ALLERGY POLICY

Please also refer to administration of medicines policy, health and hygiene policy food and drink policy, safeguarding and child protection policy.

Policy Statement: Box Pre School Playgroup is committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment for all children in our care. We recognize that some children may have allergies that require special attention to ensure their wellbeing while attending our pre-school. This Allergy Policy outlines our approach to managing allergies to create a safe and supportive environment for all children.

Aim: Our primary aim is to:

- identify and manage known allergies and intolerances among children attending the pre-school;
- protect children from avoidable exposure to their known allergens;
- ensure that relevant allergy information is obtained before a child starts at the pre-school and kept up to date;
- ensure that appropriate allergy action plans are developed for children with known allergies;
- ensure that staff understand how to recognise and respond to allergic reactions and anaphylaxis;
- ensure that prescribed emergency medication is available and can be administered safely where required;
- ensure that food is checked against children's dietary and allergy requirements before it is served;
- work collaboratively with parents/carers and, where appropriate, health professionals;
- provide appropriate information and training for staff;
- maintain appropriate records of allergy-related incidents and review arrangements where necessary;
- support the inclusion and participation of children with allergies in everyday activities and outings.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Pre-School Management: The pre-school management is responsible for:

- implementing this policy;
- ensuring appropriate systems are in place to identify and manage allergies;
- ensuring allergy information is kept up to date;
- ensuring staff have appropriate information and training;
- ensuring appropriate medication and equipment are available for individual children where required;
- ensuring food-handling arrangements take account of children's allergies and intolerances;
- ensuring appropriate risk assessments are undertaken;
- reviewing allergy-related incidents and near misses;
- ensuring appropriate liaison with parents/carers and, where appropriate, health professionals;
- reviewing this policy at least annually and whenever circumstances or relevant requirements

Staff: All staff members are responsible for:

- following this policy and individual allergy action plans;
- knowing which children have known allergies or intolerances;
- understanding the symptoms of allergic reactions and anaphylaxis;
- knowing what action to take in an emergency;
- knowing where prescribed emergency medication is stored;
- checking allergy information before preparing or serving food;
- preventing avoidable cross-contamination;
- reporting allergy-related incidents or concerns to the manager;
- maintaining appropriate confidentiality.

Staff will not be expected to diagnose an allergy or determine independently whether a child has developed an allergy

Parents/Guardians: Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- informing the pre-school of any known allergy, intolerance or relevant medical condition;
- providing accurate and up-to-date information;
- providing prescribed medication and ensuring that it is in date;
- providing appropriate medical information and instructions where required;
- working with the pre-school to develop and update the child's allergy action plan;
- informing the pre-school of any change in the child's condition, medication or treatment;
- informing the pre-school if a child has experienced a significant allergic reaction outside the pre-school where this is relevant to their care.

Procedures:

Identification of Allergies:
Before a child is admitted to pre-school we will obtain information about any special dietary requirements, preferences, food allergies and intolerances that the child has, and any special health requirements. This information will be shared with all staff involved in the preparing and handling of food. Checks are made at snack time and a log completed to confirm that the food being provided meets all the requirements for each child.

We will have ongoing discussions with parents and/or carers and, where appropriate, health professionals to develop allergy action plans for managing any known allergies and intolerances. This information will be kept up to date and shared with staff. All staff are aware of the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis, the differences

between allergies and intolerances and that children can develop allergies at any time.

Individualized Allergy Management Plans and risk assessment:
The pre-school will collaborate with parents/guardians to create individualized allergy management plans for children with allergies.

- the child's name and photograph where appropriate;
- the known allergen(s);
- known symptoms or signs of an allergic reaction;
- symptoms that may indicate anaphylaxis;
- appropriate avoidance measures;
- prescribed medication;
- the location of medication;
- instructions for administering medication;
- emergency contact information;
- when emergency medical assistance should be sought;
- any other information necessary to keep the child safe.

The plan will be reviewed whenever there is a change in the child's allergy, medication, treatment or circumstances and at appropriate intervals.

Individual Risk Assessment

An individual risk assessment will be completed for each child with a known allergy where appropriate.
The risk assessment will consider the child's normal activities and the particular risks associated with their allergy.
Depending on the child, this may include:

- food and snacks;
- food preparation;
- eating areas;
- shared resources;
- sensory activities;
- cooking activities;
- outdoor activities;

- insects/stings;
- contact allergens;
- medicines;
- outings;
- celebrations and special events;
- food brought into the pre-school by other children;
- emergency response.

The purpose of the risk assessment is to reduce foreseeable risks while enabling the child to participate fully in the life of the pre-school.

Allergen Management

We will take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of exposure to known allergens.
We recognise that it is not possible to guarantee a completely allergen-free environment.
We will therefore focus on effective management of known risks, rather than claiming to provide an entirely allergen-free environment.
Measures may include:

- clear communication of known allergies to relevant staff;
- checking ingredients before food is served;
- preventing avoidable cross-contamination;
- appropriate handwashing;
- cleaning food-preparation and eating surfaces;
- keeping individual allergy information accessible to relevant staff;
- appropriate supervision during eating;
- appropriate management of food brought from home;
- appropriate risk assessment of activities.

