cases, a person can have a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis), which is a medical emergency and can be life threatening.

What is food intolerance?

A food intolerance is not the same as a food allergy. A food intolerance is difficulty digesting certain foods and having an unpleasant physical reaction to them. It causes symptoms, such as bloating and tummy pain, which usually happen a few hours after eating the food. The number of people who believe they have a food intolerance has risen dramatically over recent years, but it's hard to know how many people are truly affected.

A food intolerance:

- does not involve the immune system; there is no allergic reaction, and it is never life-threatening
- causes symptoms that happen gradually, often a few hours after eating the problem food
- only results in symptoms if a substantial amount of the food is eaten (unlike an allergy, where just traces can trigger a reaction)
- can be caused by many different foods

Who is at risk?

Anyone can develop a food allergen or intolerance at any time in their life irrespective of whether they have consumed the food previously. A person with an allergy is at risk even if they consume a small amount of the food allergen. The proportion of the UK population with a true food allergy is approximately 1-2% of adults and 5-8% of children, which equates to around 2 million in the UK. In addition, about 1:100 of the UK population has coeliac disease and needs to avoid gluten. Allergic reactions can also be triggered in those who are susceptible by skin contact, i.e. An individual comes into direct contact with someone who has consumed, or is consuming the trigger. Care should be taken to identify any persons with extreme allergic reactions and every effort made to reduce the risk of these persons coming into contact with the trigger or those who bring their own food onto the College premises.

Common Food Allergens

- Cereals containing gluten, (i.e. wheat, rye, barley, oats, spelt, kamut or their hybridized strains) and associated products including cakes, breads and sauces;
- Crustaceans including prawns, shrimps, crabs, lobsters, scampi, shrimp paste and Chinese oyster sauces;
- Eggs used in egg based dishes such as mayonnaise, cakes, custards and sauces and any food glazed with eggs;
- Fish and fish based products for example, fish sauces, relishes, and dressings, some soy and

Worcester sauces;

- Peanuts (also known as groundnuts) used, for example, in a wide variety of Asian dishes and cooking oils, sauces, cakes, desserts, ground nut oil, peanut flour;
Soybeans used in soy sauces, tofu bean curd, soya flour;
- Milk (including lactose) and derived dairy products such as cream and cheeses and food glazed with milk;
- Nuts i.e. almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, cashews, pecan nuts, Brazil nuts, pistachio nuts, macadamia nuts, Queensland nuts, nut oils, marzipan and all products containing these as ingredients
- Celery including stalks, leaves, seeds, celery salt and roots called celeriac
- Mustard including liquid, powder and seeds
- Sesame seeds used, for example as toppings for breads, bread sticks and rolls, tahini and humous and also as sesame oil;
- Sulphur dioxide and sulphites used in wines, dried fruits and fruit juice drinks;
- Lupin including seeds and flour;
- Molluscs including mussels, land snails, squid, whelks and oyster sauce.

People may report allergies to other foods not on the above list, kiwi, peas, other legumes (beans etc). In some cases, people only need to avoid these when raw and can eat them cooked.

The allergy to nuts is the most common high risk allergy and as such demands more rigorous controls. However it is important to ensure that all allergies and intolerances are treated equally as the effect to the individual can be both life threatening and uncomfortable if suffered.

Responsibilities

The Parent/Guardian

- Inform the College's Health Centre of their child's food allergy / intolerance prior to the beginning of the school year (or as soon as possible) after diagnosis or symptoms.
- Inform the College's Health Centre of any changes to their child's allergy or intolerances in writing as soon as possible.
- Ensures their child always carries their medication (if required) with them to College

The College (via the Health Centre)

Medical information for students is private and confidential. However it is the Health Centre's responsibility to pass any information onto the site Contract Catering Manager with regards to food allergies of students.

- Collects from parents/guardians special diets information of students in the College and Prep School with food allergies and intolerances.
- Shares this information with the College Contract Caterers for the purpose of menu planning.
- Provides a list with photos to all staff at the beginning of Michaelmas term outlining students with medical conditions
- Keeps allergen information up to date throughout the year and ensures the contract caterer has
- the most up-to-date information available
- Informs staff of those students who have allergies
- Regularly trains staff on the use of epi-pens

The Contract Caterer

- Liaises with the College at regular intervals to obtain up to date information on those students with food allergies and intolerances.
- Keeps this information up to date throughout the year as and when the information is updated by the College.

- Informs the College Health Centre if a parent contacts the catering team directly to update a student's allergy or intolerance information.
- Ensures all team members are adequately trained on allergen management.
- Provides a pre-plated meal to those students with allergies as required.
- Ensure that an Allergy Champion is available at every service to provide allergy information to students.
- Provides accurate allergy information regarding the foods that are produced.
- Meets the requirements of all relevant allergen legislation.

The College Contract Caterer (or catering staff employed by the College) is responsible for ensuring that any food provided for College members or visitors with a food allergy is appropriate for their needs.

The College Contract Caterer (or catering staff employed by the College) should stock and be able to access the necessary ingredients to offer suitable alternatives for people with allergies, intolerances and coeliac disease. This includes wheat/gluten free bread and pasta, alternatives to cow's milk and butter/margarine spreads (e.g. milk free spread). Soya or oat milk should be available on request.

The College Contract Caterer (or catering staff employed by the College) must ensure that allergen information on the Common Food Allergens listed above, should be displayed where it can be easily seen by all College staff, students and visitors. Pre-packed food provided by the Contract Caterer such as wraps and sandwiches and packed lunches will have the appropriate labelling as required by legislation.

The College Contract Caterer (or catering staff employed by the College) must maintain all training records including annual refresher training. The College Contract Caterer (or catering staff employed by the College) must train casual service staff on food allergy awareness and procedures before commencing work. All catering department staff must be trained in the signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction and emergency response procedures.

Kitchen including Food Technology Department

The College Contract Caterer (or catering staff employed by the College) should ensure that.

- Common allergenic ingredients are stored separately to reduce the risk of cross contamination.
- The use of nuts and nut products is avoided.
- Equipment/utensils used in the preparation of food for people with a food allergy are cleaned in the conventional way, this under normal circumstances should be sufficient.
- When cooking food for people with a food allergy or intolerance gloves are worn and hands washed before food preparation.
- All food produced for people with food allergy or intolerance is placed away from other food and covered in cling film. It should be clearly marked with the person's name and diet.
- Where dishes contain common allergens these are clearly labelled at the entrance to the dining area.

There is explicit agreement between the College and the Contract Caterer that the Catering Contractor does not use nuts in any of the food it prepares and serves.

Owner of policy:	Bursar		
Reviewed by:	Deputy Head		

	Pastoral		
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