

Allergen

All references to Juniper within this document refer equally to Juniper Ventures Limited and Juniper Pursuits Limited

Introduction

The safeguarding of the pupils Juniper serve meals to each day is paramount. Additionally, we are committed to supporting the provision of a balanced school meal with special dietary requirements whenever possible.





Following consultation with schools leaders, this Allergen Policy has been developed separately to our Food Intolerance Policy to ensure the most vulnerable are protected to the highest levels. Food allergies involve an immune system response and can be life-threatening whilst food intolerances affect the digestive system and are usually uncomfortable but not dangerous.

A food allergy is an abnormal immune response to food. It occurs when the immune system mistakenly identifies a specific food protein as harmful. Even a tiny amount of the allergy-causing food can trigger various symptoms, ranging from mild to severe.

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform the school of their child's food allergy prior to the beginning of the school term or as soon as possible after diagnosis or symptoms and to also provide a medical note to evidence the food allergy as soon as possible.

There are 14 identified allergens under Government legislation which came into force in December 2014. Changes to the allergen labelling requirements came into force from 1 October 2021, known as 'Natasha's Law'. Natasha's Law requires businesses to label all food that is pre-packed for direct sale (known as PPDS) with a full list of ingredients and the 14 allergens emphasised in bold to identify each of these allergens. Our menus hold detailed ingredient lists locally for staff and customer reference.

Symptoms usually appear within two hours of eating the allergenic food. Mild symptoms may include:

-  Hives or skin rash;
-  Swelling of the lips or eyelids;
-  Itching mouth and throat; and/or,
-  Hoarse voice or difficulty swallowing.



Whilst severe symptoms may include:

- ✿ Cough, wheezing, or shortness of breath;
- ✿ Abdominal pain, vomiting, or diarrhoea; and/or,
- ✿ Light-headedness or loss of consciousness

The most severe allergic reaction is anaphylaxis. Anaphylaxis is a rapidly progressive reaction that can make it hard or impossible to breathe. Without prompt medical treatment, anaphylaxis can be life-threatening.

Juniper adopts the risk-based approach recommended by the LACA – *the School Food People* as the national standard for the education catering profession (currently under revision to incorporate learnings from known near-misses).

This policy and associated forms (Appendices 1 - 5) are essential to provide Juniper with the information required to support the process of ensuring that safe, bespoke allergen diet menus are provided for pupils working in conjunction with our Registered Dietitian.

The establishment of effective risk management procedures minimises the threat to children, staff, and visitors from known trigger foods and ingredients. Central to this is a programme of training and awareness-raising sessions for all of Juniper's catering staff.

Under the national standard, risk is managed through a shared responsibility between the caterer, the school and the parent/ carer of the pupil. All schools are responsible for having their own protocols in place and supporting accompanying risk assessments which they are responsible for maintaining, reviewing and administering - this policy operates in addition to this process and confirms roles and responsibilities.

This policy applies to all primary, special educational needs and nursery aged children. For secondary school students with an allergy or medical dietary requirement, secondary education provides a welcome opportunity to learn skills that help them take greater control over their diet. To support this transition, Juniper do not prepare bespoke Allergen Diets for secondary age pupils, instead, our focus is on supporting pupils with medical dietary needs so that they can make safe choices. We do this by:

- ✿ adhering to strict food safety regulations – including transparency around the presence of the 14 legal allergens in every dish on our menus;
- ✿ encouraging pupils to ask our teams about allergens; and,



- providing nutrient counts for every dish on our menu, for pupils who need to monitor nutritional intake for medical reasons.

For secondary pupils with extremely specific, complex requirements or for those who are not reasonably able to take responsibility for managing their diet themselves, parent/carers can contact us and our Registered Dietitian will be happy to offer advice and assist on a case-by-case basis.

This policy excludes provision of Breakfast, After School Clubs, and Special Events. Additional referrals will need to be submitted for these meal events. A standard one-day school trip menu will be provided for pupils on receipt of 5 days' notice.

Procedures and Controls

The Allergen Diet Referral Form (Appendix 1A) must be completed by the School's Designated Person or another appropriate member of school staff and signed by the parent or carer of the pupil requesting the school meal.

Documented evidence from a medical professional of the allergen avoidance requirement must be attached for the request to be processed. This is an industry-wide standard and is essential for safeguarding children that require an Allergen Diet Menu.

