

Allergens Update Autumn 2022

Whilst much of the focus has been on Covid 19 risk management, we are remaining absolutely focused on food allergens.



As a member of the **Anaphylaxis Campaign**, Caterlink would encourage all schools to access the resources available on their website.

<https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/information-training/allergywise-training/for-schools/> Many of these are free and apply to Teachers and Parents. There are also student learning session packs available for multiple key stages.

We understand that Allergens amongst children do not stop at the 14 legally defined allergens and dietary needs can vary greatly across different children and different schools. Please let us know if your pupils have specific dietary needs.

It always helps to separate out categories of needs so that we can understand and best manage needs. These categories are:

- Life threatening allergies
- Other allergies
- Intolerances
- Coeliac disease
- Religious diets
- Lifestyle choices

We always advise schools to request medical evidence from parents in order to understand risks, needs and manage diets



As Covid 19 arrangements change and evolve our teams will continue to adapt and coordinate our food services around your specific site needs and management of “bubbles”

8 Steps to managing Allergens in “bubbles”

1. Caterlink site teams continue to operate according to our Allergy and Special Diet Guide policy and procedures, including holding daily pre- service allergen briefings. We would welcome key school staff to be part of these so that each day's food allergens changes are understood by all.



The image shows two documents. On the left is a large table titled 'Allergen Management' with columns for 'Allergen', 'Menu Item', 'Preparation', 'Cooking', 'Serving', and 'Allergen'. It contains a grid for recording allergen information. On the right is a smaller document, possibly a menu or a briefing sheet, with a yellow header and a table of food items and their allergen status.



2. Where schools are operating “bubbles” and students remain in classrooms or remotely, Caterlink Allergen Champions are always available prior to and during mealtimes to answer questions on food allergens. We would encourage schools to review their management of food allergies and intolerances regularly to ensure that bubbles and the school staff in them are familiar with the arrangements for students' dietary requirements if this is something they do not usually manage.

3. Prior to Covid19, many schools would usually have operated dining hall allergen management systems such as colour tokens, colour wristbands, lanyards, service till display information or early presentation to service. In many cases now this is not possible with remote dining “bubbles”. Please let Caterlink staff know if we can assist further in helping your school and staff to manage student dietary needs.



4. Check which children in your “bubble” have allergies, intolerances or other dietary needs.

5. Ensure that children **choose** from the correct menu.

6. Ensure that this is clearly **communicated** to the catering staff.

7. Identify which of the foods are special diets when received from the catering staff.

8. Double check with the child that they have the correct foods.