



## Allergies and Allergic Reactions Policy

Date policy was adopted: 01.09.2026

Date last reviewed:

Frequency of review: Annually or sooner after a serious incident

Allergy Lead: Miss Sophie Anderson

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### 1. Policy Statement

The Duckling Nursery is committed to safeguarding the health, safety, wellbeing and inclusion of all children in our care, including children with diagnosed or suspected allergies.

We recognise that allergic reactions can range from mild symptoms to severe and potentially life-threatening anaphylaxis.

Babies and young children may be unable to recognise an allergic reaction, communicate their symptoms, avoid their allergens independently or manage their own emergency medication. Responsibility for allergy safety therefore rests with the adults caring for the child.

The Nursery will work in partnership with parents/carers, healthcare professionals, and other relevant professionals to:

- identify known allergies and intolerances before a child attends;
- maintain accurate and current information about children's dietary and medical needs;
- assess and minimise the risk of exposure to known allergens;
- ensure staff understand children's individual allergies and symptoms;
- ensure appropriate individual Allergy Action Plans and healthcare arrangements are in place;
- ensure prescribed emergency medication is readily accessible;
- recognise and respond promptly to allergic reactions and anaphylaxis;
- manage food allergens and minimise cross-contact;
- support children with allergies to participate safely and inclusively in Nursery life;
- record, review and learn from allergic reactions and allergy-related near misses.

The Nursery will not describe itself as completely **"allergen-free"**, as the total absence of allergens cannot ordinarily be guaranteed. Instead, we will manage identified risks through appropriate individual and setting-wide controls and will adopt an **allergy aware** approach.

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### 2. Legal and Regulatory Framework

This policy has been developed with regard to the legislation and guidance applicable to private early years providers in England, including:

- the **Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) – Group and School-Based Providers**;
- Allergy in schools – July 2026;
- Department for Education guidance for early years providers on food allergies and intolerances;
- Department for Education Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition guidance;
- relevant food information and allergen legislation;
- Food Standards Agency guidance on food allergens;
- the **Equality Act 2010**, where applicable;
- the **UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)** and Data Protection Act 2018 in relation to children’s health information; and
- relevant guidance concerning supporting children with medical needs.

The Nursery also has regard, as appropriate, to the principles contained within the Department for Education’s allergy safety guidance and policy template when developing good practice for allergy safety.

This policy should be read alongside the Nursery’s:

- Medication Policy;
- Food and Nutrition Policy;
- Health and Safety Policy;
- Risk Assessment Policy;
- Outings Policy;
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy;
- Equality, Inclusion and SEND Policy; and
- Accident and Incident Policy.

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### 3. Designated Allergy Safety Lead

The Nursery will nominate a senior member of staff as the **Designated Allergy Safety Lead**. The Designated Allergy Safety Lead is: **Miss Sophie Anderson**

The Allergy Safety Lead will work with the Nursery Manager to oversee allergy safety within the setting.

Responsibilities include:

- supporting implementation of this policy;
- maintaining oversight of children with known allergies;
- ensuring relevant Allergy Action Plans and individual healthcare/care plans are available and current;
- ensuring appropriate allergy information is communicated to relevant practitioners;

- coordinating allergy awareness and emergency-response training;
- monitoring arrangements for prescribed emergency medication;
- ensuring medication expiry dates are checked;
- supporting individual allergy risk assessments;
- ensuring allergy risks are considered during activities and outings;
- reviewing allergic reactions and near misses; and
- contributing to the annual review of this policy.

The appointment of an Allergy Safety Lead does not remove the responsibility of other practitioners to understand and follow allergy-safety procedures.

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## 4. Identifying Allergies and Dietary Requirements

### Before Admission

Before a child attends the Nursery, parents/carers will be asked to provide information about their child's health and dietary requirements.

This will include, where relevant:

- diagnosed food allergies;
- suspected allergies currently under investigation;
- food intolerances;
- coeliac disease;
- non-food allergies;
- known allergens or triggers;
- previous allergic reactions;
- the child's usual signs and symptoms;
- previous anaphylaxis;
- asthma or other relevant medical conditions;
- prescribed medication;
- adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs), where prescribed;
- dietary restrictions; and
- relevant advice from healthcare professionals.

This information will be recorded before food or drink is provided to the child.

Parents/carers must provide accurate information and notify the Nursery promptly if their child's allergy, dietary requirements, medication or treatment changes.

