



Food Policy

This policy promotes healthy eating and enables children to make informed food choices. The appendix details the Allergy Guidance.

Reviewed: January 2026

Next Review date: January 2027

Food Policy

Introduction

The academy is dedicated to providing an environment that promotes healthy eating and enables pupils to make informed food choices. This will be achieved by the whole academy approach to food provision and food education documented in this policy.

The policy has been adapted by consultation between members of staff, governors, parents, children and support services. This academy food policy is co-ordinated by Sarah Ashford, Deputy Head.

Aims

The main aims of our academy food policy are:

1. To provide a range of healthy food choices throughout the day and in line with the mandatory School Food Standards
2. To support pupils to make healthy food choices and be better prepared to learn and achieve
3. To ensure a consistent approach to healthy eating across the academy community including pupils, staff and parents/carers

Food throughout the school day

1. Breakfast

Breakfast is an important meal that should provide 25% of a child's energy requirement and supports pupils to be ready to learn at the start of each day.

The Academy runs a daily breakfast club for pupils from 7.30am – 8.50am.

The breakfast menu includes whole grain cereal, fruit, yoghurt. Water and milk are always available.

2. School Lunches

Academy meals are provided by the Kitchen and are served between 12 noon and 1pm in the hall. The school meals meet the mandatory requirements of the School Food Standards 2015 (See appendix).

All meals are planned on a 3-week cycle and always contain a meat/ fish and vegetarian option. The menus can be found on our Academy website. Meals are prepared, packaged and advertised in line with Natasha's Law.

3. Packed Lunches

The Academy's packed lunch policy is developed using guidance from the Children's Food Trust. The guidance aims to support pupils to have a balanced lunch and best prepare them for learning in the afternoon.

Packed lunches should include:

- Some starchy foods such as bread (sliced bread, pitta bread, wraps, bagels), pasta, potatoes, couscous; choose wholegrain where possible
- 1 portion of fruit and 1 portion of vegetables or salad
- Dairy food such as cheese or yoghurt
- Meat, fish, or another source of protein such as eggs, beans and pulses, hummus, falafel
- Oily fish once every 3 weeks e.g. sardines or salmon
- **The weight of portions is also important, and is the same as for hot meals.**

Packed lunches should keep the following to a minimum (only 1 of each):

- *Crisps or crisp type snacks e.g. flavoured rice cakes or cheddars*
 - *Any items containing chocolate including bars, biscuits, cakes or yoghurts/desserts*
- Packed lunches should not include:*
- *Sweets or confectionary*

Polite reminders will be sent home via your child's teacher/ key worker to support these healthy choice guidelines.

The Academy provides water for all pupils at lunchtime; therefore, there is no need for packed lunches to include a drink.

4. Healthy Snacks

The Academy understands that healthy snacks can be an important part of the diet of young people.

- In the Nursery, Early Years and KS1, snacks are provided during the morning and include fruit and vegetables.
- We encourage other children to bring in a healthy snack for morning break. The snack can consist of
 - fresh fruit, whole or sliced
 - fresh vegetable snacks
 - plain breadsticks
 - plain unsalted rice/ corn cakes
 - plain unsalted crackers
 - no added sugar packaged snack

We **do not** allow crisps, biscuits or chocolate bars at snack time.

5. Drinks

The Academy is a **water only** school, with the exception of the free milk entitlement for all primary free school meal pupils and nursery children. Water is provided on the tables at lunchtimes and children must bring their own water bottles into class. Fizzy drinks are **not** allowed.

6. School trips

A packed lunch will be provided by the Academy, for all children who usually have a school meal. Children are welcome to bring their own packed lunches on trips; however, these lunches must adhere to the same food and drink guidance described above.

7. Rewards and Special Occasions

Rewards

The Academy does not allow food to be used as a reward for good behaviour or achievement. Other methods of positive reinforcement are used in school.

Special Occasions

Occasional external fund-raising events may include the sale of treat food such as cakes or ice creams. Curriculum themed activities may introduce children to food from other cultures as part of a classroom lesson, any dietary requirements will always be adhered to.

8. Curricular and extra-curricular activity

Food and nutrition is taught at an appropriate level throughout each key stage in science, PSHE and Design Technology (cooking and nutrition).

Termly clubs also support the teaching of food and healthy eating and include an after school cookery club.

Staff delivering cooking sessions and clubs have achieved Level 1/2 in Food Safety and Hygiene.

9. Special dietary requirements

The Academy does everything possible to accommodate pupils' specialist dietary requirements including allergies, intolerances, religious or cultural practices.