Without medical evidence it is also not possible to ascertain, nor verify whether the list of allergens provided on the referral form is clinically accurate. This increases the risk of inadvertently offering a meal containing allergens, and if a child experiences an adverse reaction, this could potentially be life-threatening.

If there is a discrepancy between the list of allergens on the referral form and the medical evidence provided for a medical diet menu, further information may be requested before a menu can be finalised, as accuracy cannot be presumed. In such a case it would be imperative to first ascertain whether the allergens have changed since the medical evidence, or whether there was a mistake on the referral form for instance.

The requirement for medical evidence is a safeguarding measure, in addition to a legally bound duty of care and responsibility.

The following applies to the medical evidence:

1. It should be provided by a medical professional source i.e., medical doctor, registered dietitian, nurse or NHS medical professional.



2. School composed care plans, commercial laboratory reactivity results and homeopathic results **will not** be accepted.
3. Updated medical evidence **must be** provided if an existing allergen requires additional or reduced adjustments.
4. The referral form and necessary medical evidence **must be** emailed by the school to medical.diets@juniperventures.co.uk via EGRESS encrypted email system.

Once the referral form has been received, an Allergen Diet Menu in the form of an individualised meal plan will be created by our Registered Dietitian to meet the needs of the pupil. A meeting will take place between the school, Juniper and parent/carer if required.

Where possible three choices will be made available but where there are complex dietary needs this may not be possible – usual industry practice is a single choice.

Scenario 1: Menus where no significant changes are required:

In these cases, meals can be selected with minor omissions or swaps of ingredients/components (e.g. removal of a burger bun or swapping rice and peas with plain rice).

Scenario 2: Menus where further adjustments are required beyond minor omissions or swaps:

In these cases, adjustments are needed in order to include menu choices (e.g. reserving a portion of the meal at a particular stage in the recipe or deconstructing a meal to avoid allergens, such as reserving a portion of meat sauce from lasagne to avoid white sauce/lentils/lasagne sheets).

Scenario 3: Menus where multiple meals are not suitable and cannot be incorporated, due to complex allergen needs:

The catering team will always endeavour to have one hot choice which may need to be a jacket potato which will be reflective of the risk level.

A copy of the approved menu will be issued to the school who will in turn provide a copy to the parent/ carer for approval or review by completing the Allergen Diet – Sign Off Form (Appendix 2A).

The sign off form must be emailed by the school to medical.diets@juniperventures.co.uk via EGRESS encrypted email system. The Juniper Area Manager will then brief the Chef Manager of the agreed Allergen Diet Menu and agree a date for when this will become effective.



When the Juniper core menu is updated (after easter and the autumn half term each year) the pupil's Allergen Diet Menu will automatically be reviewed and updated.

An Allergen Update form (Appendix 3A) must be completed by the School's Designated Person to ensure the continued safety and accuracy of the medical diet menus provided.

Due to an increasing demand for Allergen Diet menus, the industry standard lead time for new and adjusted referrals is 3-5 weeks if all appropriate information is provided. It will always be the intention of Juniper to attempt to provide an appropriate agreed menu in a shortest period possible. Whilst a request is being processed, pupils will be required to bring their own packed lunch.

In the absence of a packed lunch, if an Allergen Diet Menu is being developed then Juniper's Allergen Aware menu (Appendix 5A) may be made available upon agreement from the parent/carer. Our Allergen Aware Menu is free from the 14 legally declared allergens and is aligned closely with Juniper's Core menu where possible, so the pupil does not feel isolated at mealtimes. No other menu apart from the Allergen Aware Menu will be served until the bespoke Allergen Diet menu has been agreed and is in operation.

We know that pupils with certain medical conditions may need a special diet plan that is not necessarily centred around intolerances or allergens. For example, some pupils with conditions that involve swallowing difficulties (dysphagia) may require a modified texture diet such as fork mashed, smooth or pureed. We will support these pupils' requirements on an individual basis by working in conjunction with schools, parents and Juniper's Chef Manager to ensure a suitable and safe meal is available each day.

Allergen Diet Menu referrals received after February Half term will only be processed for the Spring/Summer Menu.

Allergen Diet Menu referrals received after September will only be processed for the Autumn/Winter Menu.

An Allergen Diet Menu will continue to be provided for future menu cycles until we receive confirmation that there is no longer a requirement.