The Nursery will maintain ongoing communication with parents/carers to ensure records remain current.

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## 5. Allergy Register

The Nursery will maintain an up-to-date record of children with known allergies and relevant dietary requirements.

The record will include appropriate information such as:

- child's name;
- photograph, where appropriate;
- allergy/allergen;
- known symptoms;
- dietary requirements;
- whether an Allergy Action Plan is in place;
- prescribed emergency medication;
- location of medication; and
- other essential emergency information.

Relevant information will be made readily available to practitioners who need it to keep the child safe while protecting the child's confidentiality.

Temporary, agency and cover staff must be made aware of relevant allergy information before taking responsibility for affected children.

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## 6. Individual Allergy Action Plans and Healthcare Plans

Where a child has a diagnosed allergy, particularly where there is a risk of anaphylaxis or emergency medication has been prescribed, the Nursery will work with parents/carers and relevant healthcare professionals to ensure appropriate individual arrangements are documented.

Where a healthcare professional has issued an **Allergy Action Plan**, the Nursery will obtain a current copy.

An individual plan should include, as appropriate:

- the child's allergens and known triggers;
- how exposure should be avoided;
- usual signs and symptoms;
- previous reaction history;
- prescribed medication;
- where medication is stored;
- when medication should be administered;
- how medication should be administered;
- emergency procedures;

- when 999 must be called;
- arrangements for food and drink;
- arrangements for activities;
- arrangements for outings;
- reasonable adjustments required; and
- emergency contact information.

The Nursery will not independently alter medical instructions contained within a healthcare professional's Allergy Action Plan.

Parents/carers must provide an updated plan when their child's medical advice changes.

The child's Nursery arrangements will be reviewed when an updated Allergy Action Plan is received.

## 7. Allergy Awareness and Staff Training

Staff responsible for children will receive appropriate allergy awareness and emergency-response training.

Training will be refreshed **at least annually**, with additional training provided where necessary.

Training will cover, as appropriate:

- what allergies are;
- how allergic reactions can occur;
- common food and non-food allergens;
- the difference between food allergy, food intolerance and coeliac disease;
- recognising signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction;
- recognising anaphylaxis;
- understanding that reactions can be unpredictable;
- children's individual allergens;
- locating children's Allergy Action Plans;
- locating emergency medication;
- reducing the risk of allergen exposure;
- preventing food cross-contact;
- responding to an allergic reaction;
- calling emergency services;
- administering prescribed emergency medication where staff are appropriately trained;
- using the relevant type of adrenaline auto-injector where applicable;
- recording and reporting incidents and near misses; and
- understanding the potential emotional and wellbeing impact of allergies.

Allergy procedures will form part of the induction process for relevant new employees.

Temporary, bank, agency and cover staff must receive sufficient information to keep children with allergies safe before taking responsibility for them.

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## 8. Minimising the Risk of Allergen Exposure

The Nursery will take reasonable and proportionate measures to minimise children's exposure to their known allergens.

Allergy risk management extends beyond food and mealtimes.

Staff will consider possible allergens arising from:

- meals and snacks;
- drinks;
- food brought from home;
- baking and cooking;
- sensory and messy play;
- arts and crafts;
- play materials;
- plants and gardening;
- animals;
- creams and personal-care products;
- cleaning products;
- airborne allergens;
- contact allergens;
- celebrations and special events; and
- outings and external activities.

Where a child has a significant known allergy, an individual risk assessment will be completed where appropriate.

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## 9. Food Allergy Management

The Nursery will take all reasonable steps to ensure that food provided to a child is suitable for their recorded dietary requirements.

The Nursery will maintain accurate information about allergens contained in food provided.

Staff involved in preparing or serving food must have access to children's current dietary and allergy information.

Food labels and ingredient information will be checked because manufacturers may change ingredients and recipes.

Product substitutions must also be checked before being served.

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## 10. Preventing Allergen Cross-Contact

Appropriate precautions will be taken to minimise unintended allergen cross-contact.

Depending on the risk, measures may include:

- effective handwashing before food preparation and eating;
- cleaning preparation surfaces;
- appropriately cleaning equipment and utensils;
- separating allergen-containing ingredients where appropriate;
- using appropriate utensils and equipment;
- clearly identifying children's individual meals;
- preventing food from being transferred between plates;
- checking labels before preparation;
- checking ingredients following substitutions;
- appropriate food storage;
- ensuring staff understand individual dietary requirements; and
- supervising children to prevent food sharing.

