

Allergens Policy Statement



Aspens firmly believe in providing high quality food to our customers and clients that is safe to eat.

We are therefore committed to reducing the risk to our customers with regards to the provision of food and the consumption of allergens which could lead to an allergic reaction.

Aspens accept our duty to comply with all relevant legislation concerning allergen information.

Aspens acknowledges that the successful implementation of this policy and management of allergens requires the commitment and support from all employees. To achieve this Aspens will:

- Work closely with our supply chain to ensure accurate information on all products that may contain allergens.
- Maintain a database of all our recipes, clearly listing ingredients and highlighting those containing allergens.
- Work closely with our clients in assisting in the support of customers with known allergies, including meeting with parents, if requested to discuss any special requirements.
- Display signs that encourage our customers to ask about allergens in the foods being served.
- Ensure that our employees have the necessary training and information to provide our customers with accurate guidance on allergens.
- Through good hygiene practices and adhering to Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP), reduce the risk of cross contamination in our kitchens.
- Audit our operations to ensure the above policy and practices are working effectively and review the policy as necessary.
- Operate as far is practical a nut free environment within our primary and secondary school kitchens. Unless otherwise requested.

Responsibilities

The Directors of the Company will:

- Ensure the development and review of the Company Allergen Policy.
- Ensure that the necessary resources are available for implementing the Allergen Policy and detailed arrangements, as well as the subsequent monitoring of performance.
- Ensure that the appropriate information, training and supervision is provided to all employees and apprentices.

• The QHSE Department will:

- Develop the Company's allergen policy and procedure to ensure that it's legal and moral obligations are met.
- Work with the Primary Authority Agreement to ensure the policy and procedures are assured advice.
- Ensure that the policy and procedures are communicated to all stakeholders to ensure the its effective implementation.
- Provide relevant training material to ensure the effective implementation of the policy.
- Work with the Food Department to review and update policy and procedures when necessary.

• The Procurement Department & Food Department will:

- Effectively communicate the allergen policy and procedures to all stakeholders.
- Ensure that all menu cycles are supported with accurate recipes.
- Ensure that all recipes will have the relevant allergen information.
- Ensure that suppliers provide accurate allergen information on products on the Company Approved Product List (APL).
- Ensure that any changes to products and recipes are communicated to Unit Managers.
- Provide additional support at Unit level where necessary.

• The Operations Team will:

- Ensure that all units have implemented the Company Allergen policy and procedure.
- With the Unit Manager, meet with Parents of RED category students to discuss and agree requirements where appropriate
- Discuss with the client any issues concerning the means in which information, concerning students with allergens, is communicated to the Unit Manager and the identification of them, *and* agreeing a solution to ensure that the allergen procedures can be fully implemented.
- Audit the unit annually to ensure the effectiveness of the policy and procedures

The Unit Manager will:

- Ensure that the Company's allergen policy and procedures are followed at Unit level.
- Liaise with the school to identify which students have special dietary needs & use the schools' procedure to identify them (through employees, wristbands, lanyards)
- Follow all recipes to ensure that allergen information is relevant.
- Complete the allergen matrix when producing dishes.
- Purchase correct products as per the Company APL.
- With the Operations Manager meet with any parents to discuss any individual student requirements.
- Ensure that allergen information is kept up to date if changes to recipes are made.
- Check product packaging before use/consumption as the packing will carry the manufacturer/suppliers up to date information and update allergen information as necessary.
- Ensure that where there are any category red students the correct procedures are followed at all times.
- Enter information onto the Unit's cashless system, where relevant.
- Ensure that all employees are aware of all information relating to students and their allergies.
- Complete the Company's allergen training and ensure all Unit employees have been trained.
- Support the School/Academy in the implementation of their own Allergy Procedure.
- Immediately report any concerns or issues to their Operations Manager

All Company Employees and Apprentices will:

- Ensure that they have read and understood the Allergen Policy
- Ensure that they follow the correct procedures detailed in the Allergen Policy to ensure the safety of students.
- Co-operating with the company on matters of allergen, including completing any training and reporting any concerns to their manager.

