

# **Allergens**

Under the Food Information Regulations 2014 food businesses are required to provide allergy information for known ingredients within the food sold. Given that the company operates in the education section it is vital that all food is safe to eat for pupils with known allergies. This guide should be read in conjunction with the company Allergen Policy, Allergen HACCP and Food Hygiene HACCP

# Some Background Facts

- 1-2 children in every average sized classroom will have a food allergy.
- Therefore, an estimated 680,00 pupils in schools have one or more food allergies
- 18% of allergic reactions to food takes place at school
- Allergen incidents happen more in schools than in any other setting outside of the home
- Cow milk allergy is responsible for 26% of food allergy deaths in school children making it the most common cause of fatal food anaphylaxis amongst this group

Given the above it is absolutely vital that students with allergen dietary needs are given priority.

#### **Definitions**

### **Allergy**

A food allergy happens when the immune system reacts to certain proteins in food or ingredients (allergen) causing symptoms including rashes, hives, swelling, difficulty in breathing. In most cases these symptoms develop very quickly but can appear several hours later. The severity of the reaction will vary from person to person. In some cases, these can be fatal. These pupils are classified as **RED** in the company policy. Individual health plans should be requested from the school for those pupils who may suffer from anaphylaxis reaction and have epi pens

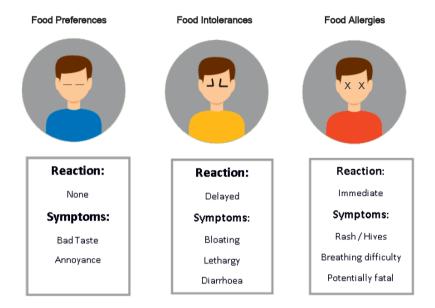
### Intolerance

A food intolerance is an adverse reaction to a food or ingredient which does not involve the immune system. Symptoms can include stomach upset, sickness and bloating. In most cases the symptoms tend to develop more slowly as the food has to be digested. These are unlikely to be fatal. These pupils are categorised as AMBER in the policy.

### Lifestyle (Food)

Food lifestyle will relate to personal preferences. This may be related to religious beliefs or ethical concerns. They will have no reaction to the foods they eat. These pupils are categorised as **BLUE** in the policy.

## In summary (in general)



Under UK legislation the following ingredient/allergens must be identified as standard, however individuals can be allergic to or intolerant to any foods.

## The 14 Major Food Allergens - including some common foods they are food in

- Peanuts including peanut butter, peanut oil, and pastes. Often found in curries, bakery goods and breakfast cereals
- Nuts including almonds, brazil, cashew, hazelnut, pecan, walnuts, macadamia, and pistachio. Used in numerous products such as curries, bakery goods, desserts, salad dressings, ice cream, almond milk
- Molluscs mussel, oysters, whelks, snails, squid. Used in fish sauces and stocks
- Crustaceans prawns, shrimps, crab lobster and scampi. Used in stocks and dressings
- Fish all types of fish, used in sauces, stocks and Worcestershire sauce
- **Eggs** fresh, dried, white or yolk. Used in cakes, savoury products, pasta, noodles, mayonnaise
- **Milk** fresh or dried powder. Yogurt, cream, cheese, butter, margarine. Also found in soups, sauces, meats products, often used as a glaze
- Cereals containing gluten wheat, rye, barley. Flour products, breadcrumbs such as in meat products, sauces, soups, stocks, batters. Oats contain a similar protein to gluten and are usually milled in factory's containing flour therefore an increased risk of cross contamination. Oat milk
- **Soya** found in tofu, bean curd, soya flour and milk, Used in soya sauce, some desserts, ice cream meats and vegetarian products
- **Sesame** seeds used to make sesame oil and paste. Found in many bakery goods, tahini and hummus

- Celery including celeriac, leaves stalks, seeds, and powder. Often used in stocks, soups ketchups, dressings
- Mustard mustard pasta, seeds, powder. Used in stocks, sauces, dressings, pickles, mayonnaise, meat products
- **Lupin** used in some breads and pastries as an alternative to soya
- **Sulphur Dioxide** used as a preservative in meat products, dried fruits, fruit juices, wine, and beers



# **Allergen and Dietary Definitions**

#### Gluten Free Guidance

Gluten free is a legal term referring to foods that contain no more than 20 parts per million. To advertise a food as Gluten Free, certain tests have to be undertaken to determine gluten amount contained.

