



ALLERGEN POLICY

In compliance with Food Information (Wales) Regulations 2014, The Big Fresh Catering Company will ensure that allergen information for all food items offered is readily available at all kitchens/sites. This information will be contained in the Allergen File. The Allergen File will be updated upon any menu or product change and reviewed on an annual basis. Any substitute product received into the kitchen will be recorded on the Allergen File to ensure staff can give the correct allergen information if required.

All kitchens will display food intolerance signs which will be visible to all customers. The Big Fresh Catering Company will ensure all products are checked for allergenic ingredients and all products will be clearly identified. The product specification sheets containing all allergen information will be kept at The Big Fresh Catering Company's Head Office. Product specification sheets will be supplied for any substitute product from the contracted suppliers.

It is the responsibility of the schools to ensure they keep up to date allergen information for pupils within their school information management system and inform the Kitchen Manager of any changes.

All allergen free meals will be prepared first in a thoroughly cleaned and sanitised area, labelled and stored appropriately. Disposable blue aprons must be worn when preparing allergen free food. Equipment used when preparing/serving an allergen free meal should be thoroughly washed and sterilised, washed in a dishwasher or washed using antibacterial detergent where a dishwasher or sanitising sink is not available prior to use.

FOOD ALLERGIES / SPECIAL DIETS

What is an allergy?

An allergy is an adverse reaction to food which causes the immune system to react in minutes presenting symptoms such as nettle rash, lips swelling and difficulty breathing. In severe cases it can be caused by the slightest trace of an ingredient. An allergic reaction can make some people very ill and has in some cases lead to death.

14 allergens listed under EU Law:

Celery
Cereals containing gluten
Crustaceans
Eggs
Fish
Lupin
Milk
Molluscs
Mustard
Nuts
Peanuts
Sesame Seeds
Soybeans
Sulphur Dioxide/Sulphites

Food Intolerance

A food intolerance, or a food sensitivity occurs when a person has difficulty digesting a particular food. This can lead to symptoms such as intestinal gas, abdominal pain or diarrhoea. A food intolerance is sometimes confused with or mislabelled as a food allergy. Food intolerances involve the digestive system e.g. lactose intolerance, gluten (Coeliac Disease).

Procedure for dealing with Food Allergies or Special Diets

If the school approach the Chef/Kitchen Manager or Area Manager with a pupil that has a specific dietary requirement due to a food allergy or food intolerance the following procedure must be followed:

- Chef/Kitchen Manager contacts Area Manager with details of the pupil and/or Area Manager will contact the school for the information provided by parent/guardian/consultant/dietician
- Area Manager will arrange a meeting or telephone interview with the parent/guardian (if required) to discuss the special dietary requirements
- A letter from the GP or hospital is required confirming the specific allergy/intolerance. Referrals may come via the dieticians
- Appropriate allergen menu will be provided for the parent/guardian's perusal. Product specifications are checked for the specific allergen and a bespoke menu for the pupil is developed if necessary
- Agreed menu will be provided to kitchen and parent/guardian

Minimising the risk

All staff within the kitchen producing or serving food to the pupil must be trained so everyone is aware of the person affected and food allergy or intolerance

Make it clear to everyone which foods and ingredients are a problem and could cause the allergic response and therefore must be avoided

Ensure everyone knows what to do if a reaction occurs and who to contact immediately

All information relating to a specific dietary requirement must be kept confidential and safeguarded under the General Data Protection Regulations