The School/Academy will:

- Work with parents/carers to gather allergen information
- Provide the Catering Manager/Supervisor with information relating to the school's Allergy Procedure/Policy.
- Provide the Catering Manager/Supervisor with an up to date list of students with any dietary requirements, including copies of the Special Diets/Allergy Form.

- **The Parent/Guardian/Carer will:**
 - Inform the school/Academy of their child's allergy as soon as possible.
 - Complete the Special Diets/Allergy Form and return to the school.
 - Where necessary meet with the Operations Manager/ Unit Manager to discuss any specific requirements relating to their child's allergy.
 - Inform the School/Academy of any changes.
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- **The Student will:**
 - Work with the catering team to follow agreed procedures relating to foods.
 - Take care to *knowingly* avoid any foods which may cause an allergic reaction.

Arrangements

It is not a requirement in catering establishments that all food is labelled with allergy information, but our employees must have access to ingredient information.

Working with our suppliers we have uploaded allergen information onto the recipe database. All recipes are kept on this database where each ingredient is clearly listed.

Due to the possible severity of nut and peanut allergies, as a company we will not knowingly serve foods containing nuts or peanuts, such as peanut butter, Nutella, nut oils and foods containing nuts within our primary and secondary schools. Only with the signed agreement of our client will we serve products that contain nuts in separate 6th form outlets and colleges.

Whilst we are unable to completely eliminate the possibility that nut, or nut products may be present in ingredients supplied to us, we require our suppliers to make practicable efforts to ensure they comply with this.

It is our legal obligation to provide accurate allergen information about the foods that we produce and service. However, in order to meet this obligation, we need our clients to provide us with up to date and accurate information of students that have allergies or intolerances.

Where we have been informed of a student with severe allergies or who has suffered from anaphylactic symptoms they will be categorised as **RED** and will be treated in line with the procedures set out. Other students with an intolerance will be categorised as **AMBER**.

Some families and students may have a dietary preference based on lifestyle choosing to exclude or include certain foods. These students will be categorised as **BLUE**

Working with the school/academy we will seek to make the relevant information available to parents/carers of students who have food allergies.

Photos and allergy requirements of students should be supplied by the school/academy to the catering team in hard copies which are visible within our kitchens. Where systems allow, this information will also be entered on to the Unit's cashless systems. Employees are briefed on requirements and made aware of allergies and special dietary requirements.

Clear signage is displayed, specifically directing any customers with allergy concerns to a member of our catering teams. Our teams have access to print outs from our recipe database. Further escalation of this process can be taken directly to the catering manager on site and subsequently to our team of Operations Managers and Head of Food

All unit managers and supervisors have completed the necessary training to support the effective implementation of the allergen policy.




An Allergen Folder will be kept on site, this will contain a copy of the current Allergen Policy and relevant allergen matrices for all foods produced by the Unit. This folder must be kept up to date and accessible to all employees




The successful implementation of the Allergen policy requires the support and co-operation of the Procurement Department, Food Team, Unit Manager/Supervisor, all employees, The School/Academy, The Parent/Guardian/Carer and the Students.

Failure to follow the allergen procedure will be deemed as a breach of Company policy and result in disciplinary action which could result in dismissal as gross misconduct.

Special Diets

In order to ensure *that* the safety of students, particularly at primary school, the following procedure categorises the student depending upon their needs:

-  **RED** serve reaction/anaphylactic symptoms disclosed
-  **AMBER** other allergy or intolerance
-  **BLUE** excludes foods due to lifestyle preference

-  **RED** *will have an agreed plated meal prepared & served if requested*
-  **AMBER** *will have a suitable meal served from the counter.*
-  **BLUE** *will have a suitable meal served from the counter.*

Prior to the beginning of each term the school must provide the Unit manager with written confirmation of the allergen and special diet requirements for students, which students have allergies or dietary requirements. In addition, the school must provide this information for new students or any changes throughout the year.

Ideally this information should be provided using the Company's Special Diets Form and signed by the student's Parent/Guardian/Carer and supported by medical evidence where appropriate. The information on this form will be used to categorise the student's dietary needs. A photo of the student should be supplied as well. If a student is categorised as **RED**, then the Operations Manager/Unit Manager must meet the parents/guardian/carers to discuss the students' needs and agreed actions, including permission to share this information with the catering team. These must be documented on the Special Diets Form.

