

Allergies and Allergic Reactions Policy

Ringle Rainbow Nursery

Updated in line with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) effective 1 September 2026, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, and with regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 as supplementary safeguarding guidance.

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By: P Reidy

1. Introduction

At Ringle Rainbow Nursery, we are committed to safeguarding the health and wellbeing of all children. We recognise that allergies and intolerances can cause reactions ranging from mild symptoms to life-threatening anaphylaxis. We aim to prevent exposure wherever reasonably possible, ensure children's individual dietary and medical needs are known before attendance, respond promptly and safely to any reaction, and work in partnership with parents, carers, health professionals and our catering provider.

2. Staff Awareness and Training

All staff receive allergy awareness appropriate to their role and are made aware of each child's individual allergies, symptoms, triggers and emergency arrangements. Staff are trained to recognise signs of an allergic reaction, which may include rash or hives, swelling, vomiting, abdominal pain, breathing difficulty, wheeze, persistent cough, dizziness, collapse or anaphylaxis. Where a child has been prescribed emergency medication such as an adrenaline auto-injector (AAI), staff who may need to respond will be instructed and trained in its use in accordance with the child's individual healthcare/allergy action plan. Training and competency are recorded and refreshed as required. A current paediatric first aider is available in accordance with EYFS requirements.

3. Allergy Risk Assessments and Information Sharing

Before a child attends, parents/carers must provide accurate information about any known allergy, intolerance, special dietary requirement, prescribed medication and the action required in an emergency. If an allergy is identified or changes after admission, parents must inform the nursery immediately. An individual Allergy Risk Assessment and, where appropriate, an Allergy/Healthcare Action Plan will be completed with the parent/carer and informed by medical advice where available. Information is shared securely with staff who need to know and recorded on BabysDays and relevant care records. Plans are reviewed at least termly, and immediately following a reaction, change in diagnosis, medication or medical advice.

4. Food Preparation and Prevention of Cross-Contamination

The nursery will take reasonable steps to prevent allergen exposure and cross-contact. Food preparation, serving and cleaning procedures will take account of each child's individual requirements. Children with allergies are closely supervised during meals and snacks. At every mealtime and snack time, a designated member of staff is responsible for checking that the food provided to each child meets their recorded dietary requirements and is prepared and served safely. Staff must not rely on memory alone and must check current allergy information before food is served. Food must also be prepared and served in accordance with current EYFS safer eating and choking-prevention requirements.

Ringle Rainbow Nursery uses Zebedees as our external catering provider. Relevant allergy and dietary information is securely shared with Zebedees so that appropriate meals can be provided. The nursery remains responsible for checking that the meal or food supplied for each child matches the child's recorded requirements before it is served. Any uncertainty about ingredients or allergen status must be resolved before the food is given to the child.

5. Emergency Response to Allergic Reactions

If a child experiences an allergic reaction, staff will follow the child's individual Allergy/Healthcare Action Plan and their training. Prescribed emergency medication will be administered without delay when indicated. For suspected anaphylaxis, staff will call 999 immediately, administer the child's prescribed adrenaline auto-injector where indicated, and follow emergency service instructions. Parents/carers will be contacted without delay. Emergency medication must be stored safely, clearly identified and readily accessible to authorised staff while remaining inaccessible to children. The incident, treatment and medication administered will be recorded and reviewed. The DSL will be informed where there are safeguarding implications, including concerns about repeated unexplained exposure or unmet medical needs.

6. Transporting Children to Hospital

- Call 999 immediately where an allergic reaction is severe or anaphylaxis is suspected. DO NOT attempt to transport the child in a staff member's own vehicle.
- Follow the child's emergency action plan and administer prescribed emergency medication where indicated.
- Whilst waiting for the ambulance, contact the parent(s)/carer(s) and arrange for them to meet the child at the hospital where appropriate.
- Arrange for the most appropriate member of staff to accompany the child, taking relevant information, medication records, prescribed emergency medication and the child's comforter where practicable.
- Redeploy staff as necessary while continuing to meet statutory supervision and ratio requirements for the remaining children.
- Inform a member of the management team immediately.
- Record the incident and any medication administered as soon as practicable.
- Reassure children who witnessed the incident and provide appropriate support to staff following the emergency.

7. Food Information and Allergy Labelling

In line with the Food Information Regulations 2014 (as amended) and current Food Standards Agency requirements, the nursery ensures that information about the 14 regulated allergens is available for food provided. Allergen information on menus and supplied foods is checked and kept current, including where recipes or ingredients change. Staff involved in handling or serving food receive appropriate food hygiene and allergy awareness information. Parents are informed of relevant menu information and must notify the nursery of any change to their child's dietary or allergy needs.

8. Safeguarding and Multi-Agency Collaboration

Children with allergies or other medical needs must receive safe, inclusive care and must not be disadvantaged because of their needs. Allergy-related absences, repeated reactions, unexplained exposure or concerns that a child's medical needs are not being met will be considered in the context of the child's wider welfare and escalated to the DSL where appropriate. Information will be shared with health professionals, children's social care or other relevant agencies where necessary to safeguard or promote the child's welfare, in accordance with the EYFS and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026. Safeguarding information will not be withheld solely because consent has not been obtained where there is a lawful basis to share it.

9. Data Protection and Cybersecurity

All allergy, dietary and medical information is stored securely on BabysDays and/or the child's care, registration and medication records and is accessible only to authorised staff who need the information to keep the child safe. Information is processed in accordance with UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the nursery Privacy Notice. Relevant information may be shared with the catering provider, emergency services, health professionals or safeguarding agencies where there is an appropriate lawful basis. KCSIE 2026 is also considered by the nursery as supplementary safeguarding good-practice guidance, including in relation to secure information handling and safeguarding culture.