Juniper will not be responsible for gradual re-introduction of food groups. Children will be treated by Juniper as either having an allergy or not. The reintroduction of food groups should be done outside of school time.

Schools must complete an Allergen Update Form (Appendix 3A) by mid-January for the Spring/Summer menu and July for the Autumn/ Winter menu. Schools should try and ensure that new September starters with an Allergen Diet requirement have supplied appropriate documentation by 1st July.

Information becoming available on pupil's needs between these times will be managed by the Juniper team as swiftly as resources permit.

Parents/carers and schools must be aware that there may be occasions when it is not possible to provide an appropriate meal for a child due to their complex dietary needs or high-risk allergens and as such packed lunch from home may be in the best interest of the child's safety.

Juniper will always use its best endeavours to reduce risk of cross contamination from allergens and the like within the provision of Allergen Diet Menus. It is not possible to guarantee that there will never be incidents of accidental cross contamination from shared or external food. All schools should be aware of these risks and do everything possible to mitigate them through their own protocols.

Nursery and Family Service

Schools and nurseries that adopt a family service are solely responsible for identification for pupils with medical diets. The use of lanyards is recommended but the choice of their use belongs to the school or nursery senior management team.

Lunchtime Service

Schools are responsible for identifying pupils with food allergies by either accompanying them along the entire length of the counter for service or – and the preferred method - the child wearing a lanyard detailing their name and the food exclusion required. Allergen Diets exclude self service areas and so it is recommended that pupils are escorted to these areas e.g. salad bars.

Juniper are only responsible for identification of pupils that are served by Juniper staff.



For each pupil with a food allergy a clear colour photo will be provided by the school and will be kept with a copy of their Allergen Diet Menu in a secure place in the kitchen for all Juniper catering staff to refer to.

In the absence of a lanyard, pupils should be escorted to the counter by a member of school staff.

For pupils deemed to be high risk, the school are recommended as part of their own Risk Assessments and protocols, to escort the pupil to the counter. All pupils requiring an adrenaline auto injector (AAI) are considered high risk. If a pupil is identified as high risk, therefore, to mitigate this risk we recommend they are escorted to the counter. It is helpful for schools and to Juniper catering teams to organise lunchtimes by year groups to aid identification further.

Nuts Statement

Juniper make every best endeavour to ensure that all our recipes are nut free and that we do not use any nut related products in our dishes.

May Contain Statement

Juniper is unable to guarantee that all the ingredients are sourced from 100% nut free (and other allergens) factories. Our suppliers are also unable to give such guarantees.

Roles and Responsibilities

Juniper

- vetting and quality control of suppliers;
- liaison with schools and parents/carers;
- allergen training for all existing staff;
- provision of suitably qualified dietitian;
- development of Allergen Diet Menu;
- devising and reviewing an Allergy Policy;
- offering schools an Allergen Risk Assessment service if requested (chargeable);
- inducting new staff, including those supplied by an agency, on allergy awareness;
- reporting and investigating all near misses/incidents to prevent re-occurrence and future learning and policy review and liaising with school; and,
- raising any operational concerns with the school.

School

- complete an Allergen Diet referral form;



- provide Health Care Plans to Juniper for each pupil impacted;
- provide a copy of the school's own Allergy Policy to Juniper upon request;
- ensure care plans are updated and shared if any changes occur;
- report and investigate all near misses/incidents to prevent re-occurrence and liaise/cooperate with Juniper in any investigation;
- inform of and share a copy of Juniper's Allergen Policy to parent/carer;
- act as intermediary between Juniper and parent/carer;
- the school is recognised as the data controller and Juniper will keep them informed of how Juniper uses any data and when it will be destroyed;
- ensure all forms are completed accurately;
- ensure appropriate medical evidence is provided to Juniper;
- share all documentation and supporting evidence with Juniper via EGRESS;
- update Juniper with Allergen requirements prior to each menu cycle (Appendix 3A);
- update Juniper with September starters Allergen documentation by 1st July each year;
- ensure a lanyard is worn by pupils with an Allergen Diet menu detailing food exclusions or escort (as recommended as best practice) pupils along the entire length of the counter (including any self-service points);
- provide 5 clear days' notice for packed lunches for school trips;
- it is recommended, as best practice, to escort all High-Risk pupils along the entire length of the counter (including any self-service points); and,
- deploy auto-adrenaline injectors (AAI) if required.

