

Allergy management policy

Government legislation:

- Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework (2025)

Food Standards Agency:

- Allergen guidance for food businesses

Department for Education:

- Help for early years providers – Food safety

At Banana Moon Day Nursery, we recognise the importance of mealtimes as valuable opportunities for development, and they must be taken seriously. Children are not in their home environment, and the nursery staff have a duty to ensure that all aspects of mealtimes are managed with the utmost care, particularly in relation to allergies and dietary needs.

No child must be left in the care of the nursery without first obtaining comprehensive information from their parent or family member regarding any known food allergies, intolerances, dietary requirements, preferences, weaning instructions or relevant health conditions.

This information must be accurately recorded and **shared with all staff involved in food preparation, handling and service.**

Understanding the difference between an allergy and an intolerance

It is essential that all staff understand the difference between a food allergy and a food intolerance, as the way each is managed and responded to can differ significantly.

- **Food allergy:** A food allergy is an **immune system reaction** that occurs soon after eating a certain food. Even a small amount of the allergen can trigger symptoms, which may include hives, swelling, difficulty breathing, vomiting or, in severe cases, anaphylaxis (a life-threatening emergency that requires immediate medical attention). Allergic reactions can occur very quickly, often within minutes.
- **Food intolerance:** A food intolerance **does not involve the immune system** and is generally less serious, although it can still cause discomfort and distress. Symptoms may include bloating, stomach cramps, diarrhoea or headaches. These symptoms typically develop more slowly and may only occur if a larger quantity of the food is consumed.

All staff must be aware of the children's known allergies and intolerances, follow all individual dietary requirements strictly and take appropriate precautions to avoid exposure and cross-contamination.

Responsibility

At Banana Moon Day Nursery, we're aware that children may have or may develop an allergy resulting in an allergic reaction. When a child has a known allergy, it's the family's responsibility to inform the nursery and the staff looking after their child. The family must provide evidence from a GP practitioner of the allergy or intolerance, and jointly, the staff and family will discuss how to avoid the substances the child is allergic to and agree upon what steps need to be taken if a reaction occurs. Action could be in three forms:

- Antihistamine (oral)
- Antihistamine (cream)
- Adrenaline injection supplied by the GP

IF THE CHILD IS UNDER THE AGE OF 12 MONTHS, ANTIHISTAMINES CANNOT BE ADMINISTERED – AN AMBULANCE WILL BE REQUIRED TO ASSIST (unless antihistamines have been prescribed by a medical professional).

The nursery staff must follow the GP's advice and guidance regarding any allergies or intolerances. If a staff member has a known allergy, it's their responsibility to disclose this to the Nursery Manager and discuss the symptoms and any treatment required with them.

Banana Moon Day Nursery follow the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework (2025) with regards to the number of staff members on the premises that hold a recognised paediatric first aid certificate. All staff who hold this certificate have been trained to recognise signs of anaphylactic shock.

We recognise that consumers may be allergic to or have an intolerance to many ingredients, **the 14 allergens that are required to be declared as a food allergen by law are:** celery, cereals containing gluten, crustaceans (such as prawns, crab and lobsters), eggs, fish, lupin, molluscs (such as mussels and oysters), mustard, peanuts, sesame, soybeans, sulphur dioxide and sulphites. These allergens are displayed on the nursery menus for families, visitors and staff members to see.

Food-related allergy and intolerance procedure

Upon registering at the nursery, allergies and intolerances are discussed with every family. If a food-related allergy, intolerance or requirement is shared, this procedure will be followed:

1. The allergy or intolerance will be documented on the **Registration form** and the nursery platform.
2. The family must provide GP evidence of a diagnosed allergy/intolerance, or evidence that this is under investigation by a medical professional.
3. During the first settling-in session, staff must ensure to document an allergy discussion on the **Settling-in form** to ensure that every opportunity has been taken to ascertain full details of any allergies or intolerances.
4. If the child has a diagnosed allergy, an **Allergy action plan** will be written. The Nursery Manager or designated person will work with the family to ensure that full details of the allergy are documented; this must include step-by-step instructions on what to do if a child has an allergic reaction.
5. If a child has a diagnosed intolerance, this will be documented on the **Registration form** and Nursery online platform, along with any potential side effects. An allergy action form is not required.

6. In the case of a known allergy, parents are asked to provide a bottle of antihistamine with consent of administration during registration or as and when the child's allergy is confirmed. The nursery will provide an emergency bottle of children's oral antihistamine (e.g. Piriton or other non-branded product), which will be administered in the case of an unknown allergy, providing emergency consent has been obtained by the parent.
7. If a child has a severe allergy that has resulted in an auto-injector pen being prescribed, then at least two members of staff working directly with the child and the Nursery Manager will receive specific medical training to be able to administer the treatment to each individual child.
8. Where possible, a meeting will be held between the Nursery Manager, the Chef and the family to review the nursery menus and agree upon necessary changes to the child's diet while they attend the nursery.
9. A report of all allergies and intolerances will be printed from the nursery platform and will be available in each room and the kitchen. This information will be updated and reshared whenever a child has a change to their allergy or dietary requirement.
10. The child's individual **Allergy action plan** will be available in their room to ensure that all staff know what action to take should an allergy occur.

Updating a dietary requirement

If an amendment is made to any food-related allergy, intolerance or requirement information once the child has been enrolled into the nursery, a **Dietary requirements update form** must be completed and signed by a family member and nursery manager. The nursery manager must then follow the steps above in the 'Food-related allergy procedure' section before any new food is given to the child.

