



# Managing Nut and Other Allergies Policy

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# Royal Greenwich Trust School Managing Nut and Other Allergies Policy

## Introduction

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Health and Safety Policy.

**ANAPHYLAXIS** is a severe allergic reaction at the extreme end of the allergic spectrum, affecting the entire body, and can occur within minutes of exposure. The main causes are attributed to nuts, seeds and seafood. This policy focuses on the management of nut allergies.

One approach could be to ban nuts from RGTS (Royal Greenwich Trust School), however, the **Anaphylaxis Campaign** highlights a number of problems with this approach as follows:

It would be impossible to provide an absolute guarantee that RGTS is nut free, given that pupils regularly bring in food from home and food items bought on the way to school. There would be a risk that children with allergies might be led into a false sense of security. The nut ban would be seen as a precedent for demands to ban other potentially 'risky' foods.

**Therefore, we do not claim to be a 'nut-free' school.** There is a strong case to be argued that children with food allergies will develop a better awareness and understanding of how to manage their allergies if they grow up in an environment where allergens are regularly present. However, we have a duty of care and therefore have procedures in place to minimize the risk of a reaction occurring in a food-allergic child. At RGTS, allergens are restricted and monitored as much as is reasonably possible.

**Our Food Standards Policy** (see *appendix 1*) emphasises the avoidance of nuts (tree nuts, peanuts and pine nuts) and nut related products in the catering services at RGTS. We use a nut-free company, recognising the potentially severe allergic reaction for some people. We also avoid the use of sesame seeds and sesame related products. The school is committed to pupil safety and therefore has created this policy to reduce the risk of children having allergy related events whilst in its care.

Within the catering facilities at RGTS, we take precautions to minimise the risk of anaphylaxis and other 14 allergenic reactions occurring (see Food Standards Agency poster (*Appendix 2*))

We never knowingly use any nuts (including pine nuts and peanuts) or sesame seeds and associated nut/sesame products in our kitchens.

Pupils who are known to have food allergies (e.g. nuts, egg, milk, gluten, fish, molluscs, crustaceans) are must let key members of the catering team know the details, on their first day at the school, and are encouraged to seek guidance from catering staff – on a daily basis, if necessary – on what they can have, from the menu, for lunch.

Catering staff receive regular training in respect of food allergies.

Food preparation staff take precautions to reduce the risk of cross contamination

Our recipes are analysed, and allergens contained therein are highlighted and recorded

The kitchen produces an allergens chart to label what is in the recipes

The canteen does not knowingly sell any products that specify tree nuts, pine nuts, peanuts or sesame seeds as ingredients.

It should be acknowledged that, given current food manufacturing processes, it is impossible to guarantee that all products will be free from possible 'traces of nuts' and other allergens.

EU allergen regulations (see Appendix 2), effective from December 2014, relating to prepackaged food and 'loose' food offered in retail and other food outlets require food service operators to provide information on 14 specified allergens (three of which are nuts, peanuts and sesame). Our commitment to flagging selected allergens on the service counter menu cards now extends to the additional newly prescribed allergens when present in the food we serve. We keep detailed allergen information on all our recipes and other food and drink items, enabling catering staff to be able to provide allergen information whenever asked. This is displayed both in the canteen and kitchen area

Whilst most allergic reactions are the result of food ingestion, we recognise, too, that severe allergic reactions can occur as a result of individuals being susceptible to airborne allergens. Allergic reactions can also be triggered by touching surfaces – such as computer or piano keyboards which may have being inadvertently contaminated.

The success of minimising anaphylaxis risk – and all other allergenic reactions - requires the co- operation of pupils, staff and parents. Parents are asked not to provide pupils with snacks and cakes (birthdays are potentially high risk occasions) that contain nuts and sesame seeds. A written reminder will be communicated to parents at least once each year.

It is essential that the school has full details of all our pupils' allergies. This information is requested by the school, and must be provided by parents when their child joins the school and then updated by parents if allergies are discovered at a later stage. The school nurse should also be provided with a treatment plan and Epipen, clearly marked with the student's name. In some cases, the school nurse will liaise directly with parents on a regular or

occasional basis.

Within the parameters of confidentiality, the school provides – to the catering department and other relevant parties – a list of names and photographs of pupils with severe medical conditions including severe allergies.

When the school provides packed lunches for trips away, catering staff provide pre-packed sandwiches that have detailed labelling.