Due to the potential risk of cross contamination within the kitchen no foods that are prepared and made in our kitchen should be advertised as Gluten Free. Only products that have been identified by the manufacturer as gluten free that are sold in the original wrapper/packaging can be sold as gluten free.

A non-gluten containing ingredients (NGCI) statement can be used for menu dishes that have been prepared without gluten containing ingredients. Due to gluten containing ingredients, such as flour, being handled in our kitchen we cannot/must not use the term gluten free and cannot guarantee these dishes are gluten free

### **Coeliac Disease**

This is an immune condition which results in the body immune system attaching any ingested gluten causing damage to the gut. Although coeliac disease is not an allergy it should be treated in the same way as a gluten allergy.

#### Milk Free

This means that food/beverage items do not contain milk from cows, goats or sheep. This is often referred to as Dairy **Free** given that milk is the core ingredient in dairy products such as butter, cheese, yogurt. Lactose intolerance is an inability to digest the sugars in milk products

### Vegetarianism

This is a diet that does not include foods such as meat, poultry, fish and seafood, but will eat dairy(milk) and egg products. Beware of hidden animal products such as gelatine, animal rennet and meat/fish stocks. Vegetarian foods may contain traces of ingredients such as fish and shellfish and therefore are unsuitable with people who are allergic to them.

## **Vegan foods**

A vegan diet involves not eating animal products, such as meat, poultry or fish and products that derive from animals which include dairy, eggs and honey. However It must be noted that vegan foods are **not necessarily allergen free** and therefore are not suitable for people with certain allergies such as fish, milk and eggs. It is important that the ingredients lists are checked for allergens

#### **Peanuts and Tree Nuts**

Due to current labelling regulations we do not claim to be a peanut/nut free environment, which creates a false sense of security.

Within primary schools we do not use products that contain nuts as an ingredient, as well as products that manufacturers declare a 'may contain declaration.'

Within secondary schools we do not use products that contain nuts as an ingredient, however, will on occasion use products with a 'may contain' statement or 'produced in a factory that handles nuts.' These products are not suitable for students with nut allergies.

#### Sesame

Although sesame may be an ingredient in our menu we do not use sesame seeds or sesame seed buns due to the physical risk of cross contamination

When preparing all of these food groups, it is important that all precautions are taken to reduce the risk of cross contamination such as separate areas, utensils, and equipment. Surfaces should be cleaned and sanitised prior to starting preparation. Effective hand washing prior to preparation and the use of a disposable plastic apron over uniform

## **General Allergen Controls**

## **Transport**

It is important that food is transported to prevent any cross contamination as much as possible. All containers should be covered with cling film and lidded or make use of silicon sealable lids.

For delivered Services the above **RED AMBER** & **BLUE** procedures must be followed for students with dietary requirements. Any **RED** meal needs to be transported in a suitable container which is double wrapped in cling film and labelled. If the meal is plated the plate must be place in a suitable container which is lidded. This food should ideally be transported to in a separate box. If this is not possible the parents of **RED** student must be made aware of transport arrangements and agree that they are sufficient.

Multiply portions of the same dishes can be transported together and then plated upon arrival for service. **RED** meals can then be plated and served at site, ensuring no risk of cross contamination during service.

In addition, a completed accurate Delivered Service Allergen Matrix for all foods must accompany the food being delivered for service. The matrix must be completed and signed by the production kitchen and handed to the service employees, who must sign upon receipt. This matrix must be kept for a period of 6 weeks.

### **Cross Contamination**

Allergens may be present in food as a result of cross contamination within the catering operations; this can happen during storage, preparation, cooking, and service.

This occurs when one food comes into contact with another and there is a transfer of proteins. Small amounts of food are now present in other food which cannot be seen. These small amounts can cause a reaction to anyone with an allergy. Therefore, it is important to minimise the risk of cross contamination during all food operations.

