Kenilworth Nursery
&
Whitnash Nursery Schools

Allergy Policy
26-27

"Recognising and valuing the uniqueness of every child"

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Committee Responsible: Governing Board – Link Governor: Kirandeep Jandoo
Lead Responsibility: Executive Headteacher

Policy Statement

At Kenilworth and Whitnash Nursery Schools, we are committed to promoting the health, safety, and wellbeing of every child through safe and inclusive eating practices. We recognise that mealtimes are not only essential for nutrition but also for social development, emotional security, and learning. This policy ensures that all food and drink provided or consumed within our schools meets the highest standards of safety, hygiene, and nutritional value, in line with the **EYFS 2026 statutory framework** and the **Department for Education's Nutritional Guidance 2025**. This policy is also informed by the **Allergy safety in schools** which is statutory for schools and provides useful guidance for early years settings.

This Allergy Safety policy is linked with other policies for the setting, including:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Safer Eating Practices Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Healthy Eating Policy
- Inclusion and Equality Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Staff induction and Training
- Staff Code of Conduct Policy

This policy is guided by the following statutory and legal frameworks:

- Childcare Act 2006
- EYFS 2026 Section 3.63 – 3.72 Food and Drink and Safer Eating (Group and school-based providers)
- EYFS 2026 Section 3.62 – 3.71 Food and Drink and Safer Eating (Childminders)
- DfE Early Years Nutrition Guidance (2025)
- Food Safety Act 1990 and associated hygiene regulations
- Food Standards Act 1999

Policy Aims

We aim to:

- Protect children from the risk of allergic reactions by implementing effective allergen management and emergency response procedures.
- Promote a safe, inclusive environment where children with allergies can participate fully in all activities with appropriate support.
- Work collaboratively with parents, carers, health professionals, and other agencies to ensure individual allergy needs are understood and met.
- Empower staff with the knowledge, training, and confidence to recognise, prevent, and respond appropriately to allergic reactions, including anaphylaxis.
- Foster a culture of vigilance and shared responsibility, where allergy safety is embedded in everyday practice across the setting.
- Maintain clear procedures for the safe storage, preparation, handling, and serving of food to minimise the risk of allergen exposure.
- Regularly review allergy management practices to ensure they remain effective, compliant with current guidance, and responsive to the needs of children and families.

Roles and responsibilities

At Kenilworth and Whitnash Nursery Schools, all staff understand and embrace their shared responsibility for maintaining a safe environment for children with allergies and medical dietary needs. Leaders and managers play a crucial role in overseeing the implementation of this policy, ensuring robust allergy management procedures are in place, staff receive appropriate training, and compliance is maintained across the setting.

Within our schools, each Key Person, together with the senior leadership team are responsible for understanding and monitoring the allergy and medical needs of the children in their care, ensuring that individual healthcare plans and risk assessments are followed consistently. This includes supporting children with diagnosed allergies, intolerances, and other medically prescribed dietary requirements, while working closely with parents, carers, and health professionals to ensure information remains accurate and up to date.

All staff at Kenilworth and Whitnash Nursery Schools are expected to be fully aware of children's allergies and the measures required to reduce the risk of allergen exposure. Staff are trained annually to recognise the signs and symptoms of allergic reactions, including anaphylaxis, and to respond appropriately in an emergency. Through effective communication, vigilance, and adherence to agreed procedures, all staff contribute to a culture of safety, inclusion, and wellbeing for every child.

Allergy Leadership and Governance

At Kenilworth and Whitnash Nursery Schools, overall responsibility for the implementation and review of this policy rests with the Executive Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team. A designated member of staff will oversee allergy management arrangements, ensuring that children's allergy information is accurate, staff training is maintained and logged, and procedures are followed consistently across the setting. The designated lead will also support communication with families and health professionals, monitor incidents and near misses, and coordinate regular reviews of the setting's allergy safety procedures.

The designated allergy lead at Kenilworth is: Emily Clemett (Office Manager)
The designated allergy lead at Whitnash is: Emma Fleming (Office Manager)

Pre-Admission Procedures

At Kenilworth and Whitnash Nursery Schools, we prioritise children's safety and wellbeing by gathering detailed information from parents and carers before a child joins the setting. This includes information about any diagnosed allergies, intolerances, medical dietary requirements, previous allergic reactions, prescribed medication, and any support plans already in place. We work closely with families to ensure that allergy information is accurate, comprehensive, and updated whenever circumstances change. This information is shared with all relevant staff to ensure every child's needs are understood and managed safely and consistently from their first day.