Parent/Carer

- submission of Allergen – (Referral Form Appendix 1A);
- submission of Supporting Medical Evidence;
- submission of Medical Evidence supporting the reintroduction of foods or ingredients to diet;
- provide suitable colour photo; and,
- provide a suitably healthy packed lunch if required.

Appendix 4A illustrates the procedure for Allergen referrals.



Procedure

The Allergen Referral Form (Appendix 1A) must be completed by the School's Designated Person or other appropriate member of school staff and signed by the parent or carer of the pupil requesting the school meal.

Documented evidence (from a medical professional) of the dietary requirement must be attached for the request to be processed. This is an industry-wide standard and is essential for the safeguarding of children.

- an Allergen Aware menu (only exclusive of the 14 stated allergens) will continue to be provided for future menu cycles until we receive confirmation that there is no longer a requirement;
- Juniper will not be responsible for gradual re-introduction of food groups; and,
- Juniper will at all times use its best endeavours to reduce risk of cross contamination from allergens and the like.

Parents/carers and schools must be aware that there may be occasions when it is not possible to provide an appropriate meal for a child due to their complex dietary needs or high-risk allergens and a packed lunch from home may be in the best interest of the child's safety. Upon data being received from the school, future invoicing will be amended to reflect any KS2 pupils who are refused a meal.

Chef Manager Allergen Procedure

Identification of children

Schools will ensure a lanyard detailing their name and the food exclusion required is worn by each pupil as required.

A colour photo must be provided to the Chef Manager and will be kept with the Allergen Menu in a secure place along with clear details of their medical dietary needs;

If no lanyard is provided, then the school should escort the pupil along the entire length of the counter (including any self-service areas).

For pupils deemed to be high risk, the school should escort the pupil to the counter.

High Risk is defined as those diagnosed with serious or severe allergies or reactions to food groups that put them at increased risk of life-threatening



reactions, such as anaphylaxis or anaphylactic shock. These pupils will have been prescribed an adrenaline auto-injector (AAI) for emergency use.

If at any time the Chef Manager or any member of Juniper staff are aware this policy is not being adhered to by the school, they must notify their Area Manager immediately.


Pre – service briefing

- Chef Manager to hold pre-service allergen briefing to all staff before each meal service.
- Chef Manager will go through each dish on the day's menu and identify which allergens are present. Allergens that may be present, but not used as ingredients are also to be identified.

Meal Service

- A nominated member of Juniper staff are to prepare each meal for each child with an Allergen Diet menu taking into account which foods to be avoided. A second member of staff should be identified in the case of absence.
- Dish to be checked and confirmed suitable by Chef Manager.
- As Allergen Diets exclude self service areas and so it is recommended that pupils are escorted to these areas e.g. salad bars by school staff.
- If a pupil has been highlighted as having an allergy but does not have an Allergen Diet menu then the school should be informed that they can only have the Allergen Aware Menu option (Appendix 5A) until an Allergen Diet referral has been completed and an Allergen Diet menu issued. You should contact your Area Manager and advise of new referral.
- If a dish with an allergy is returned to the counter, the Chef Manager should supervise its re-issue.



| | |
|--|---|
| Policy or Procedure Title | Allergen |
| Date Adopted by Board of Directors | 28 th June 2024 |
| Date last reviewed by Managing Director | 28 th June 2024 |
| Signed Off By Managing Director |  |
| Document Identifier | A – v1 – 2024 06 26 |
| Reviewed by | Michael Hales |
| Owned by | David Mackness |
| Summary of changes from previous version | N/A |
| Signed Off by managing Director/Date |  26-06-2024 |

Attached

- Appendix 1 - Allergen Referral Form
- Appendix 2 - Allergen Diet Sign Off Form
- Appendix 3 - Allergen Update Form
- Appendix 4 - Allergen Referral Process
- Appendix 5 - Allergen Aware & Packed Lunch Menus



| | |
|--|--|
| Pupil Reference : i.e. SCH123/Initials | |
| For Office Use | |

School and pupil's details - To be completed by the School's Designated Person

| | | | |
|---|------------------------|----------------------|-------|
| School attended by pupil | | | |
| Name and email of staff member completing this form | Name | Email | |
| Pupil Name | | | |
| Pupil Date of Birth | | Pupil Class and Year | |
| Parent/Carer Name | | | |
| Parent/Carer Contact Details | Contact Details | | |
| | Home | Work | Email |
| | | | |

