

Peanut and Tree Nut policy for St Paul's Church, Camberley

About allergies

An allergic reaction occurs when the immune system overreacts to a particular food. Antibodies (immunoglobulin E) in the body mistakenly treat certain proteins in food as threatening and trigger the production of chemicals (e.g., histamine) which cause the allergy symptoms. These symptoms can range from mild, to severe and life threatening.

If a child or adult allergy sufferer comes into contact with such an allergen, they can have either an allergic response (itchy mouth and tongue, swelling of lips, raised itchy rash called hives/urticaria, vomiting, nausea, abdominal pain, diarrhoea, runny nose/sneezing) or a anaphylaxis response (swelling of tongue and throat, raspy breathing, difficulty swallowing, change in voice, wheezing, coughing, dizziness, collapse, loss of consciousness, or become pale and floppy when observed in babies).

There are 14 major food allergies including peanuts and tree nuts, however this policy focuses on these two allergies alone.

Peanuts belong to the legume family (not a nut as often commonly thought) and the eight tree nuts include: almonds, brazil nuts, cashews, hazelnuts, macadamia, pecan, pistachio, walnut/shear nuts. Some foods contain the word nut but are not (e.g. coconut, butternut squash) and an allergy to peanuts does not mean an allergy to all legumes (peas, beans etc).

Peanut and tree nuts can also be found in the listed ingredients of other products, such as shampoo, conditioners, cosmetics, lotions, and soaps. Of these, soaps are most likely to be an issue at St Paul's and are included in the scope of this policy.

Policy

St Paul's is committed to taking allergies seriously by raising awareness of peanuts and tree nuts on behalf of those with allergies to them.

This is achieved in the following ways, by ensuring that:

- any food purchased, prepared, or otherwise provided at an event organised by St Paul's will not contain peanuts or tree nuts as listed ingredients
- any food purchased, prepared, or otherwise provided by any third-party users of St Paul's property will not contain peanuts or tree nuts as listed ingredients.
- any hand soaps provided at St Paul's will not contain peanut or tree nuts as listed ingredients.
- effective communication is regularly provided to all members and staff of St Paul's, together with external users to reinforce the peanut and tree nut free approach above.
- empowering those responsible for the distribution of food to politely remove any foods containing peanut or tree nut as listed ingredients from display.

- the children and youth teams are aware of children with peanut and tree nut allergies and maintain an allergy plan for each child as provided by the parent/guardian.

Procedure

If food on site contains peanuts or tree nuts, the food will be politely removed and those with allergies, or their parent/guardian in the case of a child, will be informed of the potential contact with an allergen. They will be expected to remain vigilant to symptoms thereafter.

St Paul's has a first aid kit and antihistamine medication will be stored there (Chlorphenamine / Piriton) which can be used to help reduce the symptoms of an allergic response. The correct dose should be administered in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, and medical advice sought if symptoms do not subside.

In terms of a more severe, anaphylactic response, it is the responsibility of the allergen sufferer who has anaphylactic reactions (or their parent/guardian in the case of a child) to carry appropriately dosed injectable adrenaline (e.g., 2 x Jext pens, Emerade or other Epi-pen) to manage their condition. One pen to be injected immediately into the muscle of the outer thigh on suspicion of an anaphylactic reaction, and a second pen administered 5 minutes later if there has been no response. Ideally, those trained in the use of adrenaline pens should administer these. The ambulance service is to be called, using 999 as soon as anaphylaxis is suspected.

Signed: A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Darwent', written over a horizontal line.

Dated: 7th November 2022

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