Prior to admission, we will discuss the child's individual allergy management needs with parents and carers and, where appropriate, request supporting information from health professionals. For children with diagnosed allergies, an Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP) and, where necessary, a risk assessment will be developed in partnership with parents and relevant professionals. These documents will clearly outline the allergens to be avoided, measures to reduce the risk of exposure, the signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction, and the actions staff must take in an emergency.

We maintain ongoing communication with families and, where appropriate, health professionals to ensure allergy management plans remain current and effective. All staff are made aware of children's allergies and are trained to recognise the signs and symptoms of allergic reactions, including anaphylaxis. Staff understand the importance of following agreed procedures at all times and remain aware that allergies can develop or change over time, particularly in young children. Through careful planning, effective information sharing, and a proactive approach to risk management, we aim to provide a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for every child.

Mealtime Protocols

At Kenilworth and Whitnash Nursery Schools, we recognise that mealtimes present a heightened risk of allergen exposure and therefore require careful planning, supervision, and vigilance. Before food is served, for children with identified allergies, two members of staff verify that the correct meal, snack, or drink have been prepared and provided in accordance with each child's individual allergy or medical dietary requirements. Any food provided by the setting or brought in from home is clearly identified, and staff will take all reasonable steps to prevent cross-contamination and accidental exposure to allergens.

Children are always kept within sight and hearing of staff during mealtimes and snack times. Staff are encouraged to sit with and face the children while they eat, enabling them to monitor food consumption, prevent food sharing, and quickly identify any signs of an allergic reaction. Particular care is taken during celebrations, cooking activities, and special events where unfamiliar foods may be present, ensuring that all dietary requirements continue to be met safely.

At Kenilworth and Whitnash Nursery Schools, we uphold stringent hygiene measures by ensuring children wash their hands before and after eating, table surfaces and seating areas are cleaned appropriately, and all equipment, utensils, and serving areas are sanitised and ready for use. Staff follow agreed food handling procedures to minimise the risk of allergen cross-contact and maintain a safe environment for all children.
We aim to provide a calm, well-organised eating space with minimal distractions, enabling staff to supervise children effectively and respond promptly to any concerns. Emergency medication, including prescribed adrenaline auto-injectors where applicable, is readily accessible during mealtimes, and staff understand the procedures for responding to allergic reactions. Through consistent practice, effective communication, and vigilant supervision, we strive to ensure that every child can eat safely, confidently, and inclusively.

Additional mealtime protocols to consider:

Additional allergy safety measures to consider -

- Using colour-coded plates, bowls, cups, or placemats for children with specific allergies to provide an additional visual reminder for staff.
- Displaying allergy information discreetly in food preparation areas, kitchens, staff rooms, and dining areas, in line with data protection requirements.
- Maintaining separate preparation areas, utensils, chopping boards, and storage containers for allergen-free foods where possible.
- Clearly labelling all food, ingredients, and snacks, including those brought into the setting for celebrations or special events.
- Conducting a risk assessment for activities involving food, sensory play materials, or craft resources that may contain allergens.
- Establishing allergen-aware procedures for birthdays, celebrations, fundraising events, and cultural activities involving food.
- Introducing handwashing procedures before and after meals, food preparation activities, and outdoor play to reduce allergen transfer.
- Considering allergen-aware seating arrangements where this is identified as a reasonable control measure within a child's risk assessment.
- Ensuring prescribed emergency medication is easily accessible, clearly labelled, in date, and accompanies the child during outings and visits.
- Carrying spare copies of allergy action plans and emergency contact information on outings.
- Using visual prompts, posters, or photographs to help staff, children, and visitors identify allergy-safe practices.
- Including allergy management arrangements within induction processes for new staff, volunteers, students, and agency workers.
- Providing regular refresher training on recognising and responding to allergic reactions and anaphylaxis.
- Maintaining a register of children with allergies that is reviewed regularly and updated whenever information changes (managed by the designated allergy leads)
- Encouraging a culture of "no food sharing" among children and staff during mealtimes and celebrations.
- Reviewing any pets, plants, cooking ingredients, or sensory materials that could present an allergen risk.
- Establishing contingency plans for staff absence, ensuring clear procedures are in place to ensure that any staff involved in purchasing, preparing, handling, or serving food are fully informed of children's dietary requirements, allergies, and intolerances.

