



Allergen Management

Aim

At Clare House Nursery, we are committed to providing a safe, inclusive and nurturing environment where every child can enjoy food and mealtimes safely, regardless of any allergy, intolerance or medical dietary requirement.

We recognise that food allergies can range from mild reactions to severe, life-threatening anaphylaxis. Our aim is to minimise the risk of exposure to allergens through effective communication, robust risk assessments, safe food handling procedures, staff training and close partnership working with parents, carers and healthcare professionals.

We are committed to ensuring that every member of staff understands their responsibilities in protecting children with allergies and that appropriate emergency procedures are in place should an allergic reaction occur.

Allergen Management

At Clare House Nursery, we recognise that food allergies and intolerances can pose a significant risk to children's health and, in some cases, may be life-threatening. We are committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment by taking all reasonable steps to minimise the risk of exposure to known allergens and ensuring that every child with an allergy is fully supported.

Parents and carers are required to inform the nursery of any known allergies, intolerances or dietary requirements before their child starts at the nursery, or immediately should any new allergy or medical need be identified. This information is reviewed regularly and whenever there is any change in a child's medical needs.

In accordance with the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework** and current national guidance, every child with a diagnosed allergy or medically prescribed dietary requirement will have an **Individual Healthcare Plan** and a comprehensive **Allergy Risk Assessment**, completed in partnership with parents or carers and, where appropriate, relevant healthcare professionals.

These documents will clearly identify:

- the child's known allergens
- signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction
- measures required to prevent exposure
- dietary requirements
- medication requirements
- emergency procedures
- responsibilities of staff
- arrangements for outings and off-site visits.

Healthcare Plans and Risk Assessments will be reviewed:

- before the child starts attending the nursery

- Every 6 months alongside the focus month
- following any allergic reaction
- whenever there is a change in the child's medical needs.
- Staff will maintain open and ongoing communication with parents and carers regarding their child's allergies, intolerances and dietary requirements, encouraging families to promptly share any changes to their child's health or medical needs

Where a child has a significant allergy, all relevant staff, including students, volunteers and supply staff where appropriate, will be made aware of the child's individual needs and the control measures required to reduce the risk of exposure.

Information will be communicated through the nursery's secure internal procedures whilst maintaining confidentiality and ensuring that staff have the information they need to safeguard the child.

All staff will act sensitively and respectfully towards the child and their family and will follow the child's Individual Healthcare Plan, Allergy Risk Assessment and the nursery's allergy management procedures at all times.

Staff receive appropriate training to enable them to:

- recognise the signs and symptoms of allergic reactions and anaphylaxis
- minimise the risk of cross-contamination
- safely prepare and serve food
- administer emergency medication where appropriate and trained to do so
- respond promptly and effectively during an emergency.

Food Preparation and Allergen Control

The nursery follows the guidance issued by the **Food Standards Agency (FSA)** regarding allergen management and safe food handling.

The 14 recognised allergens identified by the Food Standards Agency are considered whenever food is:

- purchased
- received
- stored
- prepared
- cooked
- served
- provided during celebrations or special events.

Staff will always read ingredient labels each time food is purchased or prepared and will never assume ingredients remain unchanged.

Where necessary, separate utensils, preparation areas and storage arrangements will be used to minimise the risk of cross-contamination.

Children are not permitted to share food, drinks or eating utensils with one another.

Visual Identification of Dietary and Allergy Requirements

To further reduce the risk of errors and support the safe provision of meals, Clare House Nursery operates a clear visual identification system during all mealtimes.

Children with specific dietary requirements, allergies or medically prescribed diets are provided with:

- colour-coded plates
- individual name place cards
- a traffic light identification system (Green, Orange and Red).

This provides an immediate visual prompt for all practitioners, helping to ensure that the correct meal is served to the correct child and that individual dietary requirements are consistently recognised.

This visual identification system forms part of the nursery's wider allergy management procedures and does **not** replace the requirement for staff to check each child's:

- Individual Healthcare Plan
- Allergy Risk Assessment
- dietary records
- daily meal information.

Before every meal is served, practitioners complete both visual and verbal checks to ensure the correct meal is being provided to the correct child.

Where appropriate, a second member of staff will verify meals served to children with significant allergies as an additional safety measure.

Supervision During Mealtimes

Children are supervised at all times whilst eating and drinking.

Practitioners remain vigilant throughout mealtimes to ensure:

- children eat only the food provided for them
- food is not shared between children
- any signs of an allergic reaction are recognised immediately
- prompt action is taken if concerns arise.

Mealtimes are recognised as an important part of safeguarding children's health and wellbeing.

Emergency Procedures

Should a child display signs of an allergic reaction, staff will immediately follow the child's Individual Healthcare Plan and Emergency Care Plan.

Where appropriate, trained staff will administer prescribed emergency medication in accordance with the child's care plan.

