



ALLERGENS POLICY

This policy will be reviewed annually or in response to changes in legislation		
Created	November 2023	Head of Compliance, Group Medical Lead, Harrisons Catering Services
Last Review	January 2024	Head of Compliance
Approved	December 2023	Operations Board, Education Board

This Policy applies to all year groups at Thomas's Schools, including the EYFS. Thomas's London Day Schools operates as a united group of schools with a similar ethos and values and as such is referred to as a singular body.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with Thomas's First Aid Policy and Medical Care Policy.

1. INTRODUCTION

Statutory legislation places upon us a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of our pupils. Whilst there are a range of reactions to allergens, anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction at the extreme end of the allergic spectrum, affecting the entire body, that can occur within minutes of exposure to an allergen. The most common causes of anaphylaxis include cows milk, eggs, nuts, peanuts, seeds and seafood, though anaphylaxis can occur after exposure to any allergen. This policy focuses on the management of nut allergies, however different people can be allergic to different allergens and therefore it is critical that parents inform the school of any allergies.

2. OUR APPROACH TO NUTS

Thomas's strives to be a nut-free environment but we do not claim to be 'nut free'. Thomas's requires that nuts (including pine nuts and peanuts), sesame seeds and sesame related products, must not be used as ingredients in any food produced in or served from the school's catering facility and our school Caterers, Harrison Catering Services Limited, follow this requirement, recognising the potentially severe allergic reaction for some people (see Harrison Catering Services Limited's 'Food Allergies and Food Intolerances').

The school asks staff and students not to bring any nut (including pine nuts and peanuts) or sesame products into school, but we do not claim to be a 'nut-free' school.

[Anaphylaxis UK](#) advises that this is a pragmatic approach, for the following reasons:

- It would be impossible to provide an absolute guarantee that the school is nut-free. Pupils regularly bring in food from home and food bought on the way to school.
- There would be a risk that children with allergies might be led into a false sense of security.
 - There is a strong case to be argued that children with food allergies will develop a better awareness and understanding of how to manage their allergies if they grow up in an environment where allergens may be present but, as at Thomas's, are restricted and monitored, as much as is reasonably possible.
- It should be acknowledged that, given current food manufacturing processes, it is impossible to guarantee that all products will be free from possible 'traces of nuts' and other allergens.

This is also in line with advice from the DfE Healthy Child Programme:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/healthy-child-programme>

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

School

The school is responsible for:

- Maintaining accurate and up to date allergen records, and informing the Harrisons Catering Team of any individuals with allergies.
- Ensuring staff are informed of pupils with allergies
- Providing training to all staff on allergy awareness and anaphylaxis management
- (For Y7 and above) explaining to pupils about processes for allergy management

All food provided to pupils during the school day should be sourced from Harrisons Catering.

Clubs

Where food is being provided as part of an extra-curricular club - not including snacks provided by Harrisons, the Club Leader is responsible for:

- Ensuring that they are aware of any allergies of pupils attending the club
- Any control measures relating to allergen management are reflected in the risk assessment and put into practice
- Checking that all food items used are safe in accordance with the risk assessment

Thomas's Outdoors Department (TOD)

Where pupils are attending activities organised by TODs where food is provided, the TOD Activity Leader is responsible for:

- Ensuring that they are aware of any allergies of pupils attending the activity
- Any control measures relating to allergen management are reflected in the risk assessment and put into practice
- Checking that all food items used are safe in accordance with the risk assessment

Where pupils are attending a residential camp, all Camp Cook hold Level 2 Food Hygiene certification

Harrison Catering Services Limited

Harrison Catering Services works across Thomas's London Day Schools and has overall responsibility for the menus and food suppliers, ensuring that the latest nutritional and healthy eating developments are adopted where appropriate.

Each school has a Chef Manager and team of catering staff who both prepare the food and serve it to the pupils.

Harrisons is responsible for:

- Ensuring that display and allergen information is accurate and up to date and visible
- Making staff always available for pupils to discuss specific needs

Refer to the Harrison Catering Services Operating Procedures for further information on allergens management within the catering department.

Parents

Parents of new and current pupils should notify the Designated Person (generally the Medical Lead) within the school in writing if their child has any food allergies or dietary requirements due to medical need or observance of religious faith by completing the Medical and Dietary Needs Form on My School Portal (MSP) before a child starts at school and updated as circumstances change. Parents should ensure allergies and intolerances are clearly identified, and dietary preferences are indicated as such.

The school will review information and meet with parents if required to ensure they are meeting the needs of the child. Specific management plans may be put in place for pupils with severe allergies.

Parents must ensure their child has two auto-injector pens available at school at all times.

Pupils

- Where they carry emergency medication, ensure this is with them at all times
- Where appropriate, informing the school to any changes in their condition
- Adhere to measures put in place by the school to support their specific allergy

4. PROCEDURES

The school implements age appropriate interventions in the Dining Hall:

Reception - Y6

- Tray identity mats (and/or coloured trays)
- Allergens Pupil List displayed in Kitchen

Y7 and above

- Pupils announce themselves to staff
- Allergens Pupil List displayed in Kitchen

Allergens information is shown on the Menu published to TomCom and around school

Natasha's Law

In response to "Natasha's Law" which came into law in 2021, all packaged food provided in school is required to have the ingredients listed on the package.

Food from home

The bringing of snacks and cakes from home is not permitted to ensure that those on special diets or with allergies are not discriminated against and to encourage good general habits. All club snacks are provided by the catering department.

Pupils must not bring onto site any cakes, doughnuts or other food items for cake sales, their birthday or other celebrations to share with other pupils.

Trips

Pupils with known allergies will be identified on the trip Welfare and Medical Information Form. For all trips, pupils with anaphylaxis must have 2 auto-injector pens. Where a packed lunch is being provided, the school will inform Harrison Catering of specific food allergies, so that an appropriate packed meal can be provided. Additional catering requirements may be necessary on an overnight trip.

Where a pupil has complex needs or may need additional provision, the school will work with parents in advance of the trip.

5. RECORD KEEPING

Any pupils with a medical condition such as coeliac or those requiring emergency medication must have an Individual Health Care Plan completed by the Medical Lead and family. This is stored in the school Pupil Management System and shared with staff as needed.

Those with anaphylaxis must complete the BSACI standardised care plan. This is stored in the school Pupil Management System and with the pupils' AAls.

<http://www.bsaci.org/about/download-paediatric-allergy-action-plans>

6. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This Policy bears due regard to the following statutory guidance and other advice.

DfE Keeping children safe in education (Sept 2023)

DfE School food in England (March 2019)

DfE Allergy Guidance for Schools (May 2022)

DfE Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions (Dec 2015)

Food Standards Agency Prepacked for direct sale (PPDS) allergen labelling changes for schools, colleges and nurseries (October 2021)

Harrison Catering Services Operating Procedures

Healthy Child Programme 5 - 19

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