

# Managing nut and other allergies

Action	Document to be reviewed annually or more frequently if required		
	Owner	Date	Completed
Review	Director of Pastoral Care/Catering Manager	May 2023	✓
Reported	Health & Safety Committee	May 2023	✓
Approved	Finance & Estates Committee	June 2023	✓

To be published on the following:	
Staff Portal	✓
School website	✓



## Introduction

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's **First Aid** 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 (see *Appendix 1*). The main causes are attributed to nuts, sesame seeds and some seafood. This policy focuses on the management of nut allergies.

## Policy

Our Food Standards policy (see *Appendix 1, page 5*) emphasises the avoidance of nuts (tree nuts, peanuts and pine nuts) and nut related products in the catering services at St Paul's, recognising the potentially severe allergic reaction, for some people. We also avoid the use of sesame seeds and sesame related products.

We do not claim to be a 'nut-free' school. The Anaphylaxis Campaign advises that this is a pragmatic approach, for the following reasons:

- It would be impossible to provide an absolute guarantee that the school is nut free. Students regularly bring in food from home and food bought on the way to school.
- There would be a risk that children with allergies might be led into a false sense of security.
- 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 may be present but, as at St Paul's, are restricted and monitored, as much as is reasonably possible.

Within the catering facilities at St Paul's, we take precautions to minimise the risk of anaphylaxis and other allergenic reactions occurring:

- We never knowingly use any nuts (including pine nuts and peanuts) or sesame seeds and associated nut/sesame products in our kitchens.
- Students who are known to have food allergies (eg nuts, egg, milk, gluten, fish, molluscs, crustaceans) are introduced to key members of the catering team, 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.
- The Catering Department maintains a detailed list of all students with known food allergies. This list is updated immediately when any new information is received.
- 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 a daily schedule of safe food in respect of allergies, whilst the counter display menus identify allergens present in the various dishes.
- The café 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. Packaging / wrapper ingredients information should be checked for allergen advice.**

EU (now UK) allergen regulations (2014), relating to pre-packaged 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 existing commitment to flagging selected allergens on the service counter menu cards now extends to these additionally prescribed allergens, if present in the food we serve. Since October 2021, to further protect allergy sufferers, Natasha's Law requires any business in England to clearly label all foods produced and packed on their premises with a complete

list of ingredients, with any of the 14 specified allergens highlighted appropriately. For example, this would apply to pre-filled baguettes made and packaged on site, which might be available in the school café. We keep detailed allergen information on all our recipes and other food and drink items, enabling catering staff to provide allergen information whenever asked.

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 been inadvertently contaminated.

The success of minimising anaphylaxis risk – and all other allergenic reactions – requires the co-operation of students, staff and parents. Parents are asked not to provide students 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. Reminders are also issued to students and parents in advance of some school events (e.g., New MIV Tea and Christmas Fair) where there is likely to be an influx of home-baked cakes, biscuits etc.

It is essential that the school has full details of all our students' allergies. This information is requested by the school and must be provided by parents when their daughter 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 AAI, Adrenaline Auto-injector, (for example, Epipen), clearly marked with the student's name. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that the school's emergency AAIs are replaced when they reach their expiry date. The school requires that girls suffering from anaphylaxis carry their own AAIs with them at all times. The school will provide girls with a high-visibility orange pouch for this purpose.

In some cases, the school nurse and / or tutor 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 students with severe medical conditions including severe allergies.

When the school provides packed lunches for trips away, catering staff are provided with a list of students who have allergies and specially labelled packed lunches are provided, accordingly.

When students take part in single or multi-day school trips, participating students' 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, students 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 AAI 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

Emergency AAIs are available in a number of public locations across the school, which include the Dining Room. Please refer to the First Aid policy for further information.

### **Availability of this policy**

This policy is available on our website <http://spgs.org/school-policies/> or is available on request from the school office, St Paul's Girls' School, Brook Green, London, W6 7BS (tel: 0207 603 2288)

## **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 AAI 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 they are unavailable, send a responsible person to the school office and ask for a first aider
- Monitor the child's condition carefully
- Administer the AAI
  - Remove packaging and pull off the blue safety cap from the AAI
  - 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 AAI 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.



ST PAUL'S  
GIRLS' SCHOOL

## FOOD STANDARDS POLICY

***At St Paul's Girls' School, we provide a fresh, healthy, varied and tasty lunch menu, so encouraging all our students to take and enjoy the important mid-day meal - eating well and stimulating an interest in food and nutrition.***

To ensure balance and variety, our lunch menus feature four main course choices each day, comprising a 'Classic' style dish, a fish dish, a grill or stir-fry 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, 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.

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.

Jugs of freshly drawn drinking water are provided on every table in the dining room, and topped up throughout the lunchtime service. There is also a chilled drinking water (still and sparkling) dispenser located in the dining room and available to students 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 students should be free to make considered choices. Self-service food counters enable our students to take what they require - in terms of portion size - for main course, dessert and fresh fruit.

We are very conscious of individuals' dietary requirements, whether by personal choice or medical necessity. A great deal of thought and effort 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 sesame seeds and nuts (or sesame / nut related products), including peanuts and pine nuts, 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 fact.