Children will not be unnecessarily excluded from activities solely because they have an allergy where the activity can be made reasonably safe.

Staff Training:
All staff will receive appropriate information and training relevant to their role.
Staff will be made aware of:

- common allergic reactions;
- symptoms of anaphylaxis;

- the difference between allergy and intolerance;
- the individual needs of children with known allergies;
- allergy action plans;
- allergen avoidance;
- prevention of cross-contamination;
- emergency procedures;
- the location and use of prescribed emergency medication.

Where a child has prescribed medication that staff may need to administer, we will ensure that relevant staff receive appropriate instruction and training.

The level of training will reflect the medication, the child's needs and the instructions provided by the appropriate health professional or medication documentation.

Training will be refreshed where necessary, including when:

- a new child with a significant allergy starts;
- a child's allergy or medication changes;
- staff responsibilities change;
- an incident identifies a training need;
- relevant guidance changes.

We will maintain appropriate records of staff training.

Food and Snacks

We will comply with the applicable EYFS requirements concerning food, drink, dietary requirements and allergies.

Before a child is admitted, information about their food allergies, intolerances and dietary requirements will be obtained.

This information will be shared with all staff involved in preparing and handling food.

Checking food

At **each snack time and mealtime**, we will ensure that there is a clearly identified member of staff responsible for checking that the food being provided meets the requirements of each child.

The responsible member of staff will check the relevant allergy/dietary information before food is provided.

Where there is uncertainty about whether food is safe for a particular child, the food will **not be served to that child** until its suitability has been established.

Food prepared by the preschool

Food prepared by the preschool will be prepared with appropriate regard to known allergies and dietary requirements.

We will take reasonable steps to prevent cross-contamination.

Ingredients and packaging information will be checked where necessary.

Where appropriate, a snack/food checklist or log will be completed to confirm that the relevant allergy information has been checked.

Food brought from home

Parents/carers will be given appropriate information about the pre-school's allergy arrangements.

Where a child brings food from home, parents/carers will be asked to provide food that is suitable for their child's known allergies and dietary requirements.

Where necessary to protect a child from a known serious allergen, we may ask parents/carers not to send particular foods into the pre-school. Any such restriction will be communicated clearly and will be reviewed according to the actual risk.

We will not describe the entire premises as "nut-free" or "allergen-free" because absolute guarantees cannot be given.

Food Information and Allergens

Where food is provided, staff will take reasonable steps to establish the ingredients and allergen information necessary to ensure that food is suitable for individual children.

We will use appropriate ingredient and allergen information supplied by:

- food manufacturers;
- parents/carers;
- catering providers;
- other reliable sources.

Where we cannot establish whether food contains an allergen relevant to a child, it will not provide that food to the child.

We will take care to prevent cross-contamination during food preparation, storage and serving.

Emergency Medication

Where a child has prescribed emergency medication, including an adrenaline auto-injector (AAI), the medication must be:

- prescribed for the child where required;
- in date;
- clearly labelled;
- stored safely;
- readily accessible to authorised staff in an emergency;
- accompanied by appropriate instructions;
- available whenever the child is at the pre-school;
- taken on outings where the child may require it.

Emergency medication must not be locked away in a location that would prevent prompt access in an emergency.

We will follow the child's allergy action plan and Administration of Medicines Policy.

We will not administer medication without the appropriate consent and information, except where emergency circumstances and applicable law/professional guidance permit action.

Response to an Allergic Reaction

If a child is suspected of having an allergic reaction, staff will respond promptly in accordance with the child's allergy action plan and our first-aid/emergency procedures.

Where anaphylaxis is suspected:

1. The child's prescribed adrenaline auto-injector should be administered without delay in accordance with the child's emergency plan and the device instructions.

2. Emergency medical assistance will be requested by calling **999**.
3. The child's parent/carer will be contacted as soon as reasonably practicable.
4. The child will be kept under continuous appropriate supervision.
5. Staff will follow the instructions of emergency medical professionals.
6. A second prescribed adrenaline auto-injector will be administered where the child's plan or medical guidance requires it and where it is available.
7. The incident will be recorded.
8. The manager will review whether any further action, notification or safeguarding/health protection advice is required.

Staff will not wait for a parent/carer to arrive before seeking emergency medical assistance where anaphylaxis is suspected.

Emergency Services

We recognise that anaphylaxis can become life-threatening very quickly.

Where emergency medical assistance is required, staff will call **999**.

We will provide emergency services with relevant information, including:

- the child's name;
- suspected allergen where known;
- symptoms;
- medication administered;
- time medication was administered;
- any other relevant information.

A member of staff will remain with the child and follow emergency medical advice.

Parents/carers will be informed as soon as reasonably practicable.

