



Allergen Policy

School Responsibility	Mr L Gilhooly
Headteacher	Mr L Gilhooly
Governor	Mrs Charlotte Monkman
Adopted	February 2023
Review	February 2026

ETHOS STATEMENT

The School was founded by and is part of the Catholic Church. The School is to be conducted as a Catholic School in accordance with the canon law and teachings of the Catholic Church and in accordance with the Trust Deed of the Diocese of Leeds in particular:

1. Religious education is to be in accordance with the teachings, doctrines, discipline and general and particular norms of the Catholic Church;
2. Religious worship is to be in accordance with the teachings, doctrines, discipline and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church;

And at all times the school is to serve as witness to the Catholic faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

MISSION STATEMENT

St Joseph is our patron saint and he inspires and guides us in our school mission:

- *Each one of us is part of God's family and we are all special*
- *As God's children and family we love one another, pray together, play together and walk hand in hand with God*
- *God is our teacher and we are his gifts. He helps us learn together, work hard and do our best to make our world a better place*
- *With fun, laughter and friendship we celebrate God's love*
- *We respect and care for everyone and for God's wonderful world*

The Allergen Policy is based on the Catholic ethos of the school in which all members of the community are respected and valued.

St Joseph's Primary School, Otley recognises that a number of community members (pupils, parents, visitors and staff) may suffer from potentially life-threatening allergies or intolerances to certain foods. The school is committed to a whole school approach to the care and management of those members of the school community. This policy looks at food allergy and intolerances.

The school's position is not to guarantee a completely allergen free environment, rather to minimise the risk of exposure by hazard identification, instruction and information. This will encourage self-responsibility to all those with known allergens to make informed decisions on food choices and to provide help and

assistance for our youngest pupils. It is also important that the school has clear plans for an effective response to possible emergencies.

Aims and Objectives

The school is committed to proactive risk food allergy management through:

- Ensuring that robust systems in place to ensure accurate and timely sharing of information relating to food allergies and intolerances with clearly defined responsibilities.
- Supporting pupils with the management of food allergies and intolerances.
- The encouragement of self-responsibility and learned avoidance strategies amongst those suffering from allergies.
- Working with catering providers to ensure that food labelling, menu planning and all aspects of food preparation support the needs of those within our school community who have food allergies.
- Provision of staff awareness on food allergies/intolerances, possible symptoms (including anaphylaxis) recognition and treatment.

The intent of this policy is to minimise the risk of any person suffering allergy-induced reaction, or food intolerance whilst at St Joseph’s Primary School, Otley or attending any School related activity. The policy sets out guidance for staff to ensure they are suitably prepared to manage the day to day needs of pupils with food allergies and to address emergency situations should they arise. The policy also outlines the expectations of all those involved in the preparation or distribution of food within the school and of parents and other individuals, in informing the school of any food allergies.

Allergy Information

True food allergies are reproducible adverse reactions to a particular food that involve the immune system. Virtually all known food allergens are proteins. They can be present in the food in large amounts and often survive food-processing conditions. Allergic reactions are characterised by the rapid release of chemicals in the body that cause symptoms, which can occur within minutes or up to an hour or more after ingestion of the allergen. The proportion of the population with true food allergy is approximately 12% of adults and about 5-8% of children, which equates to about 1.5 million people in the UK. The common causes of allergies relevant to this policy are the 14 major food allergens:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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• Lupin, seeds and flour, in some bread and pastries• Milk and dairy - also food glazed with milk• Molluscs, (mussels, whelks, oyster sauce, land snails and squid).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mustard - liquid mustard, mustard powder, mustard seeds• 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• Sesame Seeds - bread, bread sticks, tahini, hummus, sesame oil• Soya (tofu, bean curd, soya flour)• Sulphur dioxide/Sulphites (dried fruit, fruit juice drinks)
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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.

