

Allergies & Dietary needs

Milkshake Montessori Nursery is acutely aware of the risk to children in their care who suffer from allergic reactions. Life-threatening reactions can be triggered by a variety of foods, including cheese, eggs, peanuts, kiwi fruits and strawberries, as well as bee stings. As well as the devastating personal effect, such an incident can lead to criminal prosecution (resulting in fines and/or imprisonment), a civil compensation claim, employment issues and the inevitable damage to reputation and decline in business.

The duty on Milkshake Montessori to look after the children in our care is enshrined in the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, which provides that we have a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety of anyone who might be affected by the way in which it carries out its business.

Food allergies are estimated to affect 1 or 2% of the adult population and are more prevalent in infants and children. The most common allergenic foods are eggs, milk, fish, shellfish, peanuts, soya, wheat, tree nuts and seeds. Allergies to certain foods can be particularly acute. If a child suffers from a severe food allergy, we need to know the exact ingredients in their food, because even a tiny amount of the allergenic food could kill them.

In the case of food allergies, Milkshake Montessori controls are to include:

- obtaining full dietary information on admission, recording this in an easily accessible format and reviewing and updating it at regular intervals
- making all nursery staff from lunch cover staff to key workers aware of any dietary issues and regularly reminding them e.g. by using photographic labels and notices in the kitchen and serving areas etc
- making all nursery staff aware of the signs and symptoms of allergic reactions and how to deal with them
- communicating regularly with the parents of a child with a known allergy
- requesting other parents not to allow their child to bring certain foods into the nursery. This might be extended to informing other parents of the specific nature of allergies suffered by other children in the nursery, whilst ensuring confidentiality
- taking steps to ensure food preparation areas are kept separate
- taking steps to ensure that any change in food supplier is known and assurances about their products obtained and/or asking parents to provide food or a list of suitable branded food - new supplies to the nursery will be checked for ingredients and recorded by the chef.

- staff training, including an annual update. Training may include a simulated allergy reaction. Attendance at any training will be recorded
- ensuring (where appropriate) that hand washing facilities are equipped with disposable hand towels to minimise cross contamination of allergens – (see also sickness, illness policy)
- If severe allergens are included in a menu, we will try to change the menu so the affected child is not in on a particular day the food is being served.
- If the food must be used food containing allergens will be clearly labelled
 - Be aware of accidentally transferring food from one dish to another via cooking equipment or cooking media
 - Where food is prepared on the premises, complete recipes will be checked for allergens, and lists of ingredients provided for parents available upon request.

Controls are, however, useless unless they are implemented. Checking that controls are being followed can be done by way of monitoring, which should be recorded in writing. If there are any incidents or 'near misses', the controls (and the policy documents recording these) need to be amended to reflect lessons learnt and any amendments passed on to the nursery staff. In the illness, sickness, allergy book located on the desk in the office (next to phone)

Milkshake Montessori will ensure staff know the importance of knowing about the allergies of any children in the setting, and of complying with all of the setting's processes and procedures

Information passed on through parents from the registration form regarding allergic reactions and allergies must be shared with all staff in the nursery. It is extremely important to inform the school, nursery, of your child of not only the allergy, the expected reaction and most importantly how to treat the symptoms.

The teachers are there to help you and safeguard your child so it is very important to ensure they are as informed of the allergy, the symptoms and the treatment as you, the parent

Parents must provide the treatment to the allergy eg. an epi pen must given to staff to keep in class and training from the parent or carer or local health must be given.

- the nursery manager will carry out a full Allergy Risk Assessment Procedure with the parent prior to the child starting the nursery. The information must then be shared with all staff

Staff will be aware of any allergies prior to starting.

- if a child has an allergic reaction to food, a bee sting, plant etc, a First Aid trained member of staff will administer the appropriate treatment and parents must be informed
- a sick child needs above all its parent/guardian; therefore every effort should be made to contact him/her as soon as possible

- if the allergic reaction is severe a member of staff will summon an ambulance immediately.
- whilst waiting for the ambulance, contact the parent/guardian and arrange to meet them at the hospital
- a senior member of staff must accompany the child and collect together registration forms, relevant medication sheets, medication and child's comforter
- staff must remain calm at all times; children who witness an allergic reaction/accident may well be affected by it and may need lots of cuddles and reassurance.

If your child wears an identification bracelet that displays the allergy always make sure the school know what this is for and re-iterate to them the importance of the child leaving it on and it not being removed and confiscated

If your child is taking any medication for allergy relief, please pass this information to the school along with a copy of the patient information leaflet as this can be extremely beneficial for staff that are unfamiliar with the drug.

It is our policy that within our Nursery nuts are not used as an ingredient in either kitchen prepared dishes or bought in products.

Although we endeavour to ensure that we supply products which do not contain nuts, we cannot guarantee that all our products are 100% free from nuts. This is due to suppliers increasingly stating that although products are nut free they cannot guarantee this due to nuts being used else where in a factory or beforehand on the production line before a particular product is produced which we may use in the Nursery.

It is the responsibility of the child's parent/carer to keep Milkshake Montessori updated with any changes in dietary or allergy requirements of their child. This is done by a written letter to the Manager informing her of any changes.