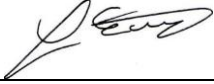


Services covered by this policy:	General Pre-school Children's Service	The Hamlet at Home Adult Services
Post holder(s) responsible for this policy:	Senior Managers	
Date approved:	2 nd October 2025	
Approved by:	Lorraine Ewing	
Signed:		
To be reviewed:	October 2027	

A. Policy statement

Our belief is that everyone at The Hamlet should be happy and safe, is unique and valued, can explore choice and opportunities, is encouraged to unlock their potential, can communicate in their own way and is part of the wider community.

This policy describes how The Hamlet ensures that food prepared on site, in sessions and food brought into the building is prepared for Hamlet Users with pre-existing allergies, sensitivities and intolerance. It also details the procedures followed in the event of anyone suffering an allergic reaction or illness.

B. Purpose of this policy and why we have it

Every Hamlet User has the right to a varied and balanced diet and experiences that provide for their dietary needs and offers health, choice and pleasure. However, The Hamlet also recognises that some individuals have an allergy, which means that there will be certain food items containing allergens that they cannot eat and items they cannot use.

The Hamlet understands that an allergic reaction can be produced by even a tiny amount of an allergen that a person is sensitive to. Symptoms of an allergic reaction can be very serious, ranging from mild itching around the mouth to vomiting, diarrhoea, wheezing and, on occasion, potentially fatal anaphylactic shock.

The Hamlet will therefore act to ensure that Hamlet Users are given appropriate information and given alternative options when foods or environments contain potential allergens. They will also be provided with a range of allergen free food choices so that their nutritional intake is not compromised and their enjoyment of food and mealtimes is not diminished.

Hamlet Users who have allergies, sensitivities or intolerances but may lack the capacity to be able to choose safe options will be supported by staff to avoid the allergen.

C. Scope of this policy

- The Hamlet Users
- Parents/carers/home support staff of Hamlet Users
- The Hamlet staff
- The Hamlet Volunteers

- Educational or work placements e.g., Occupational Therapy or Nursing
- Visitors

D. Policy

What are allergies, sensitivities, and intolerances?

An **allergy** is a reaction produced by the body's immune system when exposed to a normally harmless substance.

Allergies are different to sensitivities and intolerances.

A **sensitivity** is the exaggeration of the normal effects of a substance. For example, the caffeine in coffee may cause extreme symptoms such as palpitations and trembling.

An **intolerance** is where a substance causes unpleasant symptoms, such as diarrhoea, but does not involve the immune system.

- Activities involving food (e.g. baking) will be planned taking into account, the preferences and choices of individual Hamlet Users and with any known food allergies in mind. The Hamlet will plan to ensure that any Hamlet User who has a food allergy, sensitivity or intolerance has alternative food choices that meet their preferences.
- Where necessary, best interests decisions will be made to help Hamlet Users with allergies, sensitivities or intolerances avoid foods that may make them ill.
- Allergen-free alternatives will be provided when The Hamlet is advised a Hamlet User has allergy, sensitivity or intolerance.
- All food will be prepared, cooked, stored and presented in accordance with the standards required by food hygiene regulations and the food allergy legislation. Hamlet staff will be trained to have an understanding of food allergies, sensitivities and intolerances and will be careful in the use of ingredients and in the prevention of contamination of different foods with foods that might produce a reaction. Staff are expected to know the ingredients in all food and drink prepared by The Hamlet and other food establishments /outlets and to ensure that this information is as described on allergen information sources such as menu's and ingredient lists.
- See [Hydration and Nutrition policy](#) for how The Hamlet manages food and drink brought onto the premises by Hamlet Users for their own consumption.
- If the Hamlet User chooses to share their makes outside of The Hamlet, the Hamlet User or their representative can contact us for allergen information.

Name of policy:	Allergies, Sensitivities and Intolerances 2025
Date approved:	02.10.2025

E. Procedures and monitoring

Preventing reactions

The Hamlet will ask if the Hamlet User has any known allergies, sensitivities or intolerances when carrying out the [core assessment](#). The Hamlet User and/or their representative are expected to inform The Hamlet of any changes. The Hamlet will also request updated details annually.

Details of the Hamlet User's known allergies, sensitivities or intolerances, reactions and treatment will be recorded in their [support plan](#). The support plan also incorporates a risk assessment and details how to manage the allergen and measures to take to avoid exposing the Hamlet User to the allergen.

Lunchboxes or bags should have the Hamlet User's name on.

Preschool only: Staff should attach stickers to the Hamlet Users lunchbox to act as a reminder of their allergy, sensitivity or intolerance.

The Hamlet will try to support the Hamlet User to learn about their allergies, sensitivities or intolerances and how to stay safe.

The Hamlet will risk assess activities that involve known or common allergens such as fur, feathers, straw, balloons, latex.

Where possible, Hamlet Users with allergies, sensitivities or intolerances should not miss out on activities because of this. Activities should