Removing one particular allergen from the whole Nursery will not automatically be regarded as the appropriate response to every allergy.

Any setting-wide restriction will be based on the individual risks present and reviewed when circumstances change.

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## 11. Food Brought From Home

Parents/carers must follow Nursery arrangements regarding food brought onto the premises.

Where food from home is permitted:

- it must be clearly identified for the intended child;
- parents/carers must provide accurate information about the food where requested;
- Nursery staff will consider the allergy needs of other children who may reasonably come into contact with it; and appropriate storage and handling arrangements must be followed.
- No nuts or eggs to be provided in lunch boxes

Parents/carers must speak to Nursery management before bringing food intended to be shared with other children, including birthday cakes, sweets, treats or celebration food.

The Nursery may refuse food where its ingredients or allergen status cannot be adequately established or where it would create an unacceptable risk to a child.

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## 12. Mealtimes and Snack Times

A designated member of staff will be responsible at each meal or snack time for ensuring that the food being served to each child meets their recorded dietary requirements.

Staff must check the child's requirements before food is served.

Children will be appropriately supervised while eating.

Practitioners will:

- Ensure children and staff wash their hands before and after eating at snack and meal times.
- Ensure the correct food is given to the correct child;
- prevent inappropriate food sharing;
- discourage swapping cups, bottles and utensils;
- observe children for signs of unexpected allergic reactions; and
- know how to summon assistance immediately.
- Children eating in the school hall will have their medication with them – staff will be responsible for this.
- A radio will be taken to the school hall to contact the nursery in the event of an emergency.

Babies and young children will never be left alone while eating.

Children with allergies will be included alongside their peers wherever this can be achieved safely.

A child should not routinely be isolated from their peers as a substitute for appropriate allergy controls.

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## 13. Prescribed Allergy Medication

Medication will be managed in accordance with the Nursery's Medication Policy and the child's individual medical arrangements.

Prescribed allergy medication must:

- be clearly identified for the individual child;
- be supplied in accordance with Nursery medication procedures;
- be within its expiry date;



- be stored in accordance with relevant instructions; and
- remain readily accessible to authorised staff when needed.

Emergency allergy medication must not be stored in a way that would cause an avoidable delay during an emergency.

The Nursery will maintain appropriate records of medication supplied and administered.

Parents/carers are responsible for supplying the child's prescribed medication and notifying the Nursery of any changes.

The Nursery will operate a system for checking medication expiry dates and notifying parents/carers when replacement medication is required.

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## 14. Adrenaline Auto-Injectors

Where a child has been prescribed an adrenaline auto-injector (AAI), the Nursery will follow the child's individual Allergy Action Plan and relevant medical instructions.

Where two AAIs have been prescribed, both should be available.

The child's prescribed AAIs must be readily accessible to trained practitioners.

They must accompany the child where required when:

- using different parts of the setting;
- playing outdoors;
- attending activities away from the usual room; or
- participating in Nursery outings.

Staff responsible for a child prescribed an AAI must know:

- where it is kept;
- how to access it immediately;
- the child's known symptoms;
- the child's emergency procedure; and
- how to summon emergency assistance.

The Nursery will not delay emergency treatment while attempting to contact a parent/carer.

## Spare AA1s

- The Duckling Nursery does **not hold a spare adrenaline auto-injector (AAI)** for general emergency use.

- The nursery is a privately operated early years setting and is not currently within the arrangements that permit private nurseries to purchase spare AAIs without an individual prescription.
  - Children who have been prescribed an adrenaline auto-injector must have their prescribed medication available at nursery at all times, together with their individual allergy action plan/healthcare plan. Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring that prescribed medication is in date and supplied to the nursery.
  - If a child is suspected of experiencing anaphylaxis, staff will act immediately in accordance with the child's individual allergy action plan and administer their prescribed AAI where available, and **999 will be called without delay**.
  - A prescribed AAI belonging to another child will **not be used as an alternative** for a different child.
  - If a child who has no prescribed AAI develops suspected anaphylaxis, staff will call **999 immediately**, clearly state that anaphylaxis is suspected, and follow the instructions provided by the emergency services while providing appropriate first aid.
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## 15. Recognising an Allergic Reaction

Symptoms of an allergic reaction can vary and may develop rapidly.

