



R A Butler Academy Infant & Junior Schools

Food Allergies & Special Diets

Oct 2024

Headteacher's signature	
Chair of Governors' signature	
Catering Manager's signature	

Introduction

The food allergen and special diets policy makes a public statement which demonstrates how our school cares for and makes a positive contribution to the health and wellbeing of pupils, staff and other stakeholders, who may have food allergies or require special diets.

Under section 100 of the Children and Families Act 2014, schools have a duty to support pupils at school with medical conditions. Statutory guidance Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions sets out the duties that schools must fulfil. This includes implementing a suitable food allergy policy, which explains how the school will control risks and what emergency procedures are in place.

Aims

- To explain about allergies and anaphylaxis.
- To demonstrate an understanding of the risks and provide essential awareness to everyone in school.
- To define what can cause an allergic reaction, cross-contamination and airborne risks.
- To explain how to identify symptoms.
- To describe school processes for catering for allergies.

Dietary requirements

Special diets mean specially prepared food or particular types of food, specific to an individual's medical condition or dietary needs. This could include allergen intolerance, religious, cultural, medical, vegetarian or a vegan diet.

What is a food allergy?

Food allergies affect the body's immune system. The body reacts to certain allergens in food by producing antibodies which can cause immediate and sometimes severe symptoms, such as; itching, strange metallic taste in the mouth, swelling of the throat and tongue, difficulty swallowing or speaking, abdominal cramps, nausea and vomiting. In extreme cases it can cause; difficulty in breathing and a fall in blood pressure resulting in anaphylactic shock which can be fatal. A severe life-threatening allergic reaction to an allergen can happen within a few seconds or minutes.

What is a food intolerance?

This does not involve the immune system in the same way and is not usually as severe as a food allergy. Symptoms of an intolerance usually take longer to appear and may include headaches, fatigue and digestive problems. A food intolerance is harder to diagnose than a food allergy.

Coeliac disease

Coeliac disease is a lifelong autoimmune disease caused by a reaction to gluten. Symptoms include bloating, diarrhoea, nausea, wind, constipation, tiredness, sudden or unexpected weight loss, hair loss and anaemia. Once diagnosed, by a medical professional and written identification is given, it is treated by following a gluten free diet for life.

Potential risks

There are a range of ways that these risks can present in a school including:

- Any food on the school premises provided by the school or from outside.
- Food brought into school for food projects, Harvest festivals or food banks.
- Contact from people who have handled allergenic foodstuffs are known to present a risk of an allergic reaction (in or outside school) to allergy sufferers, if there is inappropriate handwashing.
- Catering in school / residential trips.
- Events where food is served on the premises but not prepared on the premises e.g. fun day, staff events, cake sales.
- Misinterpretation or a lack of understanding of the differences between a life-threatening 'allergy' or an 'intolerance' which may produce milder symptoms.
- Foods which are not part of the 14 legally recognised allergens.
- Reputational damage of the school if an incident occurs.

Common food allergens

Currently there are 14 allergens which are required to be declared by food law. These 14 allergens must be clearly stated if they are present in the food on offer. People may report allergies to other foods not on the below list. Other common allergens in the UK are kiwi, peas, other legumes (beans etc.), other seeds and other fruits and vegetables.

Link to 14 allergens poster:

<https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/fsa-dfe-eu-fic-schools-posterv2%20%281%29.pdf>

This should be displayed in school kitchens to make sure everyone is kept informed.

School's responsibility:

- The Headteacher and Governor's agree, implement and review the policy to ensure the safeguarding of children.
- The Office Staff, Classroom Teacher, Teaching Assistants, Supply Staff and visitors implement and follow the policy.

- The Catering team must implement and follow policy procedures and ensure they follow their Food Safety Management System and HACCP to prevent allergenic risks.
- The Lunchtime Service Staff to implement and follow policy procedures and have training commensurate to the job role.

