



Claverdon Village Nursery

Dietary Requirements Policy

Food allergy and intolerance:

An allergy can be a life threatening reaction. An intolerance could make the child feel ill or affect their long-term health. **If parents suspect either of these conditions, they should have it confirmed by a medical practitioner.**

Religious and cultural preferences:

Some religions have specific dietary requirements that do not allow certain foods to be consumed. If it's agreed that we can meet the children's needs within the nursery then it is our duty to ensure that we do not compromise the family's culture or beliefs. We will also include any children who are vegetarians and vegans in this category.

Parental Preferences:

The EYFS requires settings to have effective systems in place to ensure that they meet the individual needs of the child. This includes giving due consideration to the wishes of the child's parents, and we will endeavour to take account of a child's likes and dislikes where possible. However, we are **not able to omit whole food groups and some specific foods without written guidance from a medical practitioner.** In the event of a conflict between the parent's wishes and the welfare requirements, the setting must put the safeguarding and best interests of the child as the priority. As children's palates and preferences change often, these will be reviewed regularly.

AIM

To protect all children whilst attending nursery who have a dietary or medical condition. To ensure best practice when providing food and drinks for children with allergies, intolerances and other special dietary requirements.

A dietary requirement can be anything from an allergy, intolerance, or preference. To which we must take serious as some conditions can result into a coma, severe anaphylactic shock, or death.

A medical condition is a condition that requires ongoing medication and intervention from a healthcare professional.

AN OVERVIEW OF SPECIAL DIETS: FOOD ALLERGIES, INTOLERANCES AND OTHER SPECIAL DIETS FOR MEDICAL REASONS

Food allergies are when the body's immune system reacts unusually to a specific food, because it mistakenly perceives it as a threat. In children, common food allergies are to milk, eggs, peanuts, nuts, fish and shellfish. Symptoms can include itching in the mouth, throat or ears, a raised itchy red rash (hives), swelling of the face, around the eyes, lips, tongue and roof of the mouth and vomiting. In the most serious cases, a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis, which can include breathing difficulties, light headedness and feeling like you are going to faint) can be life- threatening.

There is no cure for food allergies, so people with allergies need to avoid the foods to which they are allergic. It is important that children with suspected food allergies see their GP for referral to an allergy clinic for a formal diagnosis. Children with severe allergies may be given a device known as an auto-injector pen (e.g. epi-pen) containing a dose of adrenaline to be used in emergencies, the details of which should be included as part of an allergy management plan

Food intolerances are different from food allergies. Symptoms tend to appear more slowly, often several hours after eating the food. Symptoms can often include diarrhoea, bloating and stomach cramps. Unlike food allergies, food intolerances are not life-threatening.

Coeliac disease is not an allergy or intolerance. It is an autoimmune disease, where eating gluten triggers the immune system, damaging the lining of the gut and also affecting other parts of the body. Symptoms can include bloating, diarrhoea, nausea, wind, constipation, tiredness, headaches, mouth ulcers, sudden weight loss, hair loss and anaemia.

People with coeliac disease cannot eat foods containing gluten. Gluten is a protein found in wheat, barley, rye and oats (unless specified as gluten free oats). Examples of foods containing gluten include bread, pasta, flour, breakfast cereals, cakes, biscuits and pastry. Gluten can also be found in many other processed foods, such as soups, sauces, and sausages. Traces of gluten can also be found in food where gluten is not an ingredient, because of cross-contamination from gluten containing foods.

Other medical diets can include where children need to follow high energy or fat diets, or food with a modified texture to make it easier for them to chew and swallow. Settings may need to seek advice from a health professional where medical diets are required.

Religious and cultural diets Many settings cater for a diverse range of children from different backgrounds. Children from minority ethnic or religious communities may follow specific dietary customs, and may exclude or prepare food in a particular way.

Vegetarian and vegan diets Vegetarians do not eat meat, poultry, fish, shellfish or animal products such as lard or gelatine. There are three main types of vegetarian: • Lacto-ovo-vegetarians eat both dairy products and eggs; this is the most common type of vegetarian diet. • Lacto-vegetarians eat dairy products but not eggs. • Vegans do not eat dairy products, eggs, or any other products derived from animals (e.g. honey). Seek advice from a dietitian if a vegan diet is requested. Many settings include a vegetarian option as part of their menu every day, as vegetarian diets are relatively common. Vegetarian dishes can also be eaten by non-vegetarian pupils too.

INFORMATION

Complete and up to date records of all allergies, intolerance, preferences, and medical conditions must be kept for all children.

The Nursery Manager must ensure that all staff have been alerted to the child's dietary and medical condition and have been made aware both of how to cater for the requirement and how to respond in the event of child having a reaction, including receiving appropriate First Aid training in administering medication prior to the child starting.

Children who may need an auto injector pen or inhaler cannot be admitted to nursery unless their auto injector pen or inhaler is in date, with the child's name on, is present at the nursery and a First Aider member of staff is present who is able to administer the auto injector pen or inhaler in an emergency.