

ALLERGY POLICY



Statement of Intent

Our mission is to promote a love of learning in order to maximise the life chances of every child in our Trust. Through nurturing, high expectations and skilled teaching, we will have a lasting and positive impact on our local and wider community.

Our Vision

TEACH Trust supports our children to become empowered citizens that make a meaningful contribution to society. Our curriculum reflects our locality and all it offers and aims to educate all children in matters which affect humanity in the wider world: these include all matters that relate to the climate and the world around us, such as climate change; the importance of respecting and celebrating the importance of equality and diversity; and being responsible global citizens.

We have the highest aspirations for our children: the broad and balanced curriculum promotes learning, provides cultural capital and supports spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The Rights Respecting Gold awards and Anti Bullying awards reflect some of many ways in which education for character are integral to the work of our schools and highlights our focus on the children's personal development.

We aim to inspire our children to be socially conscious individuals who make a difference to the world. All our children secure the key learning and skills they will need to become lifelong learners and gain employment. Our ultimate aim is to improve all our children's life chances and prepare them to thrive in their future lives.

Under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Act which came into force in April 2011, the Trust has due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

All schools in the TEACH Trust are committed to provide a safe environment that is inclusive for all children. Within our schools, we have a number of children with specific dietary requirements and food allergens. Teach Trust is committed to a whole school approach to the care and management of all members of the School community (pupils, parents, visitors and staff). This policy looks at food allergies, dietary requirements and intolerances. The TEACH Trust Medical and First Aid Policy looks more in depth at allergens such as animal stings (bees, wasps, ants etc).

1. Purpose

This policy details how the TEACH Trust will:

- Identify, manage and reduce risks for pupils with allergies
- Prevent exposure to allergens where reasonably practicable
- Respond effectively to allergic reactions, including life-threatening anaphylaxis
- Comply with:
 - Children and Families Act 2014
 - Food Information Regulations 2014
 - DfE guidance on medical conditions
 - **Benedict's Law (2026) statutory expectations**

2. Definition of Allergy and Anaphylaxis

What is an allergy?

An allergy is an immune system response to a substance (allergen) that is usually harmless but causes a reaction in some individuals.

Reactions can range from mild (e.g. rash, itching) to severe.

What is anaphylaxis?

Anaphylaxis is a severe, sudden, and life-threatening allergic reaction that affects the whole body and requires immediate emergency treatment;

- It can occur within minutes of exposure to an allergen
- It can rapidly get worse and may be fatal without treatment
- It requires urgent use of an adrenaline auto-injector and a 999 call

Key symptoms (often described as ABC):

Airway

- Swelling of throat, tongue, or airway
- Difficulty swallowing or hoarse voice

Breathing

- Wheezing, coughing
- Difficulty breathing or rapid breathing

Circulation

- Dizziness, fainting or collapse
- Blue palms, or soles of feet
- A raised rash

- Pale, clammy skin
- Pale and floppy (young child)
- Loss of consciousness

Other symptoms may include;

- Rash (hives), itching
- Swelling of lips, eyes or face
- Abdominal pain, vomiting

What to do in anaphylaxis

Anaphylaxis is a medical emergency. Call 999 immediately.

If you think someone is having an anaphylactic reaction:

- **Use an adrenaline (epinephrine) auto-injector immediately** (such as EpiPen or Jext) if one is available. Follow the instructions on the device.
- **Call 999** and say that the person is having anaphylaxis (a severe allergic reaction).
- **Help them into the best position:**
- If feeling faint: lie them flat and raise their legs.
 - If struggling to breathe: allow them to sit up.
 - If pregnant: lie them on their left side.
 - **Do not let them stand or walk.**
- **If caused by an insect sting, remove the sting if possible.**
- **If symptoms have not improved after 5 minutes and a second auto-injector is available, give the second dose.**
- **Monitor their breathing and responsiveness** until the ambulance arrives. If they stop breathing and you are trained, start CPR and follow the 999 operator's instructions

3. Types of Allergens

The school recognises that **pupils may be allergic to a wide range of substances**, not just food.

3.1 The 14 Regulated Food Allergens (UK)

Food allergies affect approximately 1 in 50 children and have increased 600% in the last 30 years. It is likely that at school children will encounter, and may accidentally ingest, one of many products which cause an allergic reaction. Children with a food allergy may react to tactile (touch) exposure or inhalation exposure. Not every ingestion exposure will result in anaphylaxis but the potential always exists. Whilst peanut allergy is the most likely to cause anaphylaxis, eight foods (peanut, tree nut, milk, egg, soy, wheat, fish and shellfish) account for the vast majority of total food allergies.

