Policy number	**6.37**
Subject	**Allergy Management**
Directorate responsible	**Quality**
Date last reviewed/by whom	September 2026
Date to be reviewed	September 2027

Policy

Linkage College is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and supportive environment in which students, staff, visitors and contractors are protected from avoidable harm associated with allergic reactions.

Linkage College recognises that allergies can vary significantly in severity, with some reactions resulting in life-threatening anaphylaxis. Effective allergy management requires a whole-college approach that includes the identification of risks, appropriate planning, staff awareness, reasonable adjustments and effective emergency responses.

As part of its commitment to reducing risk, Linkage College operates a Nut Free Environment wherever reasonably practicable, with any necessary exceptions for curriculum, vocational or animal welfare purposes subject to a detailed risk assessment and appropriate control measures. Whilst the College cannot guarantee an entirely nut-free environment due to the potential for cross-contamination within food manufacturing processes, all reasonable steps will be taken to minimise the presence of nut-containing products and reduce the likelihood of exposure.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that known allergies are identified, assessed and managed appropriately, enabling individuals to participate safely in college life. The policy establishes a framework for managing allergy-related risks and outlines the responsibilities of staff, students and visitors in maintaining a safe environment.

Scope

This policy applies to all students, apprentices, staff, volunteers, contractors and visitors across all Linkage College campuses, retail outlets, catering facilities and transport services.

The policy applies to all allergy-related risks including food allergies, medication allergies, environmental allergies and any other allergy that may impact upon an individual's health, wellbeing or ability to access services safely.

Principles

Linkage College believes that individuals with allergies should be able to access education, employment opportunities and social activities safely and with appropriate support. The College will seek to balance the safety of individuals with allergies with the rights and needs of the wider college community through proportionate risk assessment and reasonable adjustments.

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Allergy management arrangements will be person-centred and informed by professional advice, medical guidance and the individual's assessed needs. Information will be shared appropriately to ensure safety whilst maintaining dignity and confidentiality.

The College recognises that effective allergy management is a shared responsibility. Everyone using college facilities has a role to play in reducing risks and maintaining a safe environment for those who may be vulnerable to allergic reactions.

Identification and Assessment of Allergies

The College will seek to identify allergies at the earliest opportunity through admissions processes, enrolment documentation, annual reviews and ongoing communication with students, families, carers, healthcare professionals and other relevant agencies.

Where an allergy presents a risk to an individual's health or safety, an appropriate assessment will be completed and any required control measures documented within support plans, healthcare plans, risk assessments or other relevant records, such as an Allergy Action Plan. These arrangements will be reviewed regularly and whenever there is a significant change in circumstances.

Information relating to severe allergies and emergency response arrangements will be made available to relevant staff members to ensure prompt and appropriate action can be taken should an allergic reaction occur.

Managing Allergies Within the College Environment

The College will take reasonable steps to minimise exposure to known allergens wherever practicable. This may include adjustments to catering arrangements, food preparation practices, classroom activities, work placements, educational visits and social activities.

Managers and staff are expected to consider allergy risks when planning activities and to implement agreed control measures. Attention should be given to activities involving food preparation, food consumption, arts and crafts materials, animals, plants or other substances that may trigger allergic reactions.

Where concerns arise regarding exposure to allergens, the College will work collaboratively with students, parents, carers and healthcare professionals to identify suitable arrangements that support both safety and participation.

Reasonable Adjustments and Positive Risk Taking

The College is committed to supporting students with allergies to participate fully in learning, enrichment activities, work placements and the wider college experience.

Reasonable adjustments will be considered where required to reduce the likelihood of allergic reactions and enable safe participation. Adjustments will be based upon individual need and informed by risk assessments, healthcare advice and discussions with the student and, where appropriate, their family or advocate.

The College recognises the importance of promoting independence and positive risk taking. Measures introduced to manage allergy risks should be proportionate and should not unnecessarily restrict opportunities for learning, social interaction or personal development.

Nut Free Environment

In recognition of the increasing number of students and staff with potentially severe nut allergies, Linkage College operates a Nut Free Environment across all campuses, retail outlets and catering facilities.

Nut-containing products must not be intentionally purchased, prepared, sold, supplied or consumed on college premises. This includes peanuts, tree nuts and any products containing nut ingredients. The College recognises that, in limited circumstances, the use of nuts or nut-containing products may be necessary for legitimate curriculum, vocational or animal welfare purposes. This may include Small Animal Care, where particular feeds, treats, bedding materials or enrichment activities may contain nuts or nut-derived ingredients.

Where the presence or use of nuts cannot reasonably be avoided, a **specific and detailed risk assessment must be completed before the activity or product is introduced or used**. The risk assessment must consider individuals with known allergies who may access or come into contact with the area and establish appropriate control measures to minimise the risk of exposure.