Possible symptoms include:

- itching;
- rash, redness or hives;
- swelling of the lips, face or eyes;
- vomiting;
- abdominal symptoms;
- sudden changes in behaviour;
- coughing;
- wheezing;
- difficulty breathing;
- swelling affecting the tongue, mouth or throat;
- difficulty swallowing;
- becoming pale, floppy or unusually sleepy;
- dizziness;
- collapse; or
- loss of consciousness.

Staff must follow the child's Allergy Action Plan and their training rather than waiting to see whether serious symptoms improve without treatment.

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## 16. Anaphylaxis – Emergency Procedure

**Anaphylaxis is a medical emergency.**

Where anaphylaxis is suspected, staff will:

1. **Stay with the child and summon immediate assistance.**
2. **Follow the child's Allergy Action Plan.**
3. **Administer the child's prescribed adrenaline without avoidable delay where indicated by the child's plan and staff training.**
4. **Call 999 and state that anaphylaxis is suspected.**
5. **Follow the instructions of the emergency call handler.**
6. **Use a further prescribed adrenaline auto-injector where required in accordance with the child's Allergy Action Plan, emergency instructions and staff training.**
7. **Contact the child's parent/carer as soon as practicable.**
8. **Continue to supervise and monitor the child until emergency medical assistance arrives.**
9. **Ensure the child's medication and relevant medical information accompany them if transferred for medical treatment.**

The child must not be left alone.

**Calling a parent/carer must never delay calling 999 or administering emergency treatment.**

Following an emergency allergic reaction, the incident will be recorded and reviewed.

**Allergy Drills will be implemented termly.**

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## 17. Activities, Cooking and Messy Play

Allergy risks must be considered when planning activities, not only when preparing meals.

This includes:

- baking;
- cooking;
- food tasting;
- messy play;
- sensory activities;
- arts and crafts;
- gardening;
- activities involving animals; and
- externally provided activities.

Staff planning activities will check whether ingredients or materials contain or may expose a child to their known allergens.

Reasonable alternatives or adjustments will be provided where necessary to allow children with allergies to participate safely.

Food used for play will be subject to the same consideration of children's allergies as food intended for eating.

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## 18. Outings and Visits

Having an allergy should not unnecessarily prevent a child from participating in Nursery outings.

The Nursery will assess allergy risks when planning an outing.

For children at risk of anaphylaxis, arrangements will include consideration of:

- possible allergen exposure;
- food and drink;
- the child's Allergy Action Plan;
- prescribed emergency medication;
- accessibility of emergency assistance;
- staffing;
- supervision;
- transport arrangements; and
- whether accompanying practitioners have appropriate knowledge and training.

The child's required emergency medication must accompany them and remain readily accessible.

A child requiring emergency allergy medication will not leave the setting on an outing without the required medication being available.

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## 19. Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion

The Nursery recognises that living with an allergy can affect a child's emotional wellbeing and their family's confidence and anxiety.

Children with allergies will be treated sensitively, respectfully and inclusively.

Practitioners will ensure children are not:

- unnecessarily excluded from activities;
- routinely isolated at mealtimes;

- singled out inappropriately;
- teased or bullied because of their allergy; or
- made to feel that their allergy is an inconvenience.

Where appropriate to their age and development, children will be supported to begin understanding their own needs.

For example, an older nursery child may be encouraged to ask a practitioner before accepting unfamiliar food.

However, **responsibility for managing allergy safety will not be placed upon a young child.**

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## 20. Information Sharing and Confidentiality

Information about a child's allergies and medical needs constitutes sensitive health information.

Information will be managed in accordance with the Nursery's Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy and applicable data-protection legislation.

Information will be shared on an appropriate need-to-know basis with people responsible for keeping the child safe.

This may include:

- the child's key person;
- room practitioners;
- Nursery management;
- kitchen/catering staff;
- temporary or agency staff responsible for the child;
- staff accompanying outings; and
- emergency healthcare professionals.

Where photographs or allergy information are displayed internally to help staff correctly identify children, this information will be positioned and managed appropriately to protect children's privacy.

Information will not be shared more widely than is reasonably necessary.

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## 21. Responsibilities of Parents and Carers

Parents/carers have an important role in helping the Nursery manage their child's allergy safely.

