Allergies and Intolerances Policy

Grass Roots Nursery Group
Updated September 2026

1. Policy Statement

Grass Roots Nursery Group is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and medically robust environment for all children. We recognise that allergies and intolerances can pose significant risks and require clear procedures, consistent communication, and strict kitchen and room-based controls. We work in partnership with families and health professionals to minimise risk, prevent cross-contamination, and ensure children with dietary restrictions participate fully and safely in nursery life.

2. Purpose & Scope

This policy ensures:

- all allergies and intolerances are identified before enrolment
- staff follow consistent, safe procedures during meals, snacks, and activities
- kitchen teams follow strict allergen-safe preparation protocols
- emergency responses to allergic reactions are clear, fast, and safe
- medication is stored and accessed correctly
- outings remain safe for children with allergies

This policy applies to:

- all employees
- apprentices and students
- volunteers
- agency staff
- parents/carers

It covers:

- diagnosed allergies
- intolerances
- non-food allergies
- emergency response
- medication storage
- incident reporting

3. Statutory Framework & Reference Guidance

This policy operates in full compliance with:

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework (DfE, 2026)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE, 2026)
- NHS Allergy & Anaphylaxis Guidance
- UKHSA Health Protection in Children & Young People Settings
- Food Information Regulations (Allergen Labelling)
- Data Protection Act 2018 & UK GDPR

4. Operational Procedures

A. Identification & Pre-Enrolment Requirements

Health Declarations

Before a child starts, parents/carers complete a digital Health & Dietary Information Form on Famly

detailing:

- diagnosed allergies or intolerances
- history of reactions or anaphylaxis
- prescribed medication (e.g., antihistamines, adrenaline auto-injectors)
- dietary restrictions
- current weaning stage (if applicable)

Medical Documentation

For diagnosed allergies, parents must provide:

- a GP or consultant letter confirming the allergy
- an Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP) completed with the nursery

Weaning & Allergen Introduction

Children under 12 months follow the Home-First Allergen Introduction Protocol outlined in the Weaning & Allergen Policy.

B. Risk Minimisation & Safe Mealtime Procedures

Kitchen Protocols

- Allergen-safe meals are prepared in designated areas using colour-coded equipment.
- All meals leaving the kitchen are labelled with the child's name, room, and allergen status.
- Staff check labels before serving food.
- No food swapping is permitted under any circumstances.

Room-Based Controls

- Staff maintain direct line-of-sight supervision during meals.
- Children sit upright at tables or highchairs.
- Spherical foods (grapes, cherry tomatoes, sausages) are cut lengthwise into quarters.
- Hard or sticky foods are modified or omitted for safety.
- A Paediatric First Aid (PFA) trained member of staff is present during all meals.

Non-Food Allergens

Staff check all sensory materials, craft supplies, lotions, soaps, and outdoor plants against allergy records before use.

C. Emergency Response to Allergic Reactions

If a child shows signs of an allergic reaction:

Mild/Moderate Reaction

(e.g., hives, swelling around lips/face, abdominal pain)

- Administer prescribed antihistamine immediately.
- Monitor closely and contact parents.

Severe Reaction / Anaphylaxis

(e.g., breathing difficulty, wheezing, throat tightness, pale/floppy state)

- Call **999** immediately.
- Administer the child's adrenaline auto-injector into the outer mid-thigh.
- Note the exact time of administration.
- If symptoms persist after 5 minutes, administer a second auto-injector if available.
- Notify the Nursery Manager/DSL.
- A staff member accompanies the child to hospital if parents have not yet arrived.

D. Medication Storage, Access & Outings

Storage

- Allergy medication is stored in clearly labelled, unlocked red emergency bags.
- Bags are kept out of children's reach but immediately accessible to staff.
- Medication is never stored in locked safes or coded cabinets.

Expiry Checks

- Management conducts monthly audits of all medication expiry dates.

Outings

- Emergency allergy bags, medication, IHPs, and a mobile phone accompany staff on all outings (Wild Roots, allotment visits, community walks).

5. Incident Recording & Review

Recording

- All allergic reactions or near-miss incidents are logged on Famly for parent visibility.
- A formal incident report is completed on CPOMS within 24 hours.

Review

- Management conducts a debrief within 48 hours to review:
    - room supervision
    - kitchen preparation
    - communication
    - risk assessments
- Procedures are updated if required.

6. Monitoring & Review

This policy is reviewed annually or sooner if guidance, medical standards, or operational needs change.
The Nursery Manager and DSL are responsible for ensuring consistent implementation across all settings.

7. Linked Policies

- Food & Nutrition Policy
- Weaning & Allergen Introduction Policy
- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Inclusion & SEND Policy
- Intimate Care Framework
- Health & Safety Policy