Parent / carer responsibilities:

- The parent/carer should identify and provide information if their child has an allergy, intolerance or special diet by providing medical evidence.
- The parent/carer should ensure that any required medication (EpiPen's or other adrenalin injectors, inhalers and any specific antihistamine) is supplied, in date and replaced as necessary.
- The parent/carer must inform the school if an episode of anaphylaxis occurs outside school.
- The parent/carer should assist the School by educating their child and encourage increasing the independence in their child's awareness and management of their allergy.
- A meeting can be arranged with School Staff to further discuss a child's needs.
- It is the parents'/carers' responsibility to ensure that if their child's medical needs change at any point that they make the school aware and complete a new form for records to be revised and updated.
- It is the parents/carers responsibility to update the school on any changes to their child's medical needs/health.

Catering team responsibilities:

- The Catering Manager/Staff will familiarise themselves with the special dietary needs of pupils for correct meals to be consumed.
- Suppliers will provide information regarding the allergen content of their products. This will build an identification form of allergens within the school menus.
- All dishes which are produced in-house will be from ingredients from approved suppliers. Any ingredient changes/supplier changes affecting ingredients will be detailed.
- Opened allergenic and allergen free items/ingredients will be sealed/covered and stored separately to reduce the risk of contamination.
- Equipment/utensils used in the preparation of food for people with a food allergy are cleaned/sanitised according to standard procedures (as per the Catering Procedures Manual and the Cross-Contamination Kitchen Rules SM04).
- All foods which are prepared for special diets will be prepared in an area which is sanitised and free from cross-contamination.
- Separate colour-coded chopping boards and equipment will be used for this purpose (as per the Cross-Contamination Kitchen Rules SM04 document).

- After food has been prepared it will be covered and stored separately to foods containing allergens and will be labelled as required.
- It is advised the Catering Manager should provide daily briefs to Kitchen Staff prior to service. This will include information relating to pupils and menu items containing allergens.
- It is advised that best practice is followed – An Allergen Records folder is set up and contains current menus, current allergen identification forms, recipes used, children's information/special menus.

Communication

SLT and Catering Managers are encouraged to communicate with parents / carers / staff about pupils who have specific dietary requirements on a regular basis to ensure safe meals are provided. If pupil requirements are complex and more information/clarification is needed, the Catering Manager will meet with parents / carers to identify and discuss specific needs further.

When a child starts at RAB, a checklist sheet is completed to ensure that our correct procedures are completed for ensuring children with allergies are catered for appropriately (see appendix A).

The Catering Team must complete and maintain allergen records for the daily/weekly menus for all stakeholders. An information sheet is produced for each child with a food allergy by the admin team for the catering team. This includes a photo of the child and a description of the allergy / food intolerances.

A daily list of children with allergies who are taking a school meal is provided by the school admin team for the catering team. The catering team use this information to complete daily individual menu records for children with allergies. This record is signed and counter signed by catering staff when the child is served their food. Children with allergies are served on a blue plate.

Staff training

All Catering Managers must attend the following courses:

- Level 3 Food Safety
- A recognised training course on food allergy awareness
- School specific allergen awareness training (covered internally)
- Level 2 Health & Safety

All **Catering Assistants** must attend the following courses:

- Level 2 Food Safety
- A recognised training course on food allergy awareness
- School specific allergen awareness training (covered internally)

All training records will be maintained by the Catering Manager.

Management of an allergic reaction

Emergency procedures are in place for children with anaphylaxis. The procedures are displayed in the staffroom. This is managed by the school lead first aider. Staff are trained in the use of adrenaline auto-injectors.

Natasha's Law

See Appendix B


Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

Who will sign this policy?

