

The Hen House Allergy Safety Policy (2026)

1. Purpose

This policy outlines how The Hen House Childcare services are minimising the risk of allergic reactions and ensures staff are prepared to recognise and respond to allergies and anaphylaxis. Our aim is to provide a safe, inclusive environment for all children with allergies, intolerances or medical dietary needs.

2. Legal & Guidance Framework

This policy is written in line with:

- Allergy Safety in Schools Statutory Guidance (July 2026)
- Benedict's Law
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework
- Food Standards Agency allergen regulations
- Safer Food, Better Business
- UK GDPR

3. Definitions

- **Allergy:** An immune response to an allergen.
- **Anaphylaxis:** A severe, life-threatening allergic reaction requiring immediate adrenaline.
- **Intolerance:** A non-immune reaction.
- **Coeliac Disease:** An autoimmune condition requiring strict gluten avoidance.
- **IHP (Individual Healthcare Plan):** A personalised plan detailing risk-reduction measures and emergency procedures.
- **Allergy Action Plan:** A clinical document issued by a GP/allergy specialist.

4. Roles & Responsibilities

Management

- Maintain and review this policy annually.
- Collect and update allergy information.
- Ensure staff receive annual allergy and anaphylaxis training.
- Ensure adrenaline devices are stored safely and checked monthly.

- Include allergy risks in all activity and trip risk assessments.
- Communicate allergy information to staff and visitors.

Staff

- Follow risk-reduction measures.
- Check ingredients before serving food.
- Prevent food sharing and cross-contamination.
- Recognise allergic reactions and act immediately.
- Ensure medication is accessible.
- Report incidents and near misses.

Parents/Carers

- Provide full allergy and medical dietary information.
- Supply in-date medication daily.
- Label food containers clearly.
- Update us immediately if allergies change.
- Provide medical advice, action plans or IHCPs.

5. Identification of Children with Allergies

- Allergy information is collected at registration.
- Information is stored securely and shared appropriately.
- Children with allergies are clearly identified on our internal register.
- IHCPs and Allergy Action Plans are accessible to staff.

6. Minimising Risk & Exposure to Allergens

Food Provided by The Hen House

- A named staff member checks ingredients before serving food.
- Allergen information is available to parents.
- Staff receive food hygiene and allergen-awareness training.
- Foods used in activities are checked for allergens.
- Unlabelled foods are avoided.
- Children are taught not to share food or utensils.

Food Brought from Home

- Containers must be clearly labelled.
- Parents ensure food is suitable for their child.
- Ice packs must be provided for chilled food.
- For severe allergies, certain foods may be restricted.

Environmental Measures

- High hygiene standards are maintained.
- Allergy risks are considered in all activities.
- Staff are informed when a child with allergies is present.

7. Emergency Response to Allergic Reactions

Mild to Moderate Symptoms

May include rash, swelling, stomach pain, vomiting, mild throat tightness.

Action: Administer antihistamine if prescribed, monitor closely, inform parents.

Signs of Anaphylaxis

Airway swelling, breathing difficulty, dizziness, faintness.

Immediate Action

1. Keep the child where they are.
2. Lie flat with legs raised.
3. Administer adrenaline immediately.
4. Call 999 and state ANAPHYLAXIS.
5. Administer second device after 5 minutes if needed.
6. Contact parents.
7. Child must go to hospital.

8. Medication Management

- Children prescribed adrenaline must bring an in-date device daily.
- Devices must be accessible at all times and staff must be aware of where they are stored.

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- Stored at room temperature.
- Used devices disposed of in a sharps box.
- Out-of-date devices returned to a pharmacy.

Spare Adrenaline Devices

- We may hold spare devices.
- These do not replace a child's own devices.
- Consent is not required in an emergency.

9. Individual Healthcare Plans (IHPs)

IHPs are created for:

- Children with an Allergy Action Plan
- Children with asthma and allergy
- Children with medical dietary conditions
- Children awaiting diagnosis

IHPs include allergen details, risk-reduction measures, emergency procedures, medication requirements, and responsibilities.

10. Trips, Outings & External Activities

- Allergy risks included in trip risk assessments.
- Medication carried at all times.
- Supervising staff trained in anaphylaxis response.
- Food provided off-site checked for allergens.

11. Training

All staff receive annual training covering:

- Allergy awareness
- Signs and symptoms of reactions
- Anaphylaxis response
- Adrenaline administration

- Food allergen management
- Reporting procedures
- Risk-reduction strategies

Temporary staff receive essential allergy briefings.

12. Incident Reporting

- All reactions, near misses and medication administration are recorded.
- Parents informed promptly.
- Records reviewed to improve practice.

13. Review of Policy

- Reviewed annually or after any incident.
- Updated in line with statutory guidance.