



Allergen Policy Statement

Date of last review:	June 2022	Author:	Head of Estates
Date of next review:	June 2023	Owner:	Head of Estates
Type of policy:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Network wide <input type="checkbox"/> Tailored by school	Approval:	Management team
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Ark Schools is committed to providing high quality food to our customers and clients that is safe to eat. We therefore aim to reduce the risk to our pupils and customers with regards to the provision of food and the consumption of allergens which could lead to an allergic reaction.

Ark Schools accepts its duty to comply with all relevant Food Regulations, which states that allergen information must be provided on all food sold.

- Ark Schools acknowledges that the successful implementation of this policy and management of allergens requires the commitment and support from all employees. To achieve this Ark and its schools will:
- Ensure the involvement of health care professionals, parents, staff and the pupil in establishing an individual medical care plan when required.
- Ensure effective communication of individual pupil medical needs to all relevant teachers and other relevant staff.
- Ensure First Aid staff training includes anaphylaxis management, including awareness of triggers and first aid procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency.
- Ensure that parents of pupils with packed lunches will be requested to give careful thought to eliminating food that may be of risk to those members of staff and pupils who suffer from such allergies.
- Ensure all educational visits will be pre-checked that 'safe' food is provided or that an effective control is in place to minimise risk of exposure for pupils with allergies.
- Where a pupil is prescribed EpiPen the teacher in charge will ensure they or another supervising staff member is trained in the use of the EpiPen, and capable of performing any possible required medical treatment as outlined in the Pupils Health Care Plan.

- Providing, as far as practicable, a safe and healthy environment in which people at risk of allergies and anaphylaxis can participate equally in all aspects of school life.
- Encourage self-responsibility and learned avoidance strategies amongst pupils suffering from allergies.
- Raise awareness about allergies and anaphylaxis amongst the school community.
- Ensure each staff member has adequate knowledge of allergies, anaphylaxis and emergency procedures.
- Liaise with parents/guardians of pupils who suffer allergies, to assess risks, develop risk minimisation strategies, and management strategies for their child.
- Where possible use an Allergy Action Plan for pupils with recognised allergies.
- Work closely with its supply chain to ensure accurate information on all products that may contain allergens.
- Maintain a database of all its recipes, clearly listing ingredients and highlighting those containing allergens.
- Work closely with its Catering Managers and Chef Managers in assisting in the support of pupils with known allergies, including meeting with parents, if requested, to discuss any special requirements.
- Display signs that encourage our customers to ask about allergens in the foods being served.
- Ensure that our staff have the necessary training and information to provide our pupils/customers with accurate guidance on allergens.
- Through good hygiene practices and adhering to Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP), reduce the risk of cross contamination in our kitchens.
- Audit our operations to ensure the above policy and practices are working effectively and review the policy as necessary.
- Operate as far as is practical a nut free environment within our Academy school kitchens.

This document should be read in conjunction with the following Ark documentation:

- First Aid in Schools
- Administration of medicines
- Infection Control
- Accident / Incident Reporting, Recording and Investigation

Responsibilities

The COO of the Company will:

- Ensure the development and review of the Company Allergen Policy.
- Ensure that the necessary resources are available for implementing the Allergen Policy and detailed arrangements, as well as the subsequent monitoring of performance.

The Head of Estates of the Company will:

- Develop the Company's Allergen Policy and Procedures to ensure that it's legal and moral obligations are met.
- Ensure that the appropriate information, training, and supervision is provided to all employees and apprentices.
- (Where applicable) Work with the Primary Authority Agreement to ensure the policy and procedures are assured advice.
- Ensure that the policy and procedures are accessible for all stakeholders to access communicated to all stakeholders to ensure its effective implementation.
- Provide relevant training material to ensure the effective implementation of the policy.
- Provide additional support at the individual academies where necessary.