Individual Healthcare Plans and Risk Assessments

At Kenilworth and Whitnash Nursery Schools, children with diagnosed allergies will have an Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP), which will be developed in partnership with parents, carers, and relevant professionals. This may include health visitors, school nurses, community nurses, paediatricians, allergy specialists, dietitians, General Practitioners (GPs), and any other professionals involved in supporting the child's health and wellbeing. By working collaboratively with families and professionals, we aim to ensure that every child's allergy needs are fully understood and consistently managed.

Each Individual Healthcare Plan will clearly outline the child's known allergens, signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction, strategies to minimise the risk of exposure, and the action to be taken in an emergency. Plans will also include details of prescribed medication, including the location of medication, administration procedures, consent arrangements, and emergency contact information. Where required, supporting documents such as Allergy Action Plans provided by healthcare professionals will be incorporated into the child's records.

Risk assessments will consider all areas of the child's experience within the setting, including mealtimes, snack times, cooking activities, sensory play, celebrations, outings, visits, and outdoor learning. Appropriate control measures will be identified to reduce risks while ensuring that children remain fully included in the life of the setting.

All relevant staff will be made aware of and have access to the information they need to support the child safely. Individual Healthcare Plans and risk assessments will be reviewed at least annually, whenever new information is received, following any significant change in the child's condition or treatment, and immediately after any allergy-related incident or near miss. Through regular review and partnership working, we aim to ensure that arrangements remain effective, responsive, and centred on the individual needs of each child.

Records of children with allergies will be displayed in the lunch room area/kitchen and midday/lunch staff **must** ensure they are aware of each child's dietary needs.

Emergency Medication and Response

At Kenilworth and Whitnash Nursery Schools, emergency medication is stored safely, clearly labelled, and readily accessible whenever children are present, including during outdoor play, visits, and outings. Staff understand their responsibilities in responding to allergic reactions and follow agreed emergency procedures without delay. Following any allergic reaction, parents and carers will be informed as soon as possible, and the incident will be reviewed to identify any lessons that can further strengthen practice. At Kenilworth and Whitnash, we have KITT wall mounted emergency medication units, which include tracked and annually replenished spare Jext adrenaline auto-injector pens (AAI's) suitable for children and adults.

Food Preparation and Hygiene

At Kenilworth and Whitnash Nursery Schools, we recognise that effective food preparation and hygiene practices are essential in reducing the risk of accidental allergen exposure. We maintain suitable, hygienic food preparation areas and implement robust procedures to identify, store, prepare, and serve food safely for children with allergies, intolerances, and medical dietary requirements. All allergen information is clearly communicated to relevant staff, and ingredients are checked carefully before food is prepared or served.

All staff involved in preparing or handling food receive appropriate training in food hygiene, allergy awareness, and allergen management, and are assessed as competent before undertaking these responsibilities. Staff understand the importance of reading food labels, checking ingredient information, and following agreed procedures whenever food is purchased, prepared, or provided to children.

At Kenilworth and Whitnash Nursery Schools, we take reasonable steps to prevent cross-contamination during food preparation and serving. This may include the use of separate utensils, equipment, preparation surfaces, and storage containers where appropriate. Food preparation areas, equipment, and high-touch surfaces are cleaned and sanitised regularly in accordance with our hygiene procedures. Staff follow effective handwashing practices before handling food and after contact with potential allergens.

Our team works closely with parents, carers, and, where appropriate, health professionals to ensure children's dietary and allergy needs are accurately reflected in our food preparation practices. We regularly review our procedures and refresh staff training to ensure we continue to provide the highest standards of safety, inclusion, and care for all children.

Nutrition Standards

At Kenilworth and Whitnash Nursery Schools, we are committed to ensuring that children with allergies, intolerances, and medical dietary requirements have access to safe, healthy, and nutritious snacks and drinks throughout the day. Our snacks are planned in line with the DfE Early Years Nutrition Guidance (2025) and adapted where necessary to meet individual dietary needs while maintaining a balanced diet.