Coeliac disease is not an allergy. Whilst it is classified as a food intolerance it is not like other intolerances in that it is an 'auto-immune' disease, which means that the body produces antibodies that attack its own tissues. In coeliac disease this attack is triggered by gluten, a protein found in wheat, rye and barley. This intolerance to gluten causes an inflammatory response that damages the gut. Villi (tiny, finger-like projections that line the gut) become inflamed and then flattened (villous atrophy), leading to a decreased surface area for absorption of nutrients from food. People with undiagnosed coeliac disease can, as a result, have a wide range of digestive symptoms and can suffer from nutritional deficiencies. Other food intolerances may also require management and awareness.

Procedures and Responsibilities

The parents or carers of all new starters to the school are required to complete a data collection form on which the details of any food intolerances or allergies and their management should be described. If details are unclear or ambiguous, the school will follow this up with a phone call to parents for further information which will be recorded by the school.

For children starting in the reception class, information regarding food allergies will be discussed during transition meetings alongside any other medical needs. Where a child transfers from another school or from nursery, the school will try and obtain any relevant information regarding how the previous school or setting managed the food allergy in order to provide continuity. It is parents' responsibility to ensure that if their child's medical needs change at any point that they make the school aware, and a revised medical needs form must be completed. Members of staff or volunteers will be asked to disclose any food allergies as part of their induction.

How the School uses this Information

All medical needs forms are stored confidentially yet centrally so they can be accessed by appropriate members of staff as required. Medical information for pupils is private and confidential however in order to ensure that medical needs can be properly managed, information is shared with school staff. This is done in several ways:

- Before the start of a new academic year, medical needs information, including details of food allergies, are shared with the receiving class teacher as part of our transition process. It is the class teachers' responsibility to ensure that they are familiar with the information provided and that any other adults working with the children are aware of their needs as well.
- Key medical needs information is kept at the front of the daily paper register as an additional reminder to any new staff (e.g. supply teacher) who may be teaching the class.
- The medical needs coordinator will inform the school kitchen of any pupils who have food allergies or intolerances. A photo of these children is displayed in the kitchen along with details of their condition.
- Where a food allergy significantly impacts on a child's day to day activity, a care plan might be put in place e.g. a child who requires tube feeding or is required to eat at a separate time. This will be constructed in conjunction with school staff, parents and healthcare professionals.
- Key medical needs information will be available when children are taken off site.

Lunchtimes

Children are able to have a school dinner or bring a packed lunch from home. If children are having a school dinner, they make their menu selection at the start of the school day when the register is taken. Staff support children with their menu choices.

The menus are also available online so that parents can help children make choices before they come into school. Where children have food allergies, a wristband is worn for identification when the children go into the dining hall.

The school kitchen caters for a range of food allergy needs. Where needs are very specific, it may be beneficial for a meeting to be arranged between parents, school staff and catering staff to discuss dietary requirements. Sometimes menu substitutions can be made to accommodate allergy needs – this is at the discretion of the school kitchen and is dependent on resources available. If children have a food allergy which can be triggered by contact with certain food substances, as well as ingestion, the school will ensure that due consideration is given to where the child is seated in the dining hall and the cleaning of tables.

Children are told that they are not allowed to share food at lunchtimes. Midday supervisors observe and assist the children at lunchtime in order to reduce the opportunity for children to share food, although we cannot guarantee that this will not happen.

Responsibilities

Key school staff responsibilities are outlined above. Additional responsibilities include:

- Supporting those children who have school dinners with their menu choices.
- Liaising with parents regarding the management of food allergies.

The school has a number of first aiders who would be called assist in cases of allergic reaction including anaphylaxis. A number of staff have also had training in how to administer an epi-pen to those children who have an Allergy Management Plan. The school will contact parents and the emergency services, if required, in the event that a child suffers an allergic reaction. The school's medical needs policy outlines the school's response to medical emergencies.

Midday Supervisors Responsibilities

- Assist children in collecting the correct school dinners for their needs.
- Provide feedback to class teachers of any observations made in relation to food at lunchtime.
- Ensure that surfaces are clean to reduce risks of cross contamination.