All Company Employees and Apprentices will:

- Ensure that they follow the correct procedures detailed in the Allergen Policy to ensure the safety of students.
- Cooperate with the company on matters of allergen management and control, including completing any training and reporting any concerns to their manager

The Individual Academy will:

- Work with the departments to review and update policy and procedures when necessary.
- Ensure that all menu cycles are supported with accurate recipes and allergen information.
- Ensure that all recipes have the relevant allergen information.
- Ensure that suppliers provide accurate allergen information on products on the Company Approved Product List (APL).
- Effectively communicate the Allergen Policy and procedures to all stakeholders.
- As data controllers, collect information of students with food allergies and intolerances, ensuring this information is kept up to date.
- Provide the Catering Manager/Chef Manager with an up-to-date list of students with any food allergies, intolerances or dietary requirements.
- Ensure that any communication between parents and the caterer goes through the Academy and be involved at each stage.
- Ensure that each Academy has a process of identifying students with special dietary requirements, such as lanyards or wrist bands. This process should not be based solely on photographs or teachers identifying the pupil
- Ensure that all staff and lunchtime assistants are adequately trained on allergens and the school's procedures.

- Educate pupils about allergies and to support peers with special diets.
- Provide the Catering Manager/Chef Manager with information relating to the school's Allergy Procedures/Policy
- Ensure that any changes to products and recipes are communicated to all relevant Managers
- Ensure that all staff are trained as appropriate to understand their obligations in relation to the management of allergens.

The School First-Aider/ School Welfare Officer shall:

- Conduct “anaphylaxis scenarios” and supervise practice sessions in administration of adrenaline auto-injection devices to determine the level of staff competence and confidence in using the device.
- Routinely review each pupil's auto-injection device to ensure that it remains complete and is in date.
- Liaise with the pupils/parents at risk of anaphylaxis.
- Parents/guardians shall:
- Read and be familiar with the policy.
- Identify and liaise with the nominated staff member.
- Bring relevant issues to the attention of the school.

The Parent/Guardian/Carer will need to:

- Notify the school of the pupil's allergies. Ensure there is clear communication.
- Complete the Special Diets/Allergy Form and return to the school, providing a medical support for food allergies.
- Work with the school to develop a plan that accommodates the pupil's needs throughout the school including in the classroom, in dining areas, in after-school programmes, during school sponsored activities and on the school bus. Ask your doctor, school nurse, allergy specialist or paediatrician to help.
- Where necessary meet with the Catering/Chef Manager to discuss any specific requirements relating to their child's allergy. Information from these meetings to be recorded on the Special Diets Form by the Catering/Chef Manager. Inform the individual Academy of any changes.
- Provide written medical documentation, instructions and medications as directed by a doctor. Replace medications after use or upon expiry.
- Educate the pupil in allergy self-management, including what foods are safe and unsafe, strategies for avoiding allergens, how to spot symptoms of allergy, how and when to tell an adult of any reaction, and how to read food labels.
- Providing appropriate foods to be consumed by the child if necessary.
- Review policies and procedures with the school staff, school welfare officer, the pupil's doctor and the pupil (if age appropriate) after a reaction has occurred.

The Student will:

- Be sure not to exchange food with others. Take care to knowingly avoid any foods which may cause an allergic reaction
- Avoid eating anything with unknown ingredients.
- Be proactive in the care and management of your food allergies and reactions (based on the age level).

- Notify an adult immediately if you eat something you believe may contain the food to which you are allergic.
- Notify an adult immediately if you believe you are having a reaction, even if the cause is unknown.
- Always wear your medical alert bracelet or some other form of medical identification.
- Developing a relationship with the school first-aider or trusted adult eg form tutor or welfare officer
- Taking responsibility for avoiding food allergens, including informing staff of his/her allergy at times of potential risk
- Learning to recognise personal symptoms.
- Keeping emergency medications where appropriate, in the first aider's office or in an agreed suitable location. This may include carrying the medication with them at all times.
- Notify an adult if they are being picked on or threatened by other students as it relates to their food allergy.
- Knowing the overall Pupil Health Care Plan and understand the responsibilities of the plan.
- Develop greater independence to keep themselves safe from anaphylactic reactions.
- Work with the catering team to follow agreed procedures relating to foods.

General Food Production and Service

It is important to reduce the risk of cross contamination with allergens in the general production and service of foods within the business.

The following procedures are in place to reduce the risk:

- Cleaning work areas down, using 2 stage cleaning, in between preparing different foods.
- Ensuring all equipment and utensils are cleaned in-between usage.
- Storing ingredients and foods in closed and labelled containers, this includes the Dry Stores, fridges and freezers.
- Keep ingredients containing allergens separate from others
- Washing hands thoroughly between preparing different foods. Cooking can also result in cross contamination – such as chips cooked in the same oil as fish cannot be considered gluten or fish free.