Control measures may include the secure storage and controlled use of nut-containing products, restricting access where necessary, appropriate handling and cleaning arrangements, prevention of cross-contamination, clear communication with relevant staff and students, and consideration of suitable alternatives wherever practicable.

Any exception must be **necessary, proportionate and appropriately managed**. The existence of this exception does not remove the College's general expectation that nuts and nut-containing products will not otherwise be brought onto, supplied or consumed on College premises.

Students, staff, visitors and contractors are expected not to bring nut-containing products onto college sites. Information regarding the College's Nut Free Environment will be communicated through induction processes, visitor information, signage and routine communications.

All catering and retail facilities operated by the College will ensure that products containing nuts are not knowingly stocked or sold. Suppliers will be expected to provide appropriate allergen information to support procurement decisions and allergen management.

The College recognises that complete elimination of risk cannot be guaranteed because some foods may carry advisory statements such as "may contain nuts" or "may contain traces of nuts". These products do not intentionally contain nuts but may have been produced in environments where cross-contamination is possible. The use of such products will be informed by risk assessment, the needs of students with allergies and the availability of suitable alternatives.

The College's approach is therefore to maintain a practical and proportionate Nut Free Environment whilst acknowledging the limitations that exist within modern food production systems.

Catering, Retail and Food Procurement

All catering and retail services operated by or on behalf of Linkage College will support the implementation of this policy. Procurement arrangements will seek to exclude products containing nuts as ingredients and ensure that allergen information is available for products supplied.

Staff involved in food purchasing, preparation and service must remain vigilant regarding allergy management and ensure accurate information is available to students, staff and visitors. Any concerns regarding allergens, food labelling or food safety must be reported immediately to the relevant manager.

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The school menu is available for parents to view in weekly/fortnightly/monthly advance with all ingredients listed and allergens highlighted on the school website at:

The students' learning mentor will inform the Catering staff and catering lecturers of students with food allergies

Where external caterers or food suppliers are engaged by the College, they will be expected to comply with relevant allergen legislation and support the objectives of this policy.

Medication and Emergency Arrangements

Where an individual has prescribed emergency medication, parents/carers/guardians will be expected to keep the anaphylaxis kit up to date and clearly labelled. Emergency medication must be readily accessible without delay and administered in line with the individual's healthcare plan, staff training and organisational procedures. It must be appropriately stored and administered in accordance with training, organisational procedures and individual healthcare plans.

Staff identified as requiring training will receive appropriate instruction in recognising the signs and symptoms of allergic reactions and responding effectively to emergencies, including anaphylaxis.

Where a serious allergic reaction is suspected, emergency procedures must be followed without delay. This may include administering prescribed emergency medication, contacting emergency services and notifying the appropriate manager.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for ensuring appropriate governance arrangements are in place to support the implementation of this policy and for promoting a culture in which allergy management is taken seriously across the organisation.

Managers are responsible for ensuring allergy risks are considered within their areas of responsibility, that appropriate control measures are implemented and that staff understand their responsibilities under this policy.

Employees are responsible for complying with this policy, implementing agreed control measures, attending relevant training and reporting any concerns, incidents or near misses relating to allergies.

Parents/carers/guardians and students are expected to cooperate with arrangements designed to protect individuals with allergies and to inform the College of any known allergies or significant changes to their health needs.

Visitors and contractors are expected to comply with college requirements regarding allergen management, including the College's Nut Free Environment arrangements.

Incident Reporting and Learning

Any allergic reaction, suspected exposure to a known allergen, administration of emergency medication or allergy-related near miss must be reported in accordance with the College's incident reporting procedures.

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All incidents will be reviewed to identify contributory factors, lessons learned and any additional measures that may be required to reduce future risks. Findings will be used to inform improvements in practice, staff training and organisational procedures.

Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored through incident analysis, audits, risk assessment reviews, feedback from students and staff, and routine quality assurance activities.

Where nut-containing products are identified on college premises, staff should take reasonable and proportionate action to reduce the risk of exposure. This may include removing the product from use, reminding the individual of the Nut Free Environment requirements, informing a manager and reviewing whether any further control measures or communications are needed.

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner where changes in legislation, guidance, organisational need or identified risks make this necessary.

Related Policies and Procedures

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Medicines Management Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy
- Food Safety Policy
- Incident Reporting Procedures

Statement of Commitment

Linkage College is committed to creating an environment in which individuals with allergies can learn, work and participate safely. Through effective risk assessment, partnership working, staff awareness and the maintenance of a Nut Free Environment, where practicable, the College will take all reasonable and proportionate steps to reduce the risk of allergic reactions and promote the health, safety and wellbeing of all members of its community.