Louise Baker, Catering Manager holds the file with the list of food allergies and a copy of this is also held in the medical room and shared with relevant staff members.

Pupil's food allergies are displayed in a sensitive way in relevant places around the school including in class when appropriate.

10. Expectations of staff and visitors

The academy expects staff to contribute to and support this food policy across the school day. Staff and visitors will be expected to model good practice behaviour around food and drink and in line with the policy, when in the company of pupils.

11. Parents, carers and family members

Our relationships with parents/carers is very important and we aim to support them with information and advice around food, so that they are best prepared to make healthy choices for their families.

12. Monitoring and review

We have consulted staff, parents and children in relation to healthy foods and have taken notice of their views in this policy.

The policy will be reviewed every 2 years.

Appendix : Allergy Guidance

1. Introduction

An allergy is a reaction of the body's immune system to substances that are usually harmless. The reaction can cause minor symptoms such as itching, sneezing or rashes but sometimes causes a much more serious reaction called anaphylaxis.

Anaphylaxis is a serious, life-threatening allergic reaction. It is at the extreme end of the allergic spectrum. The whole body is affected often within minutes of exposure to the allergen, but sometimes it can be hours later. Causes can include foods, insect stings, and drugs. Most healthcare professionals consider an allergic reaction to be anaphylaxis when it involves difficulty breathing or affects the heart rhythm or blood pressure.

Anaphylaxis symptoms are often referred to as the ABC symptoms (Airway, Breathing, Circulation). It is possible to be allergic to anything which contains a protein, however most people will react to a fairly small group of potent allergens.

Common UK Allergens include (but are not limited to):- Peanuts, Tree Nuts, Sesame, Milk, Egg, Fish, Latex, Insect venom, Pollen and Animal Dander.

This policy sets out how Brookside Academy will support pupils with allergies, to ensure they are safe and are not disadvantaged in any way whilst taking part in school life.

2. Role and responsibilities

Parent Responsibilities

- On entry to the Academy, it is the parent's responsibility to inform reception staff of any allergies. This is also relevant if a child develops a reaction whilst at the Academy. This information should include all previous serious allergic reactions, history of anaphylaxis and details of all prescribed medication.
- Parents are to supply a copy of their child's Allergy Action Plan (BSACI plans preferred) to the Academy. If they do not currently have an Allergy Action Plan this should be developed as soon as possible in collaboration with a healthcare professional e.g. School nurse/GP/allergy specialist.
- Parents are responsible for ensuring any required medication is supplied, in date and replaced as necessary.
- Parents are requested to keep the Academy up to date with any changes in allergy management. The Allergy Action Plan will be kept updated accordingly.

We request that parents providing packed lunches become aware of the 14 allergens and think about if there are alternatives they could use in the packed lunch:

1. Celery

This includes celery stalks, leaves, seeds and the root called celeriac. You can find celery in celery salt, salads, some meat products, soups and stock cubes.

2. Cereals containing gluten

Wheat (such as spelt and Khorasan wheat/Kamut), rye, barley and oats is often found in foods containing flour, such as some types of baking powder, batter, breadcrumbs, bread, cakes, couscous, meat products, pasta, pastry, sauces, soups and fried foods which are dusted with flour.

3. Crustaceans

Crabs, lobster, prawns and scampi are crustaceans. Shrimp paste, often used in Thai and South-East Asian curries or salads, is an ingredient to look out for.

4. Eggs

Eggs are often found in cakes, some meat products, mayonnaise, mousses, pasta, quiche, sauces and pastries or foods brushed or glazed with egg.

5. Fish

You will find this in some fish sauces, pizzas, relishes, salad dressings, stock cubes and Worcestershire sauce.

6. Lupin

Yes, lupin is a flower, but it's also found in flour! Lupin flour and seeds can be used in some types of bread, pastries and even in pasta.

7. Milk

Milk is a common ingredient in butter, cheese, cream, milk powders & yoghurt. It can also be found in foods brushed or glazed with milk, and in powdered soups & sauces.

8. Molluscs

These include mussels, land snails, squid and whelks, but can also be commonly found in oyster sauce or as an ingredient in fish stews.

9. Mustard

Liquid mustard, mustard powder and mustard seeds fall into this category. This ingredient can also be found in breads, curries, marinades, meat products, salad dressings, sauces and soups.

