

BERMAGUI PRESCHOOL



4.23 Nuts, Nut Products and Other Allergens Policy

This policy is guided by the paramount consideration that children's safety, rights and best interests are upheld above all other considerations in all decisions, actions and practices.

This policy has been developed by Bermagui Preschool in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor, educators and staff and approved by the Approved Provider.

Date Approved: August 2026

Review Date: August 2029

Aim

Bermagui Preschool is committed to providing a safe, healthy and inclusive environment for all children, including those with diagnosed food allergies and at risk of anaphylaxis. The Preschool aims to minimise the risk of exposure to nuts, nut products and other known allergens while supporting the participation, wellbeing and safety of every child.

Bermagui Preschool is a Nut Free Preschool. Families, educators, volunteers, students and visitors are requested not to bring peanuts, tree nuts or foods containing nuts onto the Preschool premises. While every reasonable precaution is taken to maintain a nut free environment, it is not possible to guarantee that the service is completely free from traces of nuts or other allergens. Accordingly, the Preschool implements comprehensive risk minimisation, communication and emergency management procedures to protect children with allergies and anaphylaxis.

Background

Food allergies are common in young children and may be triggered by foods including peanuts, tree nuts, eggs, milk, dairy products, soy, wheat, sesame, fish, shellfish and some fruits. While any allergic reaction has the potential to become serious, anaphylaxis is the most severe form of allergic reaction and requires immediate treatment with an adrenaline autoinjector and urgent medical assistance.

Bermagui Preschool recognises that the successful management of allergies and anaphylaxis relies on collaboration between families, educators, health professionals and the Preschool community. Through proactive planning, staff training, communication and appropriate emergency procedures, the Preschool aims to minimise the likelihood of exposure to allergens while ensuring children with diagnosed allergies can safely participate in all aspects of the educational program.

This policy should be read in conjunction with Policy 4.21 Reducing the Risk of Allergies and Anaphylaxis and Policy 4.22 Management of Allergies and Anaphylaxis.

Policy

To minimise the risk of exposure to nuts, nut products and other allergens, Bermagui Preschool will:

- Maintain a Nut Free Preschool by requesting that families, staff, students, volunteers and visitors do not bring peanuts, tree nuts or foods containing nuts onto the Preschool premises.
- Promote an allergy-aware environment that supports children with diagnosed allergies while recognising that no environment can be guaranteed completely free of allergens.
- Develop and implement individual risk minimisation plans for children diagnosed with allergies or anaphylaxis in partnership with families.

- Ensure every child diagnosed with anaphylaxis has a current ASCIA Action Plan for Anaphylaxis (or other medical management plan completed by a registered medical practitioner) and prescribed medication available whenever the child attends Preschool.
- Ensure prescribed adrenaline autoinjectors and emergency medical plans are readily accessible at all times, including during excursions, outdoor play and emergency evacuations.
- Encourage all children not to share food, drinks, lunchboxes or eating utensils.
- Provide regular education for educators regarding allergy awareness, recognising allergic reactions and responding to anaphylaxis.
- Inform all families during enrolment that Bermagui Preschool operates as a Nut Free Preschool and explain the importance of supporting this approach to protect children with life-threatening allergies.
- Display appropriate signage at the Preschool entrances advising families and visitors that Bermagui Preschool is a Nut Free Preschool.
- Review risk management strategies whenever a child enrolls with a diagnosed allergy, following an allergic reaction, or whenever circumstances change.
- Respond promptly and appropriately to any suspected allergic reaction or anaphylactic emergency in accordance with the child's medical management plan and current first aid recommendations.

Procedures and Responsibilities

The Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor will:

- Ensure all known allergies and medical conditions are recorded on each child's enrolment record prior to commencement at the Preschool.
- Ensure families provide:
 - current medical information regarding the child's allergy or anaphylaxis diagnosis;
 - a current ASCIA Action Plan for Anaphylaxis or other medical management plan completed by the child's treating medical practitioner;
 - prescribed medication, including an in-date adrenaline autoinjector where required;
 - current emergency contact details.
- Develop, implement and regularly review an individual Risk Minimisation Plan and Communication Plan in consultation with the child's family.
- Ensure allergy management information is communicated to all educators, relief staff, students and volunteers while maintaining the child's dignity and privacy. Where information must be displayed to protect the child's safety, informed parental consent will be obtained.
- Ensure prescribed medication and medical management plans are readily accessible at all times and accompany the child during excursions, emergency evacuations and other off-site activities.
- Display appropriate signage advising that Bermagui Preschool operates as a Nut Free Preschool.
- Ensure all educators maintain current approved first aid qualifications, including management of asthma and anaphylaxis.
- Provide regular opportunities for educators to practise recognising allergic reactions and administering adrenaline autoinjectors.
- Review this policy and associated risk minimisation procedures annually or following any allergy-related incident.
- Ensure relief educators, volunteers and students are informed of relevant allergy management procedures before working directly with children.

