



Statement

At Twinkling Toddlers, we are fully committed to ensuring that every child's dietary needs are met safely, and that all mealtimes and snack times are managed with the utmost care. This policy outlines our procedures for managing food allergies, special dietary requirements, and choking risks, in full compliance with the latest EYFS 2025 framework.

Definitions

1. **Allergy** – A condition in which the body has an exaggerated response to a substance (e.g. food and drug) also known as hypersensitivity.
2. **Allergen** – A normally harmless substance that triggers an allergic reaction in the immune system of a susceptible person.
3. **Intolerance** – Intolerances are more common with symptoms appearing slower after touching and/ or consuming a substance. Symptoms can include bloating, stomach cramps and discomfort.
4. **Anaphylaxis** – **Anaphylaxis, or anaphylactic shock**, is a sudden, severe and potentially life-threatening allergic reaction to food, stings, bites, or medicines.
5. **Epipen /Jext/ Emerade**– Brand name for syringe style device containing the drug Adrenalin, - which is ready for immediate inter-muscular administration.
6. **Minimized Risk Environment**– An environment where risk management practices (e.g. Risk assessment forms) have minimised the risk of (allergen) exposure.
7. **Health Care Plan**– A detailed document outlining an individual child's condition treatment, and action plan for location of Epipen.

Allergy and Dietary Needs Management

- Before a child starts at the setting, detailed information will be gathered regarding:
 - Food allergies and intolerances
 - Medical dietary needs
 - Cultural and religious dietary preferences
- This information will be:
 - Documented and stored securely
 - Shared with all staff to ensure awareness and accountability
 - Reviewed regularly and updated if any changes are reported by parents or carers

Allergy Action Plans

- For children with known allergies, an Allergy Action Plan will be created in partnership with:
 - Parents or guardians
 - Relevant healthcare professionals
- Action plans will be:
 - Displayed in appropriate areas (e.g., kitchen and eating areas) discreetly and respectfully
 - Regularly reviewed and updated as needed



Named Allergy Lead for Each Child

- A specific staff member will be designated as responsible for checking each child's food before serving, ensuring it is safe and meets their dietary requirements.

Food Preparation and Labelling

- All food will be prepared with allergy awareness in mind:
 - Clear separation of allergen-containing foods
 - Strict prevention of cross-contamination during preparation and serving
 - Labelling of all prepared foods and ingredients where applicable

Safe Introduction of Solid Foods – SEN Children

- Introduction of solid foods will be:
 - Planned in consultation with parents or carers
 - Gradually introduced to monitor for allergic reactions
 - Carried out with close supervision and care

Choking Prevention Measures

- Food will be prepared and served in ways that reduce choking risks:
 - Foods will be cut into age-appropriate sizes
 - Whole grapes, cherry tomatoes, and similar foods will be halved or quartered
 - Tough or sticky foods will be avoided for younger children
- Children will be seated in highchairs or low chairs during all meals and snacks
- Distractions (toys, running, screens) will be minimised during eating

Supervision and Emergency Preparedness

- A Paediatric First Aid (PFA) trained member of staff will be present at all times during meals and snack times
- Staff will sit facing the children to closely observe for signs of choking or allergic reactions
- Children will be closely supervised to prevent food swapping or sharing

Incident Management and Reporting

- Any choking incident or allergic reaction will be:
 - Responded to immediately by trained staff
 - Documented in the incident log
 - Reported to parents/carers as soon as possible
- Near-miss incidents will be regularly reviewed to identify patterns and prevent recurrence



Staff Training

- All staff involved in food preparation and supervision will receive training in:
 - Food hygiene – (The Safer Food Group)
 - Allergy awareness
 - Choking prevention
 - EYFS-aligned Paediatric First Aid (PFA) – (High Speed Training)

Parental Communication

- Parents will be informed regularly about:
 - Menus and meal plans
 - Changes in allergy or dietary management procedures
 - Any incidents involving food or allergies

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed **annually** or sooner if changes in legislation, statutory guidance, or safeguarding practice occur.