The Operations Team will decide the most appropriate method for this information to be shared with all employees. The student information should be kept in a folder which is accessible to all employees. Ideally the information should also be displayed in a prominent area of the catering department, near to the service point; where employees can easily refer to them at service. However, they should not be in view of others, such as teachers, visitors and students. Whatever method is used all employees must be trained and made fully aware of it.

RED Category Controls

Once the procedure above has been followed and a menu agreed for the student the following controls must be in place at all times

The Manager/Chef must communicate to the kitchen when food for **RED** category students is being prepared. Where possible this should be in a separate area, if this is not possible then separated by time from other foods containing allergens. Prior to preparation the area and all equipment must be thoroughly cleaned using the 2-stage cleaning method and/or dishwasher to prevent cross contamination.

When preparing the meals, the Manager/Chef must thoroughly wash their hands and wear a disposable plastic apron over their uniform to prevent cross contamination. (The same control used when handling raw meat should apply) Care must be taken at all stages to prevent any allergen cross contamination including storage of ingredients, preparation, cooking and service.

Once completed the meal must be plated and wrapped in cling film, then clearly labelled with the student's name, date and dish description. If the cling film at any time is torn, removed or damaged the meal **MUST NOT** be served and immediately disposed of. It is the Manager/Chefs' responsibility to check the dish before service to ensure that it is correctly covered and labelled.

The meal must be clearly identified to the members of employees responsible for serving the student, this information must be communicated directly to the employees by the Manager/Chef during the pre-service briefing.

The meal must be served directly to the student by the nominated employee responsible for serving the student.

The Allergen Briefing Sheet must be signed by the person who has prepared the meal and the person who has served the meal.

It is for the student's safety that the above procedures are followed at all times, if at any time this cannot be followed *then* the Unit Manager must agree an action with the school

At no time can a **RED** student be served food from the counter due to the risk of cross contamination.

AMBER & BLUE Controls

Students that are **AMBER** or **BLUE** can be served from the counter ensuring that they are served the correct meal. Employees must be briefed before service by the Unit Manager/Chef using the Allergen Briefing Sheet.

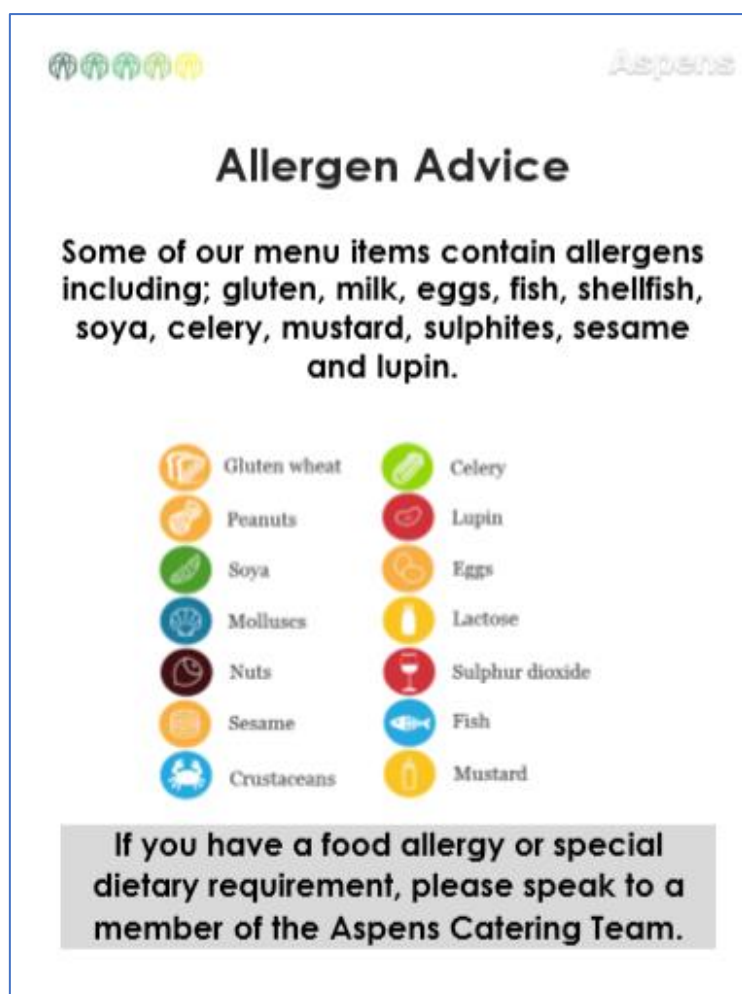
For delivered Services the above procedure must be followed for **RED, AMBER & BLUE** students. In addition, a completed accurate Allergen Matrix for all dishes, must accompany the food being delivered for service. This must be handed to the