Educators will:

- Familiarise themselves with the allergies, medical management plans and risk minimisation strategies for children in their care.
- Follow each child's ASCIA Action Plan or medical management plan at all times.
- Ensure children diagnosed with allergies are appropriately supervised during meal times, cooking experiences, celebrations, excursions and any activity involving food.
- Encourage children not to share food, drinks, lunchboxes, water bottles or eating utensils.
- Wash tables, highchairs and food preparation areas before and after eating experiences.
- Ensure children and educators wash their hands before and after meals and food preparation activities.
- Carefully check ingredients used in cooking experiences and learning activities.
- Immediately remove from children's access any food or product identified as containing nuts or posing a risk to a child with a diagnosed allergy.
- Monitor donated foods, fundraising items, celebration foods and cooking ingredients to ensure they comply with the Preschool's Nut Free requirements.
- Remain alert for signs and symptoms of allergic reactions and respond immediately if an allergic reaction is suspected.
- Participate in regular professional learning and emergency response practice relating to allergies and anaphylaxis.

Families will:

- Inform the Preschool of any diagnosed allergy or medical condition before their child commences attendance or immediately following diagnosis.
- Provide a current ASCIA Action Plan or medical management plan completed by the child's treating medical practitioner.
- Supply all prescribed medication, ensuring it is clearly labelled, in date and replaced before expiry.
- Immediately notify the Preschool of any changes to their child's allergy management, medication or emergency contacts.
- Support Bermagui Preschool's Nut Free Policy by ensuring their child does not bring peanuts, tree nuts or foods containing nuts to Preschool.
- Carefully check ingredient labels on all food packed for their child.
- Inform anyone preparing their child's lunch of the Preschool's Nut Free requirements.
- Work collaboratively with educators to support safe allergy management practices.

Risk Minimisation

To minimise the risk of exposure to allergens, Bermagui Preschool will:

- Maintain a Nut Free environment by requesting that peanuts, tree nuts and foods containing nuts are not brought onto the Preschool premises.
- Encourage alternatives to food for celebrations, birthdays and rewards wherever practical.
- Ensure educators supervise all eating experiences.
- Discourage food sharing between children.
- Consider allergy risks when planning cooking experiences, sensory activities, excursions and special events.
- Use only ingredients that are considered safe for enrolled children with diagnosed allergies.
- Thoroughly clean tables, food preparation areas and equipment after use.
- Store children's medications in accordance with the child's medical management plan while ensuring they remain readily accessible during an emergency.

Lunchbox Procedure

If foods containing nuts or nut products are identified in a child's lunchbox:

- the food will be discreetly removed from the child's access where appropriate;
- the item will be placed in a sealed bag and returned home with the family;
- a suitable replacement food will be provided by the Preschool where available, so the child does not miss out;
- educators will respectfully remind the family of Bermagui Preschool's Nut Free Policy; and
- where repeated occurrences arise, the Nominated Supervisor will discuss the Preschool's allergy management requirements with the family to ensure the ongoing safety of all children.

Emergency Response

In the event of a child displaying signs or symptoms of an allergic reaction or anaphylaxis, educators will respond immediately.

Where anaphylaxis is suspected, staff will:

- Administer the child's prescribed adrenaline autoinjector (e.g. EpiPen® or Anapen®) immediately in accordance with the child's current ASCIA Action Plan for Anaphylaxis.
- If the child's prescribed medication is unavailable and an emergency adrenaline autoinjector is available, administer it in accordance with current first aid recommendations and training.
- Call 000 immediately and request an ambulance, advising that a child is experiencing anaphylaxis.
- Follow the child's current ASCIA Action Plan or Emergency Medical Management Plan.
- Contact the child's parent/guardian or emergency contact as soon as practicable.
- Continue to closely monitor and reassure the child until ambulance officers assume care.
- Administer further first aid as directed by emergency services if required.
- Ensure another educator supervises the remaining children and maintains the normal operation of the Preschool as far as practicable.