10. Nuts

Not to be mistaken with peanuts (which are actually a legume and grow underground), this ingredient refers to nuts which grow on trees, like cashew nuts, almonds and hazelnuts. You can find nuts in breads, biscuits, crackers, desserts, nut powders (often used in Asian curries), stir-fried dishes, ice cream, marzipan (almond paste), nut oils and sauces.

11. Peanuts

Peanuts are actually a legume, and grow underground, which is why it's sometimes called a groundnut. Peanuts are often used as an ingredient in biscuits, cakes, curries, desserts, sauces (such as satay sauce), as well as in groundnut oil and peanut flour.

12. Sesame Seeds

These seeds can often be found in bread (sprinkled on hamburger buns for example), breadsticks, houmous, sesame oil and tahini. They are sometimes toasted and used in salads.

13. Soya

Often found in bean curd, edamame beans, miso paste, textured soya protein, soya flour or tofu, soya is a staple ingredient in oriental food. It can also be found in desserts, ice cream, meat products, sauces and vegetarian products.

14. Sulphur Dioxide (sometimes known as sulphites)

This is an ingredient often used in dried fruit such as raisins, dried apricots and prunes. You might also find it in meat products, soft drinks, vegetables as well as in wine and beer. If you have asthma, you have a higher risk of developing a reaction to sulphur dioxide.

Staff Responsibilities

- Key staff will complete anaphylaxis training. Training is provided as part of First Aid
- Staff must be aware of the pupils in their care (regular or cover classes) through a Care Plan for known allergies as an allergic reaction could occur at any time and not just at mealtimes. Any food-related activities must be supervised with due caution.
- Staff leading school trips will ensure they carry all relevant emergency supplies. Trip leaders will check that all pupils with medical conditions, including allergies, carry their medication. Pupils unable to produce their required medication will not be able to attend the excursion.
- The Medical Lead will ensure that the up-to-date Care Plan is kept with the pupil's medication.
- It is the parent's responsibility to ensure all medication is in date however the Medical Lead will check medication kept at school on a termly basis and send a reminder to parents if medication is approaching expiry.
- Medical Lead keeps a register of pupils who have been prescribed an adrenaline auto-injector (AAI) and a record of use of any AAI(s) and emergency treatment given.

Pupil Responsibilities

- Pupils are encouraged to have a good awareness of their symptoms and to let an adult know as soon as they suspect they are having an allergic reaction.
- Pupils who are trained and confident to administer their own AAIs will be encouraged to take responsibility for carrying them on their person at all times.
- Pupils will be taught to be allergy aware through the curriculum and assemblies.

3. Care Plans

Care Plans are designed to function as individual healthcare plans for children with care needs including food allergies, providing medical and parental consent for schools to administer medicines in the event of an allergic reaction, including consent to administer a spare adrenaline autoinjector.

Brookside will model this using the British Society of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (BSACI) Allergy Action Plans to ensure continuity. This is a national plan that has been agreed by the BSACI, Anaphylaxis UK and Allergy UK.

It is the parent/carer's responsibility to complete the allergy action plan with help from a healthcare professional, Medical Lead and provide this to the Academy.

4. Emergency Treatment and Management of Anaphylaxis

What to look for:

Symptoms usually come on quickly, within minutes of exposure to the allergen. Mild to moderate allergic reaction symptoms may include:

- a red raised rash (known as hives or urticaria) anywhere on the body

- a tingling or itchy feeling in the mouth
- swelling of lips, face or eyes
- stomach pain or vomiting.

More serious symptoms are often referred to as the ABC symptoms and can include:

- **AIRWAY** - swelling in the throat, tongue or upper airways (tightening of the throat, hoarse voice, difficulty swallowing).
- **BREATHING** - sudden onset wheezing, breathing difficulty, noisy breathing.
- **CIRCULATION** - dizziness, feeling faint, sudden sleepiness, tiredness, confusion, pale clammy skin, loss of consciousness.

The term for this more serious reaction is anaphylaxis. In extreme cases there could be a dramatic fall in blood pressure. The person may become weak and floppy and may have a sense of something terrible happening. This may lead to collapse and unconsciousness and, on rare occasions, can be fatal.

If the pupil has been exposed to something they are known to be allergic to, then it is more likely to be an anaphylactic reaction. Anaphylaxis can develop very rapidly, so a treatment is needed that works rapidly. Adrenaline is the mainstay of treatment, and it starts to work within seconds.

What does adrenaline do?

- It opens up the airways
- It stops swelling
- It raises the blood pressure

As soon as anaphylaxis is suspected, adrenaline must be administered without delay.

