



Allergies and Allergic Reactions Policy

Statement of intent

At Cherish Childcare we recognise that children may have, or may develop, allergies or intolerances. Our aim is to minimise the risk of exposure to known allergens, respond promptly and safely to allergic reactions, and ensure staff understand the difference between an allergy, an intolerance and anaphylaxis. This policy should be read alongside the nursery's Medication Policy, Sickness and Illness Policy, Health and Safety Policy and food safety arrangements.

Information collected before a child starts

- Before a child is admitted, parents and carers are asked about any food allergies, intolerances, dietary requirements and relevant health needs.
- Parents and carers must tell the nursery about any new allergy, suspected allergy, intolerance, diagnosis, prescribed medication or change to medical advice as soon as it becomes known.
- Where a child has a known allergy, the nursery will work with the parent/carers and, where appropriate, a health professional to develop or obtain an individual allergy action plan.
- Allergy information and action plans will be kept up to date and shared with staff who need the information to keep the child safe.

Allergy action plans and risk assessment

For a child with a known allergy, the manager or SENCO/appropriate lead will complete an individual allergy risk assessment with the parent or carer before the child starts, or as soon as the allergy becomes known.

- The risk assessment will identify the allergen, known signs and symptoms, likely routes of exposure, required avoidance measures, emergency medication and emergency action.
- Where appropriate, the nursery will use or have regard to a recognised allergy action plan, such as the British Society for Allergy and Clinical Immunology (BSACI) allergy action plan.
- The plan will identify where emergency medication is stored and which staff are trained and authorised to administer it.

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
1 September 2026	Cherish Childcare	1 September 2027



- Plans and risk assessments will be reviewed when the child's needs change, following medical advice, after an allergic reaction or near miss, and at appropriate intervals.

Staff awareness and training

- All staff are made aware that children can develop allergies at any time, including during the introduction of solid foods.
- Staff receive information about common signs and symptoms of allergic reactions and anaphylaxis and the difference between allergy and intolerance.
- Staff know where children's individual allergy information and emergency medication are kept.
- Where a child requires specialist treatment such as an adrenaline auto-injector, relevant staff will receive child-specific training before the setting relies on them to administer the medication.
- Training will be refreshed when necessary, including when the child's medication, device, dose or action plan changes.

Sharing allergy information

Relevant allergy information is shared with staff involved in preparing, handling or serving food and with staff supervising meals and snacks.

- An up-to-date allergy register is kept in a location accessible to relevant staff while remaining appropriately confidential.
- Where appropriate and with due regard to confidentiality, a child's photograph and allergy information may be displayed in staff-only food preparation or serving areas to reduce the risk of error.
- At every meal and snack time, staff will be clear who is responsible for checking that the food provided is suitable for each child.

Food preparation and avoiding cross-contact

- Food for a child with a known allergy will be prepared and served in a way that reduces the risk of cross-contact with the allergen.
- Separate, clean utensils, equipment and preparation surfaces will be used where required by the child's risk assessment.
- Food labels and ingredient information will be checked where necessary before food is offered.
- Staff will not substitute an ingredient or product for a child with an allergy unless they are satisfied that the alternative is safe.

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- The manager, food-preparing staff and parents/carers will work together where menu adjustments or substitutions are needed.
- Children will be supervised closely during meals and snacks to reduce food sharing and accidental exposure.

Food information and allergens

Cherish Childcare will make allergen information available for food provided by the setting in accordance with applicable food information requirements. Menus and ingredient information will be kept sufficiently clear to enable staff and families to identify relevant allergens.

Recognising an allergic reaction

Possible signs of an allergic reaction may include rash or hives, itching, swelling, nausea, vomiting, stomach pain, diarrhoea, runny or watery eyes, wheezing, coughing, difficulty breathing, swelling of the mouth or tongue, dizziness, collapse or anaphylaxis.

Symptoms can develop quickly. Staff must follow the child's individual allergy action plan and emergency medication instructions where these exist.

Responding to an allergic reaction

Mild or moderate reaction

- Stay with the child and assess their symptoms.
- Follow the child's allergy action plan and administer authorised medication where required.
- Inform the manager or most senior member of staff on duty.
- Contact the parent/carer and keep the child under close observation.
- Record the reaction, medication given, time, symptoms and action taken.
- Escalate immediately if symptoms worsen or there are signs of anaphylaxis.

Suspected anaphylaxis or severe reaction

- Treat the situation as a medical emergency.
- Administer the child's prescribed adrenaline auto-injector immediately where indicated by their action plan and staff are trained to do so.
- Call 999 and state that anaphylaxis is suspected.
- Follow the emergency call handler's instructions.

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- Do not leave the child alone.
- Arrange for the parent/carer to be contacted immediately.
- If the child's plan provides for a second adrenaline dose and this is required, administer it in accordance with the plan and training.
- A suitable member of staff will accompany the child to hospital where necessary, taking relevant health information, medication records and emergency medication.
- Staffing will be reorganised so the remaining children continue to be safely supervised.

Staff will not transport a child experiencing a severe allergic reaction in a private vehicle instead of calling an ambulance.

After an allergic reaction or near miss

- Parents/carers will be informed of the reaction and the action taken.
- The incident will be recorded fully, including symptoms, suspected trigger, medication administered, staff involved and medical treatment received.
- The child's allergy risk assessment and action plan will be reviewed with the family and relevant professionals where appropriate.
- Management will review whether any change is needed to food preparation, supervision, staffing, training, storage or communication arrangements.
- Any near miss involving the wrong food or potential allergen exposure will also be reviewed so that learning can be acted upon before harm occurs.

Emergency medication

Emergency allergy medication, including prescribed adrenaline auto-injectors and antihistamines, will be stored in accordance with the child's individual plan and the nursery's Medication Policy. It must remain out of children's reach but be quickly and easily accessible to trained staff in an emergency.

Medication expiry dates will be checked regularly. Parents/carers are responsible for supplying replacement prescribed medication before it expires and for informing the nursery of any change to the prescription or device.

Ofsted and other notifications

Where an allergic reaction results in a serious illness, injury or other event that meets the Early Years Foundation Stage notification requirements, Cherish Childcare will notify Ofsted as soon as reasonably practicable and within the required statutory timescale. Other relevant authorities will be notified where required, and the setting will act on any advice received.

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Children introducing solid foods

For babies and young children who are being introduced to solid foods, staff will maintain ongoing discussion with parents/carers about foods already introduced, textures the child is familiar with and any known or suspected reactions. We will not assume that a food is safe for a child simply because of their age.

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