For less severe allergic reactions, educators will:

- Follow the child's medical management plan.
- Monitor the child closely for any deterioration.
- Contact the child's parent/guardian.
- Seek medical advice if symptoms worsen or there is any concern that the reaction is progressing towards anaphylaxis.

Following an Allergic Reaction

Following any allergic reaction or anaphylactic emergency, the Preschool will:

- Complete an Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record.
- Complete a Near Miss Risk Assessment where appropriate.
- Review the child's Risk Minimisation Plan and Communication Plan.
- Review practices and procedures to identify opportunities for improvement.
- Debrief with educators involved in the incident.
- Offer appropriate support to the child, family and educators following the incident.
- Notify the NSW Regulatory Authority where the incident meets the definition of a serious incident under the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations.

Confidentiality

Information relating to a child's allergy or medical condition will be treated confidentially and managed in accordance with the Preschool's Privacy and Confidentiality requirements.

Where it is necessary to display allergy alerts, photographs or medical management plans to protect a child's health and safety, this will occur with the knowledge and consent of the child's parent or guardian and only in locations accessible to relevant educators and authorised persons.

Legislation and Standards

Children (Education and Care Services) National Law (NSW)

Education and Care Services National Regulations

- Regulation 12 – Meaning of serious incident
- Regulation 77 – Health, hygiene and safe food practices (including food safety and allergy risk management)
- Regulation 90 – Medical conditions policy
- Regulation 91 – Medical conditions policy to be provided to parents
- Regulation 92 – Medication record
- Regulation 93 – Administration of medication
- Regulation 94 – Exception to authorisation requirement—anaphylaxis or asthma emergency
- Regulation 95 – Procedure for administration of medication
- Regulation 96 – Self-administration of medication
- Regulation 97 – Emergency and evacuation procedures
- Regulation 136 – First aid qualifications, anaphylaxis management training and emergency asthma management training
- Regulation 168 – Education and care service must have policies and procedures
- National Quality Standard

Quality Area 2 – Children's Health and Safety

- Standard 2.1 – Health
 - Element 2.1.2 – Health practices and procedures
- Standard 2.2 – Safety
 - Element 2.2.2 – Incident and emergency management

Quality Area 6 – Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities

- Standard 6.1 – Supportive relationships with families
 - Element 6.1.2 – Parent views are respected

Quality Area 7 – Governance and Leadership

- Standard 7.1 – Governance
 - Element 7.1.2 – Management systems

Resources

- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA)
- Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCIA)
- Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia
- NSW Health – Allergy and Anaphylaxis resources
- Staying Healthy: Preventing Infectious Diseases in Early Childhood Education and Care Services (NHMRC)

Related Documentation

Related Policies

- 4.21 Reducing the Risk of Allergies and Anaphylaxis
- 4.22 Management of Allergies and Anaphylaxis
- 4.12 Incident, Injury and Trauma
- 4.16 Emergency Procedures (Evacuation and Lockdown)
- 4.20 Workplace Health and Safety
- 4.32 First Aid
- 4.06 Nutrition, Food, Beverages and Dietary Requirements
- 2.06 Confidentiality
- 2.12 Record Keeping and Retention of Records
- 4.41 Paramourncy in Child Safe Practice

Related Documents

- ASCIA Action Plan for Anaphylaxis
- Medical Management Plan
- Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan
- Medical Condition Communication Plan
- Medication Record
- Medication Administration Record
- Emergency Contact Records
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Records
- Near Miss Risk Assessment Form
- Staff Training Records
- Staff Induction Records

Version History

V1.0 – First Published: Pre-October 2021

V2.0 – August 2026: Comprehensive review and update completed. The policy was revised to reflect current NSW legislation and the Education and Care Services National Law, Education and Care Services National Regulations and National Quality Standard, strengthen allergy awareness, risk minimisation and emergency response procedures, clarify the responsibilities of educators and families, update references and related documentation, and confirm Bermagui Preschool's commitment to operating as a Nut Free Preschool while recognising that no environment can be guaranteed completely free of allergens.