When pupils take part in single or multi-day school trips, participating pupils' allergies, their respective treatments and other associated requirements are factored into the planning process.

Whilst the school will exercise all due care and attention to minimise risk, pupils are expected to self- manage their allergy, too, having an understanding of;

- Foods which are safe or unsafe
- When to ask staff to change (self-service) serving utensils, if they think cross-contamination has taken place
- Their specific symptoms, if an allergic reaction occurs
- Their responsibility to carry their EpiPen with them at all times
- Who to advise, if and when an allergic reaction happens
- Letting friends and staff know about their allergy, in case of emergency
- When to seek guidance (and from whom) – if in doubt

### **Anaphylaxis protocol**

How do I recognise an anaphylaxis reaction and what action should I take?

#### **Early symptoms include**

- Itchy, urticarial rash anywhere on the body
- Runny nose and watery eyes
- Nausea and vomiting
- Dizziness

#### **Danger signs include**

- Swelling of the lips, tongue and throat
- Cough, wheeze, tightness of chest or shortness of breath
- Sudden collapse or unconsciousness

**Treatment** will depend on the severity of the reaction

**For mild symptoms** Piriton or inhaler may be given by a health co-ordinator, first aider or (on trips away from school) by any adult attendant. The agreed health plan will be in a named medical box stored in the medical centre or taken away on the trip.

**For severe symptoms (see Emergency procedure, below)** an EpiPen device should be used. This should be administered into the thigh muscle (can be delivered through clothing) and will allow the adrenaline to quickly reverse the effects of the allergic reaction. The child should then be taken to hospital

### **Emergency procedure**

The following procedure must be adopted;

Call an ambulance and send a responsible person to fetch the child's emergency box

Call the school nurse. If she is unavailable, send a responsible person to the school office and

Ask for a first aider

Monitor the child's condition carefully

Administer the EpiPen:

- Remove packaging and pull off the blue safety cap from the EpiPen
- Hold the device about 10 cm from the outer thigh
- Inject – swing and jab the orange tip firmly against the outer thigh and listen for an audible click from the mechanism – hold in place for 10 seconds
- The orange tip extends on removal
- Massage the area for 10 seconds

Monitor the child's progress – a second dose of EpiPen may be required after 10 minutes, if the condition has not improved and help has still not arrived

When the ambulance crew arrives, ascertain where they will be taking the child and give all used EpiPens to the ambulance crew for safe disposal

Contact the child's parents, guardian or next of kin and advise them to meet at the hospital, if they are not in the immediate vicinity

Accompany the child to hospital if the parents have not arrived

## **Appendix 1**

### **Food standards policy**

At RGTS, we provide a fresh, healthy, varied and tasty lunch menu, encouraging all our pupils to take and enjoy the important mid-day meal – eating well and stimulating an interest in food and nutrition.

To ensure balance, nutrition and variety, our lunch menus feature three main course choices each day: a protein dish and a vegetarian option.

It is our policy to use predominantly fresh food, delivered daily. We use salt sparingly, to season the food, during some of the cooking processes but avoid its use as much as possible. We use natural sugars where possible and we ensure that our daily offer contains fibre, protein, starchy carbohydrate, vitamins, iron and other essential minerals, which are all so important for young, growing people.

Whilst we serve fried food occasionally, we use good-quality vegetable oils and we do not use deep fat fryers once a week.

Each day, there is a selection of green and other vegetables available, together with a range of home-made salads and a variety of fresh fruit.

Our desserts are all freshly made and we never use confectionery-type products as part of the lunch offer. Any biscuits that are sold have been checked and approved.

There are water fountains as well as chilled drinking water (still and sparkling) available for

pupils to buy throughout the day.

We review and change our menus regularly, using imagination and drawing on different cultures from around the world – whilst still finding room for the traditional favourites. Within the parameters of the menu options, we believe that our pupils should be free to make considered choices. Self-service food counters enable our pupils to take what they require – in terms of portion size – for main course, pudding and fresh fruit.

We are very conscious of individuals' dietary requirements, whether they arise from personal choice or medical necessity. A great deal of thought goes into providing a varied and original daily vegetarian dish and our catering team is always willing to assist with advice regarding other dietary needs.

In accordance with our Managing Nut and other Allergies policy, we avoid using nuts or nut products in our cooking but acknowledge that there can be no absolute guarantee that cross contamination has not occurred somewhere in the food supply chain.

We do not knowingly use genetically modified foods and our supplier agreements stipulate this requirement