Action:

- Keep the child where they are, call for help and do not leave them unattended.
- **LIE CHILD FLAT WITH LEGS RAISED** – they can be propped up if struggling to breathe but this should be for as short a time as possible.
- **USE ADRENALINE AUTO-INJECTOR WITHOUT DELAY** and note the time given. AAls should be given into the muscle in the outer thigh. Specific instructions vary by brand – always follow the instructions on the device.
- **CALL 999 and state ANAPHYLAXIS (ana-fil-axis).**
- If no improvement after 5 minutes, administer second AAI.
- If no signs of life commence CPR.
- Call parent/carer as soon as possible.

Whilst you are waiting for the ambulance, keep the child where they are. Do not stand them up, or sit them in a chair, even if they are feeling better. This could lower their blood pressure drastically, causing their heart to stop.

All pupils must go to hospital for observation after anaphylaxis even if they appear to have recovered as a reaction can reoccur after treatment.

5. Supply, storage and care of medication

Depending on their level of understanding and competence, pupils will be encouraged to take responsibility for and to carry their own two AAls on them at all times (in a suitable bag/container).

For younger children or those not ready to take responsibility for their own medication, there should be an anaphylaxis kit which is kept safely, not locked away and accessible to all staff. Medication should be stored in a suitable container and clearly labelled with the pupil's name. The pupil's medication storage container should contain:

- Two AAls i.e. EpiPen® or Jext® or Emerade®
- An up-to-date allergy action plan via their Care Plan
- Antihistamine as tablets or syrup (if included on allergy action plan)
- Spoon if required
- Asthma inhaler (if included on allergy action plan).

It is the responsibility of the child's parents to ensure that the anaphylaxis kit is up-to-date and clearly labelled, however the Medical Lead will check medication kept at school on a termly basis and send a reminder to parents if medication is approaching expiry.

Parents can subscribe to expiry alerts for the relevant AAls their child is prescribed, to make sure they can get replacement devices in good time.

Older children and medication

Older children should, whenever possible, assume responsibility for their emergency kit under the guidance of their parents. However, symptoms of anaphylaxis can come on very suddenly, so school staff need to be prepared to administer medication if the young person cannot.

Storage

AAls should be stored at room temperature, protected from direct sunlight and temperature extremes.

Disposal

AAls are single use only and must be disposed of as sharps. Used AAls can be given to ambulance paramedics on arrival or can be disposed of in a pre-ordered sharps bin. Sharps bins to be obtained from and disposed of by a clinical waste contractor. The sharps bin is kept in the medical room.

6. 'Spare' adrenaline auto-injectors at Brookside

Brookside will purchase spare **AAls for emergency use in children who are risk of anaphylaxis**, if their own devices are not available or working (e.g. because they are out of date).

These are stored in the Medical Room, clearly labelled 'Emergency Anaphylaxis Adrenaline Pen', kept safely, not locked away and accessible and known to all staff.

The Medical Lead is responsible for checking the spare medication is in date on a monthly basis and to replace as needed. Written parental permission for use of the spare AAI is included in the pupil's allergy action plan. If anaphylaxis is suspected in an undiagnosed individual call the emergency services and state you suspect ANAPHYLAXIS. Follow advice from them as to whether administration of the spare AAI is appropriate.

7. Staff Training

The named staff members (at least 2) responsible for coordinating staff anaphylaxis training and the upkeep of the school's anaphylaxis policy are:

All staff will complete online AllergyWise anaphylaxis training at the start of every new academic year. Training is also available on an ad-hoc basis for any new members of staff. Training includes:

- Knowing the common allergens and triggers of allergy
- Spotting the signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction and anaphylaxis. Early recognition of symptoms is key, including knowing when to call for emergency services
- Administering emergency treatment (including AAIs) in the event of anaphylaxis – knowing how and when to administer the medication/device
- Measures to reduce the risk of a child having an allergic reaction e.g. allergen avoidance, knowing who is responsible for what
- Managing allergy action plans and ensuring these are up to date
- A practical session using trainer devices (these can be obtained from the manufacturers' websites: www.epipen.co.uk and www.jext.co.uk and www.emerade-bausch.co.uk)

8. Inclusion and safeguarding

Brookside is committed to ensuring that all children with medical conditions, including allergies, in terms of both physical and mental health, are properly supported in school so that they can play a full and active role in school life, remain healthy and achieve their academic potential.

9. Catering

All food businesses (including school caterers) must follow the Food Information Regulations 2014 which states that allergen information relating to the 'Top 14' allergens must be available for all food products.