After an Allergy Incident

Following a significant allergic reaction, we will:

- ensure that the child receives appropriate medical attention;
- inform the parent/carer;
- complete an appropriate incident record;
- record medication administered;
- consider whether Ofsted notification is required;
- consider whether any other statutory notification is required;
- review the child's allergy action plan;
- review the relevant risk assessment;
- identify any lessons for staff, food preparation or supervision;
- implement appropriate changes.

Where appropriate, we will discuss the incident with the parent/carer and relevant health professionals.

The purpose of reviewing an incident is to improve safety and not to apportion blame.

Near Misses

A near miss involving a child's allergy will be recorded where it provides useful information about a potential risk.

Examples may include:

- food containing a known allergen being identified before it is eaten;
- incorrect food being prepared but not served;
- prescribed emergency medication being temporarily unavailable;
- an allergy action plan not being immediately accessible;
- a cross-contamination risk being identified before exposure.

Near misses will be reviewed to determine whether changes are required to:

- procedures;
- staff training;
- risk assessments;
- food preparation;
- supervision;
- communication;
- medication arrangements.

Communication with Parents and Carers

We will maintain open communication with parents/carers regarding their child's allergies.

Parents/carers will be informed of:

- relevant changes to the child's allergy arrangements;
- allergy-related incidents involving their child;
- medication administered;
- concerns about food or allergen exposure;
- changes required to the allergy action plan or risk assessment.

Parents/carers should inform the pre-school promptly of:

- a new diagnosis;
- a change in allergy;
- new symptoms;
- changes to medication;
- expiry or replacement of medication;
- changes to medical advice;

- significant allergic reactions occurring outside the pre-school where they affect the child's care.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Information about a child's medical condition and allergies will be treated as confidential personal information.

However, information must be shared with staff who need it to keep the child safe.

We will ensure that allergy information is accessible to relevant staff while avoiding unnecessary disclosure.

Emergency information must be available in a form that enables staff to act promptly.

We will comply with applicable data protection requirements.

Outings

A child's allergy action plan, prescribed emergency medication and other necessary medication will accompany the child on outings.

Before an outing, staff will consider:

- the child's known allergens;
- the activities planned;
- food arrangements;
- access to emergency medical assistance;
- access to prescribed medication;
- appropriate staff supervision;
- emergency contact arrangements;
- the location of the nearest appropriate medical facility where relevant.

Staff responsible for the child will know:

- where the medication is stored;

- how to access it;
- what action to take in an emergency;
- how to contact emergency services and parents/carers.

We will not leave prescribed emergency medication behind because the outing is considered to be short or local.

Celebrations and Special Events

The pre-school will take children's known allergies into account during:

- birthday celebrations;
- parties;
- cooking activities;
- baking;
- cultural events;
- fundraising events;
- special snacks;
- food brought in by families.

Parents/carers will be informed where food is being brought into the pre-school for a special event and, where appropriate, asked to provide suitable alternatives for their child.

We may restrict particular foods where necessary to reduce a known and significant risk.

Activities and Non-Food Allergens

Allergies are not limited to food.

We will consider risks associated with:

- insect stings;
- latex;

- animals;
- plants;
- cosmetics;
- cleaning products;
- sensory materials;
- other known allergens.

Where a child has a known non-food allergy, an appropriate risk assessment will be undertaken.

We will take reasonable steps to reduce the child's exposure while enabling them to participate in activities wherever safely possible.

Children Developing Allergies

We recognise that allergies can develop during childhood.

Staff will be alert to symptoms such as:

- itching;
- hives or rash;
- swelling;
- vomiting;
- abdominal symptoms;
- coughing;
- wheezing;
- difficulty breathing;
- changes in voice;
- difficulty swallowing;
- sudden pallor or collapse.

Staff will follow the child's allergy action plan where one exists.

If a child experiences a suspected allergic reaction and does not have a known allergy, staff will seek appropriate medical advice and emergency assistance where necessary.

We will inform the child's parents/carers and record the incident.

We will not attempt to diagnose the cause of the reaction.

Inclusion

Children with allergies should be able to participate in the full range of activities available at the pre-school wherever this can be achieved safely.

We will seek to avoid unnecessary exclusion or disadvantage because of a child's allergy.

Reasonable adjustments will be considered where appropriate.

We will work with parents/carers and, where appropriate, health professionals to balance safety with the child's participation, independence and wellbeing.

Review of Individual Arrangements

Individual allergy arrangements will be reviewed:

- when the child starts at the pre-school;
- when a new allergy is diagnosed;
- when the allergy changes;
- when medication changes;
- following a significant allergic reaction;
- following a relevant near miss;
- when medical advice changes;
- when the child's activities or circumstances change;
- at appropriate regular intervals.

We will ensure that outdated allergy information is removed or clearly superseded so that staff are not relying on conflicting instructions.

Records

We will maintain appropriate records relating to allergy management, including where applicable:

- allergy information;
- allergy action plans;
- parental consent;
- risk assessments;
- medication records;
- staff training;
- allergy incidents;
- relevant near misses;
- reviews and actions taken.

Records will be stored securely and retained in accordance with our record-keeping and data-protection procedures.