

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As your child's school catering provider, we would like to provide clarity on how food allergies are managed in secondary schools.

Your child's safety and independence are paramount to us. Therefore, our allergen management approach aims to empower and support your child in managing their own allergies.

If your child has a food allergy, they must communicate this to their server when making their selection. Our team is trained and equipped with the necessary information to verify that the chosen dish does not contain any allergens your child has declared unsafe.

If the selected dish does contain harmful allergens, the server will advise your child and provide alternative options that are safe for them to consume.

We understand that some children may have relied on catering staff to inform them at the till whether their meal contains allergens.

Our till systems are not linked to our allergen management systems and therefore cannot reliably prevent allergen consumption. It is imperative that your child makes their selection as detailed above and does not rely on the till operative declaring their meal safe.

For clarity our till operatives do not have any information regarding your child's allergies or indeed the allergens contained within each dish.

Our approach mirrors real-life scenarios your child might encounter when dining with friends and family outside of the school environment. This empowers them, builds their confidence in responsibly managing their food allergies, and prepares them for life beyond school.

For your assurance may I stress that ensuring the safe management of allergens is of paramount importance to us. Our catering teams undergo mandatory training on allergen management to confidently identify the presence of allergens and minimise the risk of cross-contamination during food preparation, storage, and handling.

We collaborate with a Primary Authority and an Independent Food Safety consultancy to ensure our procedures comply with legal requirements and industry best practice guidelines. These procedures, include a system directly linked to our food supplier. This system ensures that allergen information reports are always current in the event of any ingredient changes in our recipes.

Each school maintains an updated folder in the kitchen, listing the top 14 allergens, which any member of the catering team can provide upon request and assist your child in checking.

If your child has a severe allergy to a food not included in the top 14 allergens, it is crucial they clearly communicate their allergy to their server to receive the correct guidance when making meal choices.

We are always open to discussing additional support to ensure your child's safety while dining with us. Please feel free to speak directly with us about your child's specific requirements.