## Storage

- Open packets should be stored in lidded sealed containers
- Any decanted foods should be clearly labelled
- Foods should be stored to reduce the risk of cross contamination.
- Use separate trays or boxes for allergen free ingredients or student specific products to prevent cross contamination or confusion with other products.
- Good housekeeping practices should be adopted in all storage areas.

- Consider the storage of disposable items, such as plates, cups, cutlery, to prevent cross contamination from allergens.
- Do not store utensils and equipment underneath the food preparation area where allergens are being handled.

#### Service

- An allergen matrix to be placed on the orange clipboard in every service area.
- A pre-service brief must be completed prior to the start of service using the correct allergen matrix
- Service brief should include, dishes, portion size, allergens, any allergen free meals
- If a customer asks for allergen information an employee must show them the relevant allergen matrix and allergen information.
- Employees must not provide information without showing the customer the matrix
- For primary schools where possible an identification system of lanyards or wristbands should be in place, if not then another system needs to be agreed with the client. The system should not rely on employee memory
- Special diet students should ideally be served first to prevent cross contamination of food or confusion of meals
- For secondary schools, any allergen information displayed on the till system must be followed, even if a pupil or teacher says otherwise
- Be aware of possible cross contamination in hot cupboards, ensure allergen free foods are covered and stored away from other foods, make use of secondary trays

### Cleaning

- Thoroughly clean down and sanitise all work surfaces between food preparation tasks.
- Cleaning should be carried out using hot soapy water and a scourer to physically remove the food allergens from a surface. The act of scrubbing is important. Surfaces should be allowed to air dry or dried with blue roll before sanitising. Sanitising a surface DOES NOT REMOVE ALLERGENS
- Wash all equipment. Ideally through a dishwasher
- Dismantle and thoroughly clean any food preparation equipment.
- Attention should be taken when cleaning food mixers, this must be completed with hot soapy water and a scourer to remove food particles such as flour. Then allowed to air or dry with blue roll before sanitising
- Thoroughly clean all surrounding areas where flour is used

## **Employees**

- Ensure good personal hygiene and clean uniform
- Follow good handwashing practices and technique
- Consider disposable gloves and aprons where necessary

#### **Coffee Machines**

• Due to the busy environment and the sharing of equipment coffee machines have a high risk of cross contamination and therefore it is not suitable to serve customers with diary allergies with drinks from them, even if made with a diary milk alternatives.

### Allergen Matrix

The allergen matrix must be completed for all outlets and services, it must include all dishes/products available.

- The correct allergen template must be used for each service/outlet
- The person preparing the dish is responsible for completing the matrix for that dish.
- The matrix must be completed from the recipe and ingredients packaging clearly identifying the allergens in the dish
- A tick or cross should be used to indicate the allergen present
- MC to indicate a may contain risk from packaging or cooking process
- The matrix must be clear and accurate with no crossing outs
- The relevant matrix must be displayed on the orange clipboard in the service area.
- All other matrices must be stored in the relevant section of the Allergen Folder
- Allergen matrix must be signed and dated.

# **Completing the Lunchtime Allergen Matrix**

Complete week 1, 2 or 3 & the day

List all dishes on the menu for that day



Sign and date by person completing the dish for the first time

Tick to indicate known allergen ingredient. Don't forget No Allergen box

Use **MC** to indicate may contain – may contain foods are not suitable for students with allergens

Sign and date boxes for when the menu is checked the next time it is used

# **Allergen Menus**

There are a number of different types of menus available for students with dietary requirements. These are managed by the Food Team with the support of AVE. All students on an individual menu are classified as a **RED** category and therefore their menu must be prepared in a controlled environment, plated, wrapped, and labelled.

For primary school we offer two medical diet meus:

- Allergen safe menu which is free from the majority if the 14 legal allergens and aligned as closely as possible with the main menu
- Bespoke if sits outside the 14 then a menu tailored to their needs (one choice only) Bespoke menus should be agreed with the parent before using.

