LITTLE CRICKETS AT PARK SCHOOL SAFER EATING & ALLERGIES POLICY

The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (EYFS) outlines that:

"All providers must take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well and you must be confident that those responsible for preparing and handling food in your setting are competent to do so".

Aim

The aim of this policy is to minimise the risk of any child suffering food allergy-induced anaphylaxis whilst at school or nursery. The underlying principles of this policy include:

- The establishment of effective risk management practices to minimise the child, staff, parent and visitor exposure to known trigger foods.
- Staff training and education to ensure effective emergency response to any allergic reaction situation.

DEFINITIONS

Allergy – A condition in which the body has an exaggerated response to a substance (e.g. food and drug) also known as hypersensitivity.

Allergen – A normally harmless substance that triggers an allergic reaction in the immune system of a susceptible person.

Anaphylaxis – Anaphylaxis, or anaphylactic shock, is a sudden, severe and potentially life-threatening allergic reaction to food, stings, bites, or medicines.

Adrenaline Auto-Injector (AAI), such as EpiPen, Jext or Emerade – Brand name for syringe style device containing the drug Adrenalin,- which is ready for immediate inter-muscular administration.

Minimised Risk Environment– An environment where risk management practices (eg. Risk assessment forms) have minimised the risk of (allergen) exposure.

Health Care Plan– A detailed document outlining an individual child's condition treatment, and action plan for location of Adrenaline Auto-Injector (AAI), such as EpiPen, Jext or Emerade .

Identifying & Requesting Information at Registration

Before a child is admitted to the setting the school must obtain information about any special dietary requirements, preferences, food allergies and intolerances that the child has, and any special health requirements. This information must be shared by the school with all staff involved in the preparing and handling of food. At each mealtime and snack time staff must be clear about who is responsible for checking that the food being provided meets all the requirements for each child.

The school will have ongoing discussions with parents and/or carers and, where appropriate, health professionals to develop allergy action plans for managing any known allergies and intolerances. This information must be kept up to date and shared with all staff.

The school ensures that all staff are aware of the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis, the differences between allergies and intolerances and that children can develop allergies at any time, especially during the introduction of solid foods which is sometimes called complementary feeding or weaning (refer to the NHS advice on food allergies: Food allergy - NHS (www.nhs.uk) and treatment of anaphylaxis: Anaphylaxis - NHS (www.nhs.uk).

The school will have ongoing discussions with parents and/or carers about the stage their child is at in regard to introducing solid foods, including to understand the textures the child is familiar with. Assumptions must not be made based on age.

In accordance with the EYFS regulatory framework, when a child is registered at our settings, the following information will be obtained from parents/carers:

- Detail of any food allergies
- Details of dietary requirements
- Whether these have been diagnosed by a Health Care Professional e.g. a GP or a Registered Dietitian.
- Details of any allergy management plans from a Health Care Professional?
- Details of any prescribed medication.
- Details of medical procedures to follow in case of an allergic reaction.

The Role of Staff
It's essential that all staff are fully informed (and fully understand) children's individual dietary requirements, and how these are being met, so they can make sure appropriate food is provided.

Staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with the policy and to adhere to health & safety regulations regarding food and drink.

Food Preparation

The school will prepare food in a suitable way for each child's individual developmental needs, working with parents and/or carers to help children move on to the next stage at a pace right for the child. Food will be prepared in a way to prevent choking. (This guidance on food safety for young children: Food safety - Help for early years providers - GOV.UK (education.gov.uk) includes advice on food and drink to avoid, how to reduce the risk of choking and links to other useful resources for early years settings). Staff preparing and serving food must take reasonable steps to prevent cross-contamination, including washing hands, cleaning preparation areas and utensils thoroughly and ensuring allergen-free meals are prepared and served separately where required.

Babies and young children should be seated safely in a highchair or appropriately sized low chair while eating. Where possible there should be a designated eating space where distractions are minimised. **Children must always be within sight and hearing of a member of staff whilst eating. Choking can be completely silent therefore it is important for staff to be alert to when a child may be starting to choke**. Where possible, staff should sit facing children whilst they eat so they can make sure children are eating in a way to prevent choking and so they can prevent food sharing and be aware of any unexpected allergic reactions. When a child experiences a choking incident that requires intervention, staff should record details of where and how the child choked and parents and/or carers made aware. The records should be reviewed periodically to identify if there are trends or common features of incidents that could be addressed to reduce the risk of choking. Appropriate action should be taken to address any identified concerns.