Food preferences

Banana Moon understand that some families may have dietary preferences for their child, and therefore the nursery will accommodate for religious preferences and/or lifestyle choices, such as veganism.

The nursery is unable to accommodate each individual child's preference due to the disliking of food; instead, staff will support and encourage children to try new foods and explore tastes and textures. If a child does not eat their meal, an alternative may be offered, or additional food may be provided during other snack times and mealtimes throughout the day to ensure that no child becomes hungry.

Ordering, preparing and serving food

The nursery operates a 'yellow plate' system to ensure that any child with an allergy or intolerance does not have a meal containing that allergen/food source. The following procedure will be followed when preparing and serving food:

1. Each morning, staff will check the **Daily register** and nursery platform **Allergy report** to identify any children who are in attendance that have an allergy or requirements.
2. A **Kitchen order form** must be completed to formally communicate the allergies and requirements within the room that day (this includes children attending for a morning and afternoon session).

3. The nursery Chef must sign the document to confirm they have been informed of the allergies or requirements that day and take responsibility for the food preparation.
4. The Chef will prepare meals in accordance with Food Standards Agency guidelines.
5. All food that contains an allergen/requirement source will be served on a yellow plate/bowl; if the food does not contain an allergen/requirement source, it will not be served on a yellow plate.
6. All drinks that contain an allergen/requirement source will be served in a yellow cup; if the drink does not contain an allergen/requirement source, it will not be served in a yellow cup.
7. The nursery Chef will communicate the meals with the Room Leader or person in charge.
8. The Room Leader or person in charge must sign the **Kitchen order form** to agree that the Chef has passed responsibility for the meal back to the room.
9. The Room Leader or person in charge will effectively communicate the dietary requirements to the staff team.

Nut-free nursery

Banana Moon Day Nursery is a nut-free nursery. The following procedures are in place to ensure the safety of all children, families and staff:

- Nut-free nursery signage can be seen at the entrance of the nursery.
- No meals on the nursery menu include any form of nuts.
- Packed lunches that are brought in from home are checked to ensure the items do not include nuts. Please see the **Food supplied from home policy** for more information.
- Staff members do not eat nuts while on the nursery premises.
- As the ingredient contents cannot be guaranteed, any items that are brought into the nursery for group occasions must be in sealed, shop-bought packaging (e.g. birthday cake, food for religious occasions, etc.). Please see the **Food supplied from home policy** for more information.

Banana Moon procedure for non-food related allergies

If a child has a non-food related allergy, the nursery manager will risk assess each individual allergy and implement relevant strategies to reduce the risk of an allergic reaction.

- An **Allergy action plan** will be completed.
- The children will be protected from bites and stings as far as physically possible via supervision.
- For a hay fever allergy, the nursery can administer oral antihistamine if necessary to enable the child to benefit from attending nursery during high pollen count days. The nursery must follow the administration instructions on the packaging and cannot exceed the dosage allowance.
- If an allergic reaction requires specialist treatment, for example an auto-injector pen, then at least two members of staff working directly with the child and the Nursery Manager will receive specific medical training to be able to administer the treatment to each individual child.

For further policies and procedures, please see **Chapter three: Health and medication**.

Minor allergic reaction procedure

In the event of a child having a minor allergic reaction to a known allergy, the following procedure will be followed:

1. A member of the management team will contact the parent to check whether medication has been administered in the preceding 24 hours – this information will be checked against the manufacturer's instructions for maximum doses within 24 hours.
2. A senior member of staff will administer the appropriate treatment, which will be detailed in the **Allergy action plan** within the room.
3. Management will re-contact the family to inform them that the treatment that has been administered and request the child be collected from the nursery if needed.
4. An **Incident form** (on the nursery platform) and a **Medication log** (if medication has been administered) will be completed and signed by the parent upon collection.
5. If the child does not need to be collected, they will be closely monitored by a member of staff.

If the reason for the minor allergic reaction is unknown:

1. A member of management will check the child's emergency consent record located within the child's **Registration form** and contact the parent to check whether any antihistamine has been administered in the preceding 24 hours. The parent will also be asked to collect their child.
2. If the parent cannot be contacted, a senior member of staff will closely monitor the child while a member of management will contact the child's emergency contacts. Emergency services will be called if needed.
3. If written permission has been given, a senior member of staff will administer the emergency antihistamine to the child, following the manufacturer's directions on the bottle.
4. If written permission has not been given, the parent/emergency contact must put in writing (by email) that they would like medication to be administered.
5. An **Incident form** (on the nursery platform) and **Medication log** (if medication has been administered) will be completed and signed by the parent upon collection.
6. The child will be closely monitored by a member of staff until their parent arrives.

Severe allergic reaction procedure

1. A member of staff with a relevant paediatric first aid certificate must stay with the child.
2. A member of staff must alert the Nursery Manager.
3. The Nursery Manager must dial 999 for an ambulance and follow the operator's instructions.
4. If the child has airway or breathing problems, a paediatric first aid trained member of staff must commence first aid.
5. The staff members must follow all guidance given by the medical professional.
6. The family will be contacted to inform them of the situation.
7. A **Serious incident form** must be completed by staff along with any information of the emergency or follow-up treatment.

The above procedures will depend on the severity of each individual reaction. **Please seek medical advice and follow their guidance.**

The following documentation can be found on the Banana Moon Hub, under Chapter two: Allergy management and mealtimes:

- Allergy action plan
- Dietary requirements update form
- Kitchen order for
- Kitchen signs
- Medication log
- Menu recipe card
- Nut-free nursery signs
- Serious incident form

Department for Education: Help for early years providers – Food safety:

- <https://help-for-early-years-providers.education.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/food-safety>