- Headteacher
- Governing body
- Catering manager

Appendix A

	<p align="center">Protocols for ensuring children with food allergies are appropriately catered for</p> <p>Name of child: _____ Date of admission: _____ Class: _____</p>		
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ACTIONS	By whom	Date completed
Check food allergy section on admissions form completed fully		
If necessary, get further information from parents		
Add food allergy information to SIMS		
Create photo card of child with food allergy information		
Inform kitchen staff		
Inform nurse		
Inform class teacher		
Inform MDAs		
Catering Manager ensure all kitchen staff understand allergy		
Daily lunch register that highlights allergies shared with Catering Manager		
Catering Manager and Assistant Caterer complete individual menu sheet for each child with allergy		
During service, individual menu sheet signed and counter signed when child served		

Appendix B – Natasha’s Law

On 1st October 2021, new legislation (the Food Information (Amendment) Regulations 2019) was introduced to provide further protection to allergy sufferers who order and buy foods that are ‘prepacked for direct sale’ (PPDS) to give them more confidence in the food they buy. Natasha’s Law requires food businesses to include full ingredients labelling on ‘pre-packed for direct sale’ (PPDS) foods, and where there are any allergens in the recipe, these must be clearly indicated by a unique typeface, e.g. bold.

What is PPDS food?

It stands for **prepacked for direct sale**.

When?

When food is prepacked for direct sale before the customer orders or selects it. E.g. a prepared sandwich.




Where?

PPDS food is packaged at the same premises or at the site it is offered or sold. This includes temporary or mobile sites such as a food truck or pop up stalls.

How?

PPDS food is fully or partly enclosed by packaging. The food cannot be altered without opening or changing the packaging in some way e.g. pots with lids, boxes with lids.

All the above points must be met for food to be classed as ‘prepacked for direct sale.’

Prepacked	Prepacked for direct sale(PPDS) food	Non-prepacked food
		
Food packed by one business and supplied to another business or packed by the same business at a different site.	Food which is packaged at the same place it is offered or sold to consumers and is in this packaging before it is selected.	Any food that is not in packaging or is packed after being ordered by the consumer

Examples of PPDS food

Prepacked for direct sale (PPDS) food can include the following:

- Food items that are sold from a school tuck shop that are packaged before they are selected.
- Sandwiches and bakery products which are packed on site before a consumer selects or orders them.
- Grab and go food items that are packaged before they are selected, such as a pasta pots, sandwiches and fruit pots.
- Samples of cookies given to consumers for free which were packed on site.
- Packaged desserts that are not ordered with a school dinner but are selected by the customer at the point of service.

Examples of this kind of packaging would be:

- A cake completely enclosed in cling film
- Bread placed in a paper bag with the bag folded over or twisted to encase the bread
- Rolls contained in a plastic bag that is tied with a knot or sealed

Food that is not PPDS

Prepacked Food - Food packed by one business and supplied to another business. This already must have full labelling, including the name of the food and a full ingredients list, with allergenic ingredients emphasised within it.



Non-prepacked Food - Any food that is not in packaging. Allergen information must still be provided but this can be done through other means, including by conversation at point of service.