Under food law, the following allergens must be identified and managed:

- Cereals containing gluten
- Celery including stalks, leaves, seeds and celeriac in salads
- Crustaceans, (prawns, crab, lobster, scampi, shrimp paste)
- Eggs - also food glazed with egg

- Fish - some salad dressings, relishes, fish sauce, some soy and Worcester sauces
- Soya (tofu, bean curd, soya flour)
- Milk - also food glazed with milk
- Nuts, (almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, pecan nuts, Brazil nuts, pistachio, cashew and macadamia (Queensland) nuts, nut oils, marzipan)
- Peanuts - sauces, cakes, desserts, ground nut oil, peanut flour
- Mustard - liquid mustard, mustard powder, mustard seeds
- Sesame seeds - bread, bread sticks, tahini, houmous, sesame oil
- Sulphur dioxide/Sulphites (dried fruit, fruit juice drinks, wine, beer)
- Lupin, seeds and flour, in some bread and pastries
- Molluscs, (mussels, whelks, oyster sauce, land snails and squid)

3.2 Other Common Food Triggers

These may also cause severe reactions:

- Kiwi, banana, avocado (linked with latex allergy)
- Spices, flavourings, processed foods
- Cross-contamination (e.g. shared utensils)

3.3 Nuts

The allergy to nuts is the most common high-risk allergy 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.

All TEACH Trust schools are 'Nut Aware'. We do not describe the schools as being 'Nut Free' because we cannot guarantee that students or adults have not brought nuts, or traces of nuts, into the building but will strive to minimise this as much as possible.

To minimise the risk of children coming in contact with nuts we ask all members of the school community to adhere to the following:

- Parents and carers are requested NOT to send food to school that contains nuts. This includes all types of nuts, peanut butter, Nutella, cereal/chocolate bars and any other food containing nuts.
- Staff will be alert to any obvious signs of nuts being brought in, but they will not inspect all food brought into school.
- Children that DO bring in food that obviously contain nuts e.g. nutella, peanut butter, Snickers, to name a few, will be asked to eat that food away from any child with a nut allergy and to wash their hands before going to play.
- If any actual nuts are found, they will be bagged up and sent home.
- Children will be instructed NOT to share food.
- Children will be encouraged to wash hands before and after eating.
- All staff are trained in understanding Allergy Awareness and dealing with Anaphylaxis (severe allergic reactions) and will use this training as the need arises.
- The school dinner providers will ensure all cooked food is nut-free.
- The schools will not sell products that contain nuts at school events.

- If staff are given gifts that contain nuts, they will need to be stored in a safe place, away from pupils, and taken home the same day.
- Any cakes or items that are brought into school for cake sales, charity purposes and other celebrations, must not contain any nuts and must be clearly labelled with a clear list of ingredients and allergies emphasised in line with Natasha's Law.

Other food allergies as outlined in the 14 major food allergens on page 3

The Trust is fully aware that any of the allergies outlined in the 14 major food allergens can impact on the school community while at school. It is the responsibility of the parents/carers to notify the school of any allergies on entry to the school and any change in their child's condition during their time at school. The processes involved when a child is identified as having a food allergy is covered in the TEACH Trust Medical and First Aid Policy.

3.4 Non-Food Allergens

The school recognises that anaphylaxis can also be triggered by non-food substances, including:

Environmental allergens

- Pollen (hay fever)
- Dust mites (carpets, soft furnishings)
- Mould
- Animal dander (class pets)

Insect venom

- Bee and wasp stings

Latex

- Balloons, gloves, rubber bands, some equipment
- Can cause severe reactions including anaphylaxis

Medication

- Antibiotics (e.g. penicillin)
- Painkillers

Other triggers

- Metals (e.g. nickel in jewellery – contact dermatitis)
- Exercise following exposure to allergens (may increase severity)

4. Benedict's Law – Whole School Duties

TEACH Trust will;

- Maintain a **published whole-school allergy policy**
- Provide **mandatory staff training**
- Hold **at least two spare adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs) in an adult accessible cupboard in the Medical Room in each school**
- Implement **individual healthcare plans**
- Maintain **robust record-keeping and communication systems**

These expectations underpin this policy.

5. Prevention strategies

It is our responsibility as a school community to do our utmost to avoid exposing children with allergies to the products which could start an allergic reaction. TEACH Trust will adopt **a whole-school risk-assessed approach** including;

Staff responsibilities

- To obtain information from parents/carers on all food allergies before children attend school.
- Medical Admin Officers (MAOs) will ensure that allergy registers are held and maintained. Refer to Appendix 1.
- MAOs will ensure that they are provided with an Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP) for children who have specific allergies through medical files and information provided from parents/carers and other professionals, where applicable.
- IHPs will include;
 - Clear allergens
 - Symptoms
 - Medication and emergency actions.
 - Incident recording information.

Plans are reviewed **annually and whenever a review is deemed necessary.**

- MAOs will ensure that Individual Healthcare Plans and pictures of children are displayed in the school office, medical room, staffroom, serveries and year bases.
- All Trust staff, undergo annual Handsam Allergy and Auto-Injector training first aid training. This should be all staff irrespective of role in school.
- TEACH Trust follow a strict no sharing policy of food, for children, that is brought from home. Where the school holds any special event where food is shared, the school will make additional arrangements. This information is shared to parents/carers on a termly basis.
- Pupils are regularly informed to advise an adult or Class teacher if another pupil appears unwell.