We work closely with parents, carers, and, where appropriate, health professionals to ensure suitable alternatives are provided and that children can participate safely and inclusively in mealtimes. Fresh drinking water is always available, and staff involved in food provision receive training in nutrition, food hygiene, and allergy awareness to support children's health and wellbeing.

At Kenilworth and Whitnash Nursery Schools, we regularly review our snack and food provision practices to ensure they reflect current guidance, best practice, and the individual needs of all children in our care.

Children with additional support needs and other special diets

At Kenilworth and Whitnash Nursery Schools, we are committed to meeting the individual dietary and allergy management needs of all children, including those who require additional support needs or special diets. We recognise that some children may require food to be prepared, presented, or supported in a specific way due to medical, developmental, physical, or sensory needs, and may need additional assistance during mealtimes.

We work closely with parents, carers, health professionals, dietitians, and specialist services to ensure we have clear and up-to-date information about any dietary requirements, food exclusions, allergies, supplements, and support strategies. Where a child has a medically prescribed diet, we request written confirmation from an appropriate health professional. This information is shared with relevant staff to ensure children's dietary and allergy needs are met safely, consistently and inclusively.

Food from Home

At Kenilworth and Whitnash Nursery Schools, we work closely with parents and carers to ensure that any food brought into the school is safe, appropriate, and clearly identified. Where a child has a diagnosed allergy or medical dietary requirement, we agree arrangements with families to minimise the risk of accidental allergen exposure and ensure consistency with the child’s allergy management plan.

To maintain the safety of all children, parents and carers are given clear information about the safe and healthy content of packed lunches and snacks. Staff remain vigilant during mealtimes to prevent food sharing and to ensure children receive only the food intended for them. Any food brought into the setting for celebrations, special events, or activities will be checked in accordance with the schools allergy management procedures before being shared with children.

We work in partnership with families to promote safe food handling and encourage the use of suitable containers and packaging to keep food fresh throughout the day. While we are not required to refrigerate or reheat food brought from home, we follow current food safety guidance and take reasonable steps to ensure that food is stored and handled safely while on the premises. Through clear communication and effective risk

management, we aim to create a safe and inclusive environment for all children, particularly those with allergies and medical dietary needs.

Celebrations and Special Events

At Kenilworth and Whitnash Nursery Schools, we recognise that birthdays, cultural celebrations, and special events are important opportunities for children to feel valued, included, and connected to their community. We work closely with families to ensure that any celebrations involving food are planned and managed in a way that prioritises the safety and wellbeing of all children, particularly those with allergies, intolerances, and medical dietary requirements.

Any food brought into the setting for sharing is checked in advance in line with our allergy management procedures. Parents and carers may be asked to provide ingredient information to enable staff to identify potential allergens and assess whether food can be safely shared. Where there is any uncertainty regarding ingredients or allergen content, the food will not be served. Staff remain vigilant during celebrations to prevent food sharing and to ensure children receive only food that is suitable for their individual needs.

We encourage families to consider non-food alternatives, such as stickers, books, bubbles, or special activities, to help create inclusive celebrations that can be enjoyed safely by all children. Through open communication, careful planning, and effective risk management, we aim to ensure that every child can participate in celebrations and events confidently, safely, and inclusively.

Outings, Visits and Off-Site Activities

At Kenilworth and Whitnash Nursery Schools, we recognise that allergy risks remain present during outings, visits and outdoor learning experiences. Thorough risk assessments are completed before all trips, taking account of known allergens, food arrangements, medication requirements, and emergency procedures. Children's emergency medication and healthcare plans accompany them on all outings and staff responsible for the visit are familiar with the actions required should an allergic reaction occur.

Communication and Information Sharing

At Kenilworth and Whitnash Nursery Schools, effective communication is central to our approach to allergy safety. Systems are in place to ensure that all staff, including temporary, agency and volunteer staff, are aware of children's allergies and individual support needs. Information is shared in a manner that supports children's safety while respecting confidentiality and data protection requirements. We encourage parents and carers to notify us immediately of any changes to their child's medical or dietary needs.

Information relating to a child's allergy is recorded on registration documents, Individual Healthcare Plans, risk assessments and where appropriate, allergy action plans. Clear procedures are in place to ensure that this information is communicated to all relevant staff and remains accurate and up to date. Staff are informed of children's allergies during induction, staff meetings, handovers and whenever new information becomes available. Temporary, agency and supply staff are briefed on relevant allergy information before they begin working with children.