Emergency services (999) will be called immediately if:

- anaphylaxis is suspected
- an Adrenaline Auto-Injector (AAI) has been administered
- staff are concerned about the child's condition.

Parents or carers will be informed as soon as possible.

All incidents will be fully recorded, reviewed and, where necessary, risk assessments and procedures updated to reduce the likelihood of future incidents.

The 14 Food Standards Agency Allergens

The nursery considers the following 14 allergens identified by the Food Standards Agency when purchasing, preparing and serving food:

1. Celery
2. Cereals containing gluten (wheat, rye, barley and oats)
3. Crustaceans
4. Eggs
5. Fish
6. Lupin
7. Milk
8. Molluscs
9. Mustard
10. Peanuts
11. Sesame
12. Soya
13. Sulphur dioxide and sulphites
14. Tree nuts (including almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, cashews, pecans, Brazil nuts, pistachios and macadamia nuts).

Partnership with Parents and Individual Allergy Management

When a child is due to start at Clare House Nursery, parents and carers are required to inform the nursery of any known allergies, food intolerances, dietary requirements or medical conditions as part of the registration process. Parents must notify the nursery immediately if there are any changes to their child's medical needs during their time at the setting.

Before a child with a diagnosed allergy attends the nursery, an **Individual Healthcare Plan** and **Allergy Risk Assessment** will be completed in partnership with parents or carers and, where appropriate, relevant healthcare professionals. These documents will identify:

- the child's known allergens
- the signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction
- measures to reduce the risk of exposure
- dietary requirements

- prescribed medication
- emergency procedures
- staff responsibilities
- arrangements for outings and emergency evacuations.

These forms will be kept within the child's folder

The Individual Healthcare Plan and Risk Assessment will be reviewed regularly, following any allergic reaction or whenever the child's needs change.

All relevant staff, including students, volunteers and agency staff where appropriate, will be made aware of the child's allergy, Individual Healthcare Plan and emergency procedures before caring for the child.

Parents are asked to discuss their child's allergy management with staff before admission and demonstrate the use of any prescribed emergency medication where appropriate. Where emergency medication such as an Adrenaline Auto-Injector (AAI) is prescribed, staff responsible for the child's care will receive appropriate training and feel competent before administering medication.

Reducing the Risk of Allergen Exposure

Clare House Nursery recognises that it is not possible to guarantee a completely allergen-free or nut-free environment. However, we take all reasonable steps to minimise the risk of exposure to allergens through robust food safety procedures, careful meal preparation and effective communication.

Where a child has a severe allergy, additional control measures identified within their Individual Healthcare Plan and Risk Assessment will be implemented. Where necessary, parents may be asked not to provide particular food items if they present a significant risk to another child within the nursery.

All food ingredients are checked carefully before use, and staff will never assume that products contain the same ingredients as previous purchases. Every delivery and every product label will be checked to ensure allergen information is accurate and up to date.

Separate utensils, preparation equipment and storage arrangements will be used where required to minimise the risk of cross-contamination.

Children are encouraged not to share food, drinks, cups, cutlery or utensils with one another.

Visual Identification During Mealtimes

To provide an additional layer of protection, Clare House Nursery operates a clear visual identification system during all meals and snacks.

Children are provided with colour-coded plates and individual name place cards using the nursery's traffic light system:

- **Green** – No known allergies or dietary requirements.

- **Orange** – Allergy, intolerance or dietary requirement requiring additional checks.
- **Red** – Severe allergy or high-risk medical dietary requirement.

This visual system enables practitioners to identify children who require additional vigilance during mealtimes. However, it does **not** replace the requirement for staff to check the child's Individual Healthcare Plan, Allergy Risk Assessment and daily dietary information before serving food.

Before every meal or snack, practitioners complete both visual and verbal checks to ensure the correct food is served to the correct child. Where appropriate, a second member of staff will independently verify meals prepared for children with severe allergies as an additional safeguarding measure.

Emergency Medication

Emergency medication, including Adrenaline Auto-Injectors (AIs), antihistamines or other prescribed medication, will be:

- clearly labelled with the child's name
- stored safely whilst remaining immediately accessible
- checked regularly to ensure it is in date
- taken on all outings, visits and emergency evacuations.

Medication will only be administered:

- with written parental consent
- in accordance with the child's Individual Healthcare Plan
- by staff who have received appropriate training and are confident in administering the medication.

If an Adrenaline Auto-Injector is administered or a child displays signs of anaphylaxis, staff will immediately call **999**, follow the child's Emergency Care Plan, inform parents or carers without delay and complete the nursery's Record of Concern and medication documentation. Following any allergic reaction, the child's Individual Healthcare Plan, Risk Assessment and nursery procedures will be reviewed to identify any additional measures required to reduce future risk.

By following these procedures, Clare House Nursery aims to provide a safe, inclusive and supportive environment where all children can enjoy meals confidently whilst minimising the risk of accidental exposure to allergens.