Details of Allergen – For completion by the School's Designated Person

| | | | |
|----------------------|--|--|--|
| State the Allergen/s | Details Date of Diagnosis | | |
|----------------------|--|--|--|

| | | |
|--------------------------------|-----|----|
| Is there a Care Plan in place? | Yes | No |
|--------------------------------|-----|----|

The pupil must bring a packed lunch from home until a bespoke Allergen Menu has been approved. Only an Allergen Aware Menu will be available as an alternative.

| | | | |
|--|-----|----|----------|
| Has the pupil been prescribed an AAI for school use and where is it located? | Yes | No | Location |
|--|-----|----|----------|

Signatories

| | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|-------|----|
| School Contact Name | | | |
| School Contact Signature | | Dated | |
| Medical Evidence of Allergen Attached | | Yes | No |
| Parent Carer/Signature | | Dated | |

Pupil Reference : i.e. SCH123/Initials

For Office Use

School and pupil's details

Pupil Name

Pupil Date of Birth

Pupil Class and Year

Parent/Carer Name

Parent/Carer Contact Details

Contact Details

Home

Work

Email

Acceptance and Agreement of Menu

Allergen Menu Accepted

Yes

No

If No, state reasons

Is an additional meeting required?

Yes

No

Signatories

School Contact Name

School Contact Signature

Dated

Parent/Carer Name

Parent Carer/Signature

Dated

Juniper Contact Name

Juniper Contact Signature

Dated

Parent/carer advises School that pupil has a suspected food allergy or medical specific diet is required



Allergen referral form 1A is completed by School's designated Person



Medical evidence provided to Juniper along with Care Plan by School's designated Person



Juniper Dietitian devises a bespoke menu based on medical evidence provided



Menu agreed and signed off by parent/carer and copy provided to Chef Manager to follow

Pupil brings own packed lunch to school each day until the personalised Allergen Menu can be prepared by Dietitian

Allergen Aware Menu



YOUR MENU @

ALLERGEN AWARE MENU

Spring - Summer 2024

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|----------------------------|--|---|---|---|--|
| Choice 1 | Greek Chicken with Jacket Wedges | Lamb Bolognese with Rice | Roast Chicken with Roast Potatoes | Lamb & Vegetable Jollof Rice | Lamb Burger (no bun) with Chips |
| Choice 2 | Jerk Sausage & Jacket Wedges (PB) | Italian Bean Stew with Rice (PB) | Cauliflower Bites with Roast Potatoes (PB) | Mediterranean Roast Vegetable Risotto (PB) | Vegan Burger (no bun) with Chips (PB) |
| Choice 3 | Jacket Potato with Baked Beans | Jacket Potato with Baked Beans | Jacket Potato with Baked Beans | Jacket Potato with Baked Beans | Jacket Potato with Baked Beans |
| Vegetable Selection | Sweetcorn Fresh Broccoli | Green Beans Fresh Carrots | Seasonal Fresh Vegetables | Mixed Vegetables Sweetcorn | Garden Peas Baked Beans |
| Dessert of the Day | Fresh Fruit | Fresh Fruit | Fresh Fruit | Fresh Fruit | Fresh Fruit |

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AND DISCOVER

PB - Plant Based

| |
|---|
| <h2>Allergen Aware Packed Lunch Menu</h2> |
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Please find below the allergen aware packed lunch specification for Newham Schools served by Juniper in the absence of an agreed medical diet.

Note that :

- 🌿 lunches may be required first thing in the morning (i.e. 08:30 hours) due to an early school outing,
- 🌿 the school are required to place an order for **allergen aware** packed lunches at least one week before they are required; and,
- 🌿 the provision of a packed lunch will be treated as a substitution of a midday meal.

| Gluten Free Pasta Salad |
|--|
| Chicken, Sweetcorn & Peppers (vegan mayo optional) |
| Cauliflower Bites with Peppers (tomato/salsa dressing optional) |

Also to be included:

- 🌿 cucumber/carrot crudités (with salsa or vegan mayo dip)
- 🌿 whole fruit i.e., apple, satsuma or banana
- 🌿 330ml bottled water