- If a child's registration form states that they have an allergy, then a "healthcare plan" is needed. It must be in place before the child starts attending sessions. A risk assessment should be carried and any actions identified to be put in place. The Assessment should be stored with the child's healthcare plan.

- Upon determining that a child attending the nursery has a severe allergy, a team meeting will be set up as soon as possible where all staff concerned attend to update knowledge and awareness of child's needs.
- All Staff who come into contact with the child will be made aware of what treatment/ medication is required by the Nursery Manager and where any medication is stored.
- All staff are to promote hand washing before and after eating.
- Snack time biscuits and snacks are monitored by staff and are peanut, nut free and other allergens depending on the children attending. All staff should know the procedures at snack and lunch time to ensure the safety of children with allergies.
- The nursery operates as a nut-aware/nut-free environment. Parents and carers are requested not to bring products containing nuts onto the premises. However, Staff cannot guarantee that foods will not contain traces of nuts.
- All tables are cleaned with an approved solution.
- Children are not permitted to share food.
- Emergency medication should be easily accessible, especially at times of high risk.
- Staff should liaise with Parents about snacks and any food-related activities.
- All staff are paediatric first aid trained, which includes training on anaphylaxis and the administration of Adrenaline Auto-Injector (AAI), such as EpiPen, Jext or Emerade .

The Role of Parents

- Parents are responsible for providing, in writing, ongoing accurate and current medical information to the school.
- If a child has an allergy requiring an Adrenaline Auto-Injector (AAI), such as EpiPen, Jext or Emerade , a "healthcare plan" must be completed and signed by the parents.
- It is the responsibility of the Parent to provide the Pre-school with up to date medication/ equipment clearly labelled in a suitable container.
- In the case of life saving medication like Adrenaline Auto-Injector (AAI), such as EpiPen, Jext or Emerade the child will not be allowed to attend without it.
- Parents are also required to provide up to date emergency contact information.
- Parents should liaise with Staff about appropriateness of snacks and any food-related activities (e.g. cooking)
- The nursery will undertake regular checks of emergency medication to ensure it remains in date and stored in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Parents will be informed when replacement medication is required.

Individual Health Care Plans

The nursery will work together with parents (and medical professionals if required) to write and agree a clear plan of how to manage their special dietary requirement/s. A risk assessment will be carried out when formulating the plan and this will be stored with the HCP. Healthcare Plans will be reviewed at least annually and immediately following any change in a child's medical condition, treatment or prescribed medication.

The Healthcare Plan will include:

- Details of the child's special dietary requirement/s and a clear list of the foods which can and can't be eaten.

- How meals and snacks will be provided (e.g. whether appropriate meals will be identified or adapted from the existing menu, or whether suitable foods will be prepared or supplied separately).

- Precautions to take during activities involving food e.g. crafts using food packaging/ messy play using food.
- The action to take in the event of an emergency (e.g. allergic reaction), including names, dose and administration of any prescribed medication, and the staff trained to administer it.

Procedure for Dealing with an Allergic Reaction

In the event of a child suffering an allergic reaction, we will delegate someone to contact the child's Parents. First Aid will be administered in accordance with the Healthcare Plan (if one is in place). Otherwise, medication will be administered as per paediatric first aid training. Any allergic reaction, administration of medication or emergency treatment must be recorded on an incident form and shared with parents/carers on the same day. Records will be retained in accordance with the nursery's data retention procedures.

If an Adrenaline Auto-Injector (AAI), such as EpiPen, Jext or Emerade is administered or if a child becomes distressed or symptoms become more serious an ambulance must be called immediately. If Parents have not arrived by the time ambulance arrives, a member of Staff will accompany the child to hospital.

Useful Resources

- Food allergy – NHS Website (opens in new tab)
- Allergy UK National Charity Free Allergy Support & Resources (opens in new tab)
- Allergen guidance for food businesses Food Standards Agency (opens in new tab)

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