When cooking allergen-free foods, the use of separate clean oven cloths maybe needed to prevent cross-contamination where relevant.

Due to nature of the business, it is not possible to completely eliminate the risk of cross-contamination.

At no time will Ark Schools make a 'free-from' claim. Any allergens contained within the foods produced on site must be clearly communicated to any customer upon request. This information is produced in the form of an Allergen matrix and must be available for all foods in all service areas. An accurate Allergen Matrix must be available for all foods served in the Unit to ensure that verbal information is accurate and can be cross referenced.

Allergen matrices for lunchtime service must be reviewed/updated each time the dishes are prepared within the menu cycle, the matrix must be signed and dated.

Allergen matrices for services such as cold deli, hot deli, cakes must be reviewed at a minimum of once a term unless ingredients or product recipes have changed.

The matrix must be signed and dated at each review. Staff should also be aware and vigilant of cross-contamination during service, such as salad bars, unwrapped cakes sharing a display unit, serving utensils & spillages.

It is a legal requirement that any brought in pre-packed foods containing any of the key allergens must be clearly labelled to identify them. Some products may also contain the statement 'may contain' which highlights the possibility of cross contamination from the factory or production. These products will not be suitable for students with severe allergen risk due to the risk of cross-contamination. It is important that all foods be labelled to identify if they contain any of the key allergens, therefore all in house produced will be labelled with the appropriate allergen label when stored in the fridge, freezer or dry stores. In addition, any foods that have been decanted from the original packaging will need to be labelled with the appropriate allergen label.

Pre-packaged foods such as in-house sandwiches & baguettes require full ingredient labelling as per the requirements of Natasha's Law October 2021.

The Allergen Notice must be clearly displayed in a prominent position in all service areas instructing customers to ask a member of the Catering staff about allergens in the food produced on site.

Hospitality Catering

Where possible it should be established at the time of booking if any persons attending have any allergies or special dietary requirements. If YES separate foods must be prepared and labelled - following the procedures list in the RED category controls section.

An Allergen Matrix needs to be completed for each booking to ensure that any allergen information can be accurately communicated upon request.

This needs to detail each item being served. If the hospitality is taking place during normal service times, then an A5 sign needs to be displayed.

For hospitality booking outside of normal service times or in remote locations then completed, accurate Allergen Matrix must be sent.

Allergen Investigation

Any Allergen incident or near miss must be report by the Catering/Chef Manager to their Operations Manager immediately. The Head of Estates must be informed the same day. All incidents must be investigated by a member of the Operations team within 24 hours of the incident occurring in order to establish the root cause of the incident.

This includes a review of procedures, employee knowledge and compliance with procedures. Once completed the findings will be communicated to all relevant parties and any required action taken.

Training

All employees must complete the relevant training necessary in order to keep our customers safe and support the effective implementation of the Allergen Policy.

This includes:

Allergen Induction Training

All employees complete this either pre-employment or on Day 1 of employment.

- Introductions to Allergens
- The importance of allergen management and controls
- How allergen information is provided within our Academies.

Allergen Policy and Procedures

This training is completed by all employees involved in food production and service. The roles and responsibilities section will vary depending on who is being trained. This is completed during Week 1 where necessary.

- Company Allergen policy and Academy procedures, company recipes and allergen matrices.
- Roles and responsibilities in dealing with allergens,
- Red, Amber and Blue category students and relevant procedures
- Risk of cross-contamination when storing preparing and serving foods and relevant controls.
- Supporting documentation.

Online Allergen Training

All employees complete the online Allergen training within the first three weeks of employment. The training includes:

- The 14 food allergens
- Symptoms of an allergic reaction
- The law concerning allergens
- How to help someone suffering from an allergic reaction.
- Allergen Management Level 3 is a one-day course for key personnel within the business as required.

Refresher Training – as required, minimum once a year. All training is recorded on an employee's Training Record Card.

Copies of documentation can be found in the Food Safety Manual.

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.

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.
- Call 999 immediately and describe what is happening; explain that you think the customer may be having a serious allergic reaction or anaphylaxis (pronounced ana-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.
- 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.
- Send someone outside to wait for the ambulance while you stay with your customer until help arrives.