To promote day-to-day awareness, we use multiple methods of communications, including confidential allergy registers, photographs displayed in staff-only areas, kitchen notices and mealtime checklists. Information shared will be proportionate to the child's needs and accessible to those responsible for their care, food preparation, or supervision.

We work closely with parents, carers, and relevant professionals to ensure information is consistent across all documentation and reflects any changes in a child's diagnosis, treatment, medication, or dietary requirements. Where concerns arise or following any allergy-related incident or near miss, information will be reviewed promptly and shared with relevant staff to support continuous improvement in practice.

Through clear communication, effective record-keeping, and regular information sharing, we aim to ensure that all adults involved in a child's care have the knowledge they need to support children with allergies safely, consistently, and confidently.

Staff training

At Kenilworth and Whitnash Nursery Schools, we ensure all staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to support children with allergies and medical dietary requirements safely. This includes completing training in Paediatric First Aid, Allergy Awareness and Anaphylaxis Management, as appropriate to their role.

New team members receive a thorough induction, which includes the allergy management procedures, individual healthcare plans, emergency response arrangements, and their responsibilities in preventing allergen exposure. This helps ensure staff feel confident in supporting children's needs from their first day in the setting.

All staff are trained to recognise the signs and symptoms of allergic reactions, including anaphylaxis, and understand the procedures for responding effectively in an emergency. Where children require prescribed emergency medication, relevant staff receive practical training in its safe administration.

Ongoing training, supervision, and regular refresher sessions are provided through KITT Medical to ensure staff remain up to date with current guidance, legislation, and best practice. Through continuous professional development, we promote a culture of vigilance, safety, and inclusion for all children in our care.

Incident Reporting and Learning

At Kenilworth and Whitnash Nursery Schools, all allergy-related incidents, allergic reactions, medication administrations and near misses are recorded, reported, and reviewed in accordance with our safeguarding, health and safety and medical needs procedures. We recognise that near misses, such as a child being given the wrong food before consuming it or an allergen being identified prior to serving, provide valuable opportunities to identify risks and strengthen our procedures before harm occurs.

Following any allergy-related incident, staff will ensure that appropriate action is taken to safeguard the child, including administering emergency medication where required and seeking medical assistance. Parents and carers will be informed as soon as possible, and relevant records will be completed promptly and accurately. Where appropriate, external agencies and regulatory bodies will be notified in line with statutory requirements.

All incidents and near misses are reviewed by the Executive Headteacher, Senior Leadership or Designated Allergy Lead to identify contributing factors and any lessons that can be learned. This review may consider areas such as communication, staff knowledge, food preparation procedures, supervision arrangements, information sharing, training needs, and risk management practices. Findings will be used to improve practice and prevent similar incidents from occurring in the future.

Where necessary, Individual Healthcare Plans, Allergy Action Plans, risk assessments, and operational procedures will be updated following an incident or review. Additional training, supervision, or changes to practice may be implemented to address any identified concerns. Relevant learning will be shared with staff through staff meetings, briefings, supervision sessions and INSET training opportunities to ensure a consistent and proactive approach to allergy safety across the setting. We maintain a culture of openness and continuous improvement, encouraging staff to report concerns, incidents and near misses without fear of blame.

Monitoring and Review

At Kenilworth and Whitnash Nursery Schools, we are committed to maintaining high standards of allergy management and ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children. To support this, we regularly review our allergy procedures, risk assessments, Individual Healthcare Plans, and emergency response arrangements to ensure they remain effective, up to date, and aligned with current guidance and best practice.

Allergy action plans, medication records and any incidents involving allergens or allergic reactions are reviewed at least termly to identify patterns, lessons learned, and opportunities for improvement. Following any allergic reaction or near miss, we will undertake a review of our procedures and implement any necessary actions to strengthen our practice. Staff training in allergy awareness, allergen management and emergency response is refreshed regularly to ensure staff remain knowledgeable and confident in their roles. We also work closely with parents, carers, and, where appropriate, health professionals to ensure information about children's allergies remains accurate and current.

We value the views of families, children, and staff and actively seek feedback to help inform the ongoing development of our allergy safety procedures. Through regular monitoring and review, we strive to create a safe, inclusive, and responsive environment for every child.