- Staff should be extra cautious if a child with allergies reports feeling unwell, with appropriate first aid being given, or advice sought from parent.
- TEACH Trust ensure that children with high risk allergies who hold an epipen, are identified with a red wrist band.
- Individual Healthcare Plans are completed for all pupils with diagnosed allergies. For any activity where allergen exposure risk is present (e.g. trips, events, classroom activities) referral to this IHCP is outlined on the trip/event/activity risk assessment, where relevant.
- Teachers/teaching assistants will promote;
 - Handwashing routines
 - Controlled use of food in lessons
- Adrenaline auto-injectors are labelled and stored in an accessible cupboard in the Medical Room in each school. Each school also holds at least two, spare, in date, emergency adrenaline auto-injectors, should these be required.
- Adrenaline auto-injectors are required to be taken wherever a vulnerable child goes e.g. away from the classroom and on school trips. A mobile or other communication device must be available on each trip for emergency calls.
- Snack time and lunch time food is monitored by staff to ensure that products are nut free. All staff will know the procedures at snack and lunch time to ensure the safety of children with allergies. However, staff cannot guarantee that foods will not contain traces of nuts.
- Lunch staff will clean surfaces before and after food use.
- Staff must remove any food containing nuts, safely store it out of reach and hand over to the child's parent at home-time.
- Staff should liaise with parents about snacks and any food-related activities; parental consent should be sought.

Parent responsibilities

Inform the school when the child starts with any food allergy or specific dietary requirements when completing the admissions paperwork.

Notify the school of any changes to their child's dietary needs throughout their time at the school.

Teach and encourage children to self-manage their individual dietary requirements, when it is age appropriate to do so.

6.0 Risk Reduction

Forerunner, our external food provider provide hot school lunches and packed lunches to the Trust.

Risk reduction includes;

- Clear allergen labelling (legal requirement)
- Menu planning to avoid cross-contamination
- Staff training in allergen awareness

7.0 Dietary requirements

Schools in the TEACH Trust understand that some children will have dietary requirements based around belief, choice and specific dietary requirements. These dietary requirements include, but not exclusively, the following:

Religious beliefs, such as, halal
Vegetarians
Vegans
Coeliac disease

In order to meet the needs of these children, parents must inform the school when the child starts of any specific dietary needs relating and keep the school updated of any changes.

In order to ensure that all children are treated equally, regardless of any dietary requirements or allergies, TEACH Trust will support children through providing alternatives. This could be through providing specific sweets when children share sweets on their birthday, providing alternative ingredients during food technology sessions, using gluten free bread for Breakfast Club/After School Club and toast club and providing gluten or dairy free biscuits for booster sessions.

TEACH Trust schools do not actively encourage the regular eating of sweets or other foods high in sugar or fat, especially as a reward for good behaviour or academic or other achievements. Other methods of positive reinforcement are used in school. However, children, if they wish, may bring in treats to share with their classmates on their birthday. In this circumstance, an alternative will be provided by the school for specific dietary requirements such as vegan or halal.

During the course of the year, the children will have the opportunity to take part in parties at school for celebrations such as Christmas where food is brought in from home. Letters will be sent home to remind parents of specific allergies. Staff will also ensure that children with specific allergies or dietary needs are supervised during these times with due caution.

Links to other policies:

TEACH Trust Medical and First Aid policy
Health and Safety policy

Equality Impact Assessment

Question		Response	
Which relevant groups and stakeholders have been consulted with in relation to this policy?			Please tick
		Pupils	✓
		Trustees	✓
		Staff	✓
		Parents/Carers	✓
		Local Authority	
		Trade Unions	
		Other Advisors (give details)	
What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy?		Termly	
		Annually	✓
		When applied	
		If legislation changes	✓
		If a formal complaint	✓
Characteristic Group	Is there a potential for positive or negative impact?	Please explain and give examples of any evidence/data used	Action to address potential positive/negative impact (e.g. adjustment to the policy)
Disability			
Gender reassignment			
Marriage or civil partnership			
Pregnancy and maternity	✓	Pregnancy may impact on allergies	Part of the risk assessment process
Race	✓	Children may not be able to eat certain foods due to beliefs	Staff are aware of these children through allergies and dietary needs register
Religion or belief	✓	Children may not be able to eat certain foods due to beliefs	Staff are aware of these children through allergies and dietary needs register
Sexual orientation			
Sex (gender)			
Age			
SEN	✓	May not be sure why they can't eat a certain food and so may need extra explanation e.g. social story	Possible social story and support to the parents
Vulnerable	✓	Families may have limited food and so give their child whatever is in the cupboard	Support for parents to ensure suitable foods are sent in
Traveller, migrant, refugees and people seeking asylum	✓	Language may be a barrier in understanding the policy or informing the school of any particular needs	Translation of the policy and any correspondence sent from school if needed
EAL	✓	Language may be a barrier in understanding the policy or informing the school of any particular needs	Translation of the policy and any correspondence sent from school if needed

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