Any request for a bespoke menu will be assessed (using the LACA Risk Analysis process) looking at the pupil's requirement, capability of the kitchen facilities and school environment to determine the risk. If the risk level is high the company may be unable to provide a meal safely. This will be discussed with the school as soon as possible.

Due to the operational nature of our business and the risk of cross contamination we do not use allergen free versions of foods such as gluten free products or dairy free products. In addition many of these products are ultra processed

The allergen safe menu and recipes can be downloaded from the company intranet

Bespoke menus and recipes will be sent to the requesting person

Before using, all menus and recipes should be printed. Recipes should be checked against the menu to ensure everything is correct. Contact the Food Team with any problems/queries and any issues resolved before the menus and recipes are used.

Once everything is correct the menu cycle and recipes should be placed together in a file with the student's name written on each week of the menu. The Group Manager, Area Support Manager or Ops Manager must fully brief in person the unit manager / Chef Manager through the menu and recipes, before the menu is introduced ensuring they completely understand the menu, recipes and the required process.

In secondary schools to support this transition, the company does not prepare managed medical diet menus for secondary age pupils. Instead, our focus is on supporting pupils with medical dietary needs so that they can make safe choices\_So we can empower secondary students to take control of their medical dietary needs, we make sure we:

- Adhere to strict food safety regulations including transparency around the presence of the 14 legal allergens in every dish on our menus
- Encourage pupils to ask our teams about allergens

## Re-introduction of allergens to a pupil's diet

Allergens should only be re-introduced onto a pupil's menu once an allergy has been confirmed to have ceased in writing from the parent or by updated medical evidence via the school.

The company cannot be responsible for the gradual re-introduction of ingredients (such as re-introduction of milk using the 'milk ladder') to a pupil's diet.

## **Packed Lunches & School Trips**

If the catering department provides a packed lunch for pupils. Those pupils having an allergy or dietary requirement must be accounted for.

Prior to the school trip where a packed lunch is required, the school must select / detail the packed lunches required and communicate in writing where a named pupil(s) has an allergen or intolerance.

The pupil(s) with the known allergy must have their individual packed lunch completely sealed and labelled with their full name and food item. The packed lunch must be stored so cross contamination or contact of allergens is not possible.

The allergen packed lunches must be handed in person to the school representative, with each packed lunch being signed for using the Pupil Medical Diet Check Sheet.

Once the packed lunch(s) is handed to the school representative it becomes their responsibility to ensure that the allergen pupil receives the correct packed lunch and NO substitution or swapping of foods takes place.

## **Allergen Training**

It is important that all employees understand the company's allergen policy and the unit's allergen procedures by completing the following training within the required timescales. All training must be recorded on employee training record cards

Allergen introduction as part of onboarding via tripad **Unit Allergen Process** - Day 1 completed by the Unit Manager using the **Allergen Training**. Grow PRO e-learning part of Role Specific Induction Managers Allergen Policy & Procedure Training via google hangout as part

## **Dealing with Severe Allergic Reaction**

When someone has an allergic reaction to a food it is important that all staff should know what to do. In most cases the school/academy staff will be present, if not then someone should immediately get help

## **Important - Warning signs**

It is not always clear if someone is having an allergic reaction because other serious conditions can have similar symptoms.

However, warning signs to look out for are:

- if they are finding it hard to breathe,
- if their lips or mouth are swollen,
- itching around the mouth
- wheezing
- rashes
- vomiting
- diarrhoea
- may collapse.

## If the above happens, this is what you should do:

- Do not move the customer. This could make them worse.
- Ask the customer if they carry an epi pen and, if necessary, help them retrieve
  it.
- If a staff member or first aider is trained in administering adrenaline, and the customer is struggling to self-administer, then offer to assist them.
- Call 999 immediately and describe what is happening; explain that you think
  the customer may be having a serious allergic reaction or anaphylaxis
  (pronounced anna-fill-axis). It is important to mention the word anaphylaxis to
  ensure that the urgency of the situation is communicated, and that
  appropriate medication will be available.
- Send someone outside to wait for the ambulance while you stay with your customer until help arrives.