

Marble Hill Playcentres Allergies Policy and Procedures 2020

The Purpose of this Policy

The purpose of this policy is to set out our policy and procedures to prevent, manage and respond to allergies that the children at MHPC may have.

- The number of allergies in the UK has risen and it is estimated that about 7% of children have food allergies (BBC 2019).
- For children with a known food allergy, the key to preventing a potentially serious reaction is avoiding exposure to the relevant allergen (the food that causes the allergy). The greatest risk for such a child is from accidental exposure.
- At MHPC we recognise that children who visit our play facilities may have a wide range of allergies.

It is important to reduce the risk of allergen exposure as much as practicable. We will ensure our environment is as free as possible from known allergens, but do not have the capacity to police every lunchbox or eliminate every known allergen from our play environment.

PARENTS ROLE

- It will be made clear to parents and staff that although allergen avoidance policies are designed to reduce the risk of exposure, it is never possible to achieve a completely allergen-free environment in any service that is open to the general community.
- MHPC requests information about allergies from parents/guardians upon enrolment, which are stored on our database, and we expect parents to update us if anything changes with a child's allergy.
- Staff will make contact with parents/guardians of children with severe allergies to discuss risk minimisation strategies and if prescribed, parents should provide clearly named adrenaline autoinjector devices or other medication.

FOOD BROUGHT ON SITE

- Sharing food, containers, and utensils should be actively discouraged. This is especially important if food and utensils (e.g. lunchboxes and drink bottles) are brought from home.
- For some children it may be necessary to have food and drinks checked by parents.
- For severely allergic children, parents should provide food prepared at home.
- We will encourage Bottles, lunch boxes, other utensils and other drinks provided by parents to be clearly labelled with the name of the child for whom they are intended.

FOOD PREPARATION

- Staff will check the names of children on the booking system prior to commencing a cooking activity to check for allergies and intolerances.
- Nuts will never be used as an ingredient for cooking (including products that contain nuts such as Nutella).
- Eating areas and utensils will be thoroughly cleaned with warm soapy water and worktops wiped down before and after food preparation.
- Children and staff will be encouraged to wash their hands before and after eating.
- Staff who are involved in food preparation will be instructed by a staff member trained in food hygiene about the necessary measures to prevent cross-contamination during handling, preparation and serving of food.

FOOD IN CRAFTS

- The use of food in crafts and special activities may need to be restricted depending on the allergies of particular children.
- Materials such as cow's milk cartons, egg cartons and cereal and other food boxes will be clean and free from contamination before using for art and craft activities.
- Containers that have held nuts will not be used for arts and crafts.

STAFF TRAINING

- Staff should be made aware of the risk to an identified child of using allergenic foods in cooking activities (e.g. baking cakes, frying eggs).
- Staff induction training will include how to recognise and respond to a mild, moderate or severe allergic reaction
- First Aid training courses undertaken will cover the use of adrenaline autoinjector devices

Age-appropriate education of children with severe allergies and their peers is important. It is primarily the responsibility of parents/guardians to teach allergic children to care for themselves.

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| The policy was written by Julie Harness (Trustee) Claire Chapman (Manager) | Date 7.1.2020 |
| Accepted by Committee 14th January 2020 | Due for renewal January 2021 |