Catering Staff Responsibilities

Leeds Catering provide school meals at St Joseph's Primary School. Leeds Catering have their own policies relating to all aspects of food management and preparation. Leeds Catering are responsible for ensuring that:

- Staff familiarise themselves with the medical needs of our pupils in order for correct meals to be consumed.
- Menus clearly identify ingredients that may pose a risk to allergy sufferers, enabling informed choices to be made.
- Rigorous food hygiene is maintained to reduce risk of cross contamination.
- Suppliers provide information regarding the content of their products.
- As an additional precaution, staff are alerted to food allergies by wristbands worn by the children.

Parental Responsibilities

- Completing the data collection form and ensuring that any information regarding food allergies for their child is included.
- Updating the school if their child's medical needs change at any point. Parents are requested to keep the school up to date with any changes in allergy management with regards to clinic summaries, retesting and new food challenges.
- Ensuring that any required medication (EpiPens or other adrenalin injectors, inhalers, and any specific antihistamine) is supplied, in date and replaced as necessary. The parents of all children who have an epi-pen in school must complete a written Allergy Management Plan.
- Attending any meeting as required to share further information about their child's food allergy, to plan for food management in school or to complete a care plan.
- If an episode of anaphylaxis occurs outside school, the school must be informed

Pupil Responsibilities

- Children of any age must be familiar with what their allergies are and the symptoms they may have that would indicate a reaction is happening.
- Children are encouraged to take increased responsibility for managing choices that will reduce the risk of allergic reaction. Expectations are age appropriate.
- Children are not allowed to share food with each other.

Management of Food Allergies in other areas of school life

Rewards and Celebrations

On occasions, food items are used as part of the school's reward system. On these occasions, staff will endeavour to make suitable adjustments in order to ensure that children with food allergies feel included, e.g. substituting food items. Sometimes children will bring food items into school to distribute to classmates when it is their birthday. These are handed out at the end of the day so children can take them home and check with an adult before eating.

Curriculum Activities

As part of the school curriculum, children may be involved in activities that involve preparing food (e.g. DT lesson) or tasting food (e.g. tasting food from other countries). Teachers will take the needs of children with food allergies into account when planning these activities and will make modifications where possible to allow participation. When a third party is involved in delivering a food related workshop, the class teacher will be responsible for ensuring that the dietary needs of pupils are taken into consideration.

Educational Visits

The lead member of staff for an educational visit will ensure that food allergy considerations are made in any activity that may involve food. When a child with a food allergy participates in a residential visit, their dietary needs will be planned for, in conjunction with the activity centre.

Nuts

Due to an increased number of children with nut allergies in school, we ask that parents do not send children into school or on a school trip with any nut-based products in their lunchboxes or as a break time snack. This would include items such as peanut butter sandwiches or packets of nuts.

Charity Events

If the School hosts any 'cake sales' or similar events for charity it is important that no food poses a risk to the end user, however, this is difficult for the school to monitor. Where products are not made on site, but sold by the school, appropriate signage will be put in place. This will state the following: 'This item was not produced at St Joseph's Primary School, Otley therefore we cannot guarantee that it does not contain nuts or any other allergen'. It should be left to the discretion of the person buying the food that they accept the risk that allergens may be present.

Items for Sale at FOSJ events

FOSJ may sell food and drinks at school events which children are able to buy. These are sold in their original packaging. It is the parents' decision whether their children will be allowed to purchase food and drink at FOSJ events when they are not present. The school is unable to supervise the purchase of these items with regard to children with food allergies. In these circumstances, parents are advised to speak to a member of staff in order for an alternative arrangement to be considered if possible (e.g. bringing in something from home).

Monitoring

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored in line with the school's monitoring and reviewing of school policy procedures.

Any questions regarding this policy should be directed to Miss Wilkinson and Mr Gilhooly who are the school's lead teachers on this issue.