service employees upon arrival. A copy of the Allergen matrix must be completed by the production kitchen and kept for a period of 6 months.

Food Production and Service

It is a legal requirement that any pre-packed foods containing any of the key allergen must be clearly labelled to identify them. Some products may also contain the statement 'may contain' which highlights the possibility of cross contamination from the factory or production. These products will not be suitable for students with severe allergen risk due to the risk of cross contamination.

The Allergen Notice must be clearly displayed in a prominent position in all service areas instructing customers to ask a member of the Catering employees about allergens in the food produced on site.



Any allergens contained within the foods produced on site must be clearly communicated to any customer upon request. This information must be available for all foods in all service areas.

An accurate Allergen Matrix must be available for all foods served in the Unit to ensure that verbal information is accurate and can be cross referenced. Within secondary schools/academies this must include foods for all service period, breakfast, breaktime and lunchtime and all foods such as cold deli, hot deli, cakes

and bakes. This information must be kept in the Allergen File. All employees must have access to this file. Allergen matrices must be kept for as long as they are valid.

All employees should also be aware and vigilant of cross contamination during service, such as salad bars, unwrapped cakes sharing a display unit, serving utensils & spillages.

A preservice brief must be completed and recorded prior to the commencement of service. This will include at a minimum, menu and accompaniments, portion size and allergen. A record of the preservice brief must be kept in the allergen folder for future reference.

Hospitality Catering

Where possible it should be established at the time of booking if any persons attending have any allergies or special dietary requirements.

If YES separate foods must be prepared and labelled - following the procedures list in the **RED** category controls section.

An Allergen Matrix needs to be completed for each booking to ensure that any allergen information can be accurately communicated upon request. A copy must be kept in the Allergen File on site and retained for 6 months.

If the hospitality is taking place during normal service times, then an A5 sign needs to be displayed



For hospitality booking outside of normal service times or in remote locations then completed, accurate Allergen Matrix must be sent and left with the delivery

Allergen Investigation

All allergen incidents or near misses must be reported immediately to the Area/Operations Manager who will inform the Head of Food and QHSE Department.

All incidents must be investigated by Area/Operations Manager within 24 hours of the incident occurring. The investigation must include a review of procedures and employee knowledge and compliance with procedures; in order to identify the root cause of the incident. Once completed the finding must be communicated to the relevant parties along with any recommendations.

The investigation must be recorded on the relevant forms.

Dealing with Severe Allergic Reaction

When someone has an allergic reaction to a food it is important that all employees should know what to do.

Important - Warning signs

It is not always clear if someone is having an allergic reaction because other serious conditions can have similar symptoms.

However, warning signs to look out for are:

- if they are finding it hard to breathe,
- if their lips or mouth are swollen,
- if they collapse.
- **If the above happens, this is what you should do:**
- Do not move the customer. This could make them worse.
- Call 999 immediately and describe what is happening; explain that you think the customer may be having a serious allergic reaction or anaphylaxis (pronounced anna-fill-axis). It is important to mention the word anaphylaxis to ensure that the urgency of the situation is communicated, and that appropriate medication will be available.
- Ask the customer if they carry an adrenaline pen and, if necessary, help them retrieve it.
- If an employee or first aider is trained in administering adrenaline, and the customer is struggling to self-administer, then
- offer to assist them.
- Send someone outside to wait for the ambulance while you stay with your customer until help arrives.