Parents/carers must:

- provide accurate information before their child starts;
- disclose known allergies and intolerances;
- provide relevant medical information;
- provide an up-to-date Allergy Action Plan where applicable;
- provide prescribed medication in accordance with Nursery procedures;
- ensure medication is replaced before it expires;
- inform the Nursery immediately of changes to their child's condition or treatment;
- inform the Nursery of new reactions;
- discuss dietary changes with the Nursery; and
- comply with arrangements concerning food brought into the setting.

The Nursery will maintain ongoing communication with parents/carers regarding their child's allergy arrangements.

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## 22. Responsibilities of Staff

All practitioners are responsible for following this policy.

Staff must:

- know which children in their care have allergies;
- know where relevant allergy information is located;
- understand children's individual Allergy Action Plans where applicable;
- follow dietary information accurately;
- follow allergen risk-management procedures;
- supervise meals and snacks appropriately;
- know where emergency medication is located;
- recognise possible allergic reactions;
- respond immediately in accordance with the child's plan and their training;
- report incidents and near misses; and
- raise concerns with the Nursery Manager or Allergy Safety Lead.

Staff must never knowingly give a child food that conflicts with their recorded allergy or dietary requirements.

If there is uncertainty about whether food is suitable, it **must not be given until its suitability has been established.**

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## 23. Serious Incidents and Near Misses

The Nursery will record and review significant allergic reactions and allergy-related near misses.

A near miss may include, for example:

- an incorrect meal being prepared but identified before being eaten;
- emergency medication being found inaccessible;
- expired emergency medication being identified;
- incorrect allergy information being communicated;
- an allergen being introduced into an activity without the child's allergy being considered; or
- any other event where allergen exposure or inappropriate treatment could reasonably have occurred.

Following an incident or significant near miss, the Nursery Manager and/or Allergy Safety Lead will review:

- what happened;
- how it happened;
- whether established procedures were followed;
- whether information was accurate and accessible;
- whether communication was effective;
- whether staffing or supervision contributed;
- whether food-preparation procedures require amendment;
- whether the risk assessment remains adequate;
- whether further training is necessary; and
- what action should be taken to prevent recurrence.

Parents/carers will be informed as appropriate.

Where an incident meets applicable notification requirements, the Nursery will notify **Ofsted and/or other relevant authorities** within the required timescale.

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## 24. Visitors, Students, Agency Staff and Contractors

Visitors, students, volunteers, agency workers and contractors will receive allergy-safety information appropriate to their role and level of contact with children.

Agency, temporary and cover practitioners responsible for children must be made aware of relevant individual allergies before assuming responsibility.

Persons with no child-facing responsibilities will not routinely require access to children's confidential medical information but must follow relevant Nursery safety instructions.

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## 25. Celebrations and Special Events

Birthdays, cultural celebrations, festivals and special events will be planned with children's allergies and dietary requirements in mind.

Parents/carers must not bring food intended for sharing without prior agreement from Nursery management.

Staff will check the suitability of food before it is offered to children with recorded dietary requirements.

Where necessary, an appropriate alternative will be provided so that children with allergies can participate safely and inclusively.

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## 26. Policy Awareness

This policy will be:

- available to all Nursery staff;
- included within relevant staff induction;
- reinforced through allergy awareness training;
- available to parents/carers; and
- communicated to relevant catering providers, students, volunteers and agency workers as appropriate.

Parents/carers will be encouraged to discuss concerns about their child's allergy arrangements with the Nursery Manager or Allergy Safety Lead.

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## 27. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be formally reviewed **at least annually**.

It will be reviewed sooner where appropriate following:

- an allergic reaction;
- anaphylaxis;
- a significant allergy-related near miss;
- identification of a weakness in Nursery procedures;
- changes to relevant legislation or statutory guidance;
- changes to EYFS requirements; or
- significant changes to Nursery operations.



Reviews will consider incidents and near misses and identify lessons that can improve children's safety.

Changes will be communicated to staff and incorporated into training and procedures where necessary.

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## 28. Related Nursery Documents

This policy should be implemented alongside:

- Individual Allergy Action Plans;
  - Individual Healthcare/Care Plans where applicable;
  - Allergy/Dietary Requirements Register;
  - Medication Administration Records;
  - Medication Expiry Check Record;
  - Individual Allergy Risk Assessments;
  - Outing Risk Assessments;
  - Accident/Incident Records; and
  - Allergy Near-Miss Records.
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