The Academy menu is available for parents to view in fortnightly advance with all ingredients listed and allergens highlighted on the school website at

The Medical Lead will inform the Catering Manager of pupils with food allergies. Parents/carers are encouraged to meet with the Catering Manager/Cook/Chef (delete or substitute as appropriate) to discuss their child's needs.

The Academy adheres to the following Department of Health guidance recommendations:

- Bottles, other drinks and lunch boxes provided by parents for pupils with food allergies should be clearly labelled with the name of the child for whom they are intended.
- If food is purchased from the Academy, parents should check the appropriateness of foods by speaking directly to the catering manager.

- The pupil should be taught to also check with catering staff, before purchasing food or selecting their lunch choice.
- Where food is provided by the Academy, staff should be educated about how to read labels for food allergens and instructed about measures to prevent cross contamination during the handling, preparation and serving of food. Examples include: preparing food for children with food allergies first; careful cleaning (using warm soapy water) of food preparation areas and utensils. For further information, parents/carers are encouraged to liaise with the Catering Manager.
- Food should not be given to primary school age food-allergic children without parental engagement and permission (e.g. birthday parties, food treats).
- Use of food in crafts, cooking classes, science experiments and special events (e.g. fetes, assemblies, cultural events) needs to be considered and may need to be restricted/risk assessed depending on the allergies of particular children and their age.
- The Academy will alert parents who provide packed lunches to the most common allergens and ask that they think carefully about whether these must be provided – or whether there are alternatives that would be safer.

10. School trips

Staff leading school trips will ensure they carry all relevant emergency supplies. Trip leaders will check that all pupils with medical conditions, including allergies, carry their medication. Pupils unable to produce their required medication will not be able to attend the excursion. All the activities on the school trip will be risk assessed to see if they pose a threat to allergic pupils and alternative activities planned to ensure inclusion. Overnight school trips should be possible with careful planning and a meeting for parents with the lead member of staff planning the trip should be arranged, supported by the Medical Lead. Staff at the venue for an overnight school trip should be briefed early on that an allergic child is attending and will need appropriate food (if provided by the venue).

Sporting Excursions

Allergic children should have every opportunity to attend sports trips to other schools. The Academy will ensure that the P.E. teachers or trip organiser are fully aware of the situation. The school being visited will be notified that a member of the team has an allergy when arranging the fixture. A member of staff trained in administering adrenaline will accompany the team. If another school feels that they are not equipped to cater for any food-allergic child, the school will arrange for the child to take their own food. Most parents are keen that their children should be included in the full life of the Academy where possible, and the Academy will need their co-operation with any special arrangements required.

11. Allergy awareness and nut bans

Brookside supports the approach advocated by Anaphylaxis UK towards nut bans/nut free schools. They would not necessarily support a blanket ban on any particular allergen in any establishment, including in schools. This is because nuts are only one of many allergens that could affect pupils, and no school could guarantee a truly allergen free environment for a child living with food allergy. They advocate instead for schools to adopt a culture of *allergy awareness and education*. A 'whole school awareness of allergies' is a much better approach, as it ensures teachers, pupils and all other staff are aware of what allergies are, the importance of avoiding the pupils' allergens, the signs & symptoms, how to deal with allergic reactions and to ensure policies and procedures are in place to minimise risk.

12. Risk Assessment

Brookside will conduct a detailed individual risk assessment for all new joining pupils with allergies and any pupils newly diagnosed, to help identify any gaps in our systems and processes for keeping allergic children safe. These will form part of their care plan.

Useful Links

Anaphylaxis UK - <https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/>

- Safer Schools Programme - <https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/education/saferschools-programme/>

- **AllergyWise for Schools online training -**

<https://www.allergywise.org.uk/p/allergywise-for-schools1>

Allergy UK - <https://www.allergyuk.org>

- Whole school allergy and awareness management -

<https://www.allergyuk.org/schools/whole-school-allergy-awarenessandmanagement>

BSACI Allergy Action Plans - <https://www.bsaci.org/professionalresources/resources/paediatic-allergy-action-plans/>

Spare Pens in Schools - <http://www.sparepensinschools.uk>

Department for Education Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions -

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/803956/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions.pdf

Department of Health Guidance on the use of adrenaline auto-injectors in schools -

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/645476/Adrenaline_auto_injectors_in_schools.pdf

Food allergy quality standards (The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, March 2016) <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs118>

Anaphylaxis: assessment and referral after emergency treatment (The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, 2020)

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg134?unlid=22904150420167115834>