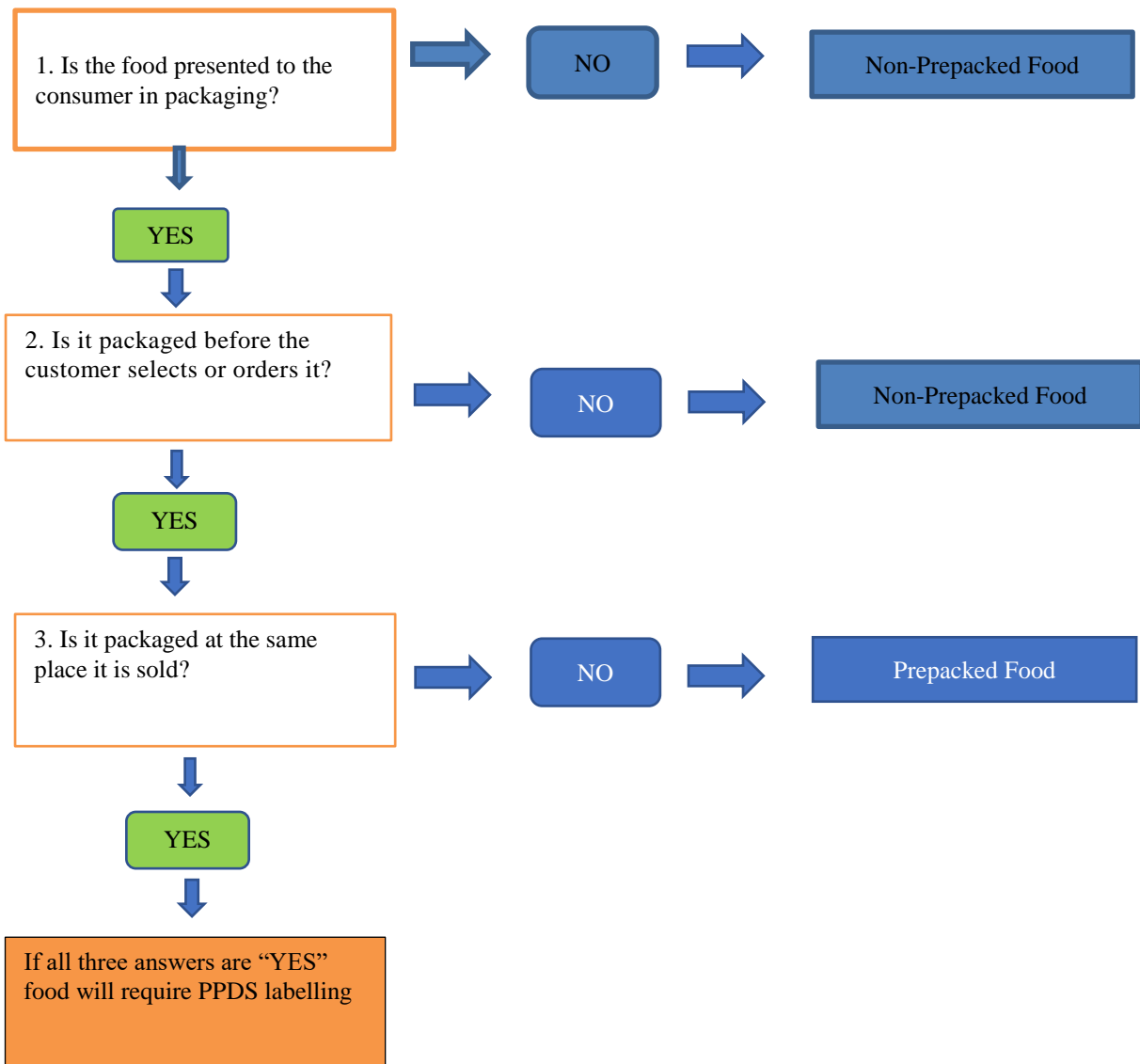
Food packed at the customer's request or is packaged after being ordered. Allergen information must still be provided but this can be done through other means, including by conversation at point of service.

Food that is partially or fully packaged but **can be** altered without opening or changing the packaging.



Ordered Food = NO Label
Food NOT ordered = Label

Answer **yes** to **all three** of the **questions** below for food to be classed as **PPDS**



What needs to be on the label?

Name of the food

Where names are prescribed in law they must be used. This mainly applies to food containing certain seafood, fish and meat ingredients.

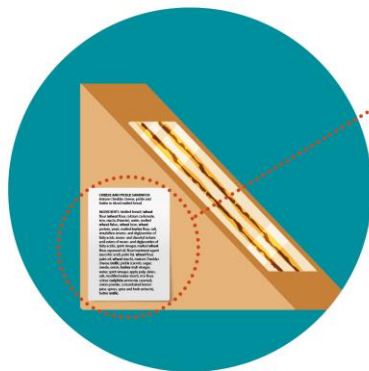
Customary names which are commonly known such as BLT Sandwich, Bakewell Tart and Fish Fingers can be used.

Names must be descriptive and inform the customer of the true nature of the food.

Ingredient list

Ingredients need to be in descending order of weight.

If any of the 14 allergens are present in the food, they must be emphasised in some way e.g. highlighted in **bold**, underlined, or in a **different colour**. Alternative allergen statements such as “Contains”: Wheat, egg and milk are not permitted.



CHEESE AND PICKLE SANDWICH

Mature Cheddar cheese, pickle and butter in sliced malted bread

INGREDIENTS: Malted bread (**wheat** flour (**wheat** flour, calcium carbonate, iron, niacin, thiamin), water, malted **wheat** flakes, **wheat** bran, **wheat** protein, yeast, malted **barley** flour, salt, emulsifiers (mono- and diglycerides of fatty acids, mono- and diacetyl tartaric acid esters of mono- and diglycerides of fatty acids), spirit vinegar, malted **wheat** flour, rapeseed oil, flour treatment agent (ascorbic acid), palm fat, **wheat** flour, palm oil, **wheat** starch), mature Cheddar cheese (**milk**), pickle (carrots, sugar, swede, onion, **barley** malt vinegar, water, spirit vinegar, apple pulp, dates, salt, modified maize starch, rice flour, colour (**sulphite** ammonia caramel), onion powder, concentrated lemon juice, spices, spice and herb extracts), butter (**milk**).

Labelling

The information must appear on the package or on the label attached to the package. It must be easily visible and clearly legible.

Information must be taken from the packaging of food products.

It must be on the outside of the product and not obscured in any way and must be clear to read.

The ingredients list has to be a minimum font size where x-height is 1.2mm or more. If the largest surface area of packaging is less than 80cm squared, you can use a minimum x-height of 0.9mm.

Labels can be handwritten as long as they meet requirements of being easily visible and clearly legible.

Labels can be printed and font size needs to be considered.

Food businesses and their suppliers have an obligation to ensure that accurate ingredient and allergen information is passed to consumers.

Food businesses should also ensure that they have processes in place to update this information should they change suppliers or when ingredients change.

For PPDS food precautionary allergen statements like “may contain” or “not suitable for” do not need to be included on the label. This information should only be provided if a real risk of allergen cross contamination has been identified following a thorough risk assessment e.g. segregation and cleaning.

Precautionary allergen information from ingredient suppliers must be passed on to the consumer.

Further Allergen Awareness

- An established allergen process must be in place as this is a legal requirement. Consider when food is served throughout the day, this potentially saves lives.
- Make sure any person with an allergy has some form of identification. This keeps them safe and makes them feel they can trust what they are eating.
- Food businesses and their suppliers already have an obligation to ensure that accurate ingredient and allergen information is passed on to customers.
- Food businesses should also ensure that they have processes in place to update this information when ingredients change.
- Any food that is in a bag, pot with a lid, wrapped in clingfilm and has not been pre-ordered must be labelled.
- Make sure any substitutes are noted on your due diligence paperwork, and allergens are highlighted.
- Make sure your allergen records are kept up to date with your menus.
- If your website contains allergen information, this must be a live document that is continuously updated. This document should include a date of when changes have been made and to encourage parents to speak to the Catering Team.
- Keep your staff training up to date, there are allergen awareness courses and advanced allergen training courses available.
- Any staff dealing with food and serving food should have allergen awareness training.

Resources

- <https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/introduction-to-allergen-labelling-changes-ppds>
- [Prepacked for direct sale \(PPDS\) allergen labelling changes for schools, colleges and nurseries | Food Standards Agency](#)
- <https://laca.co.uk/laca-school-allergens-guidance-and-risk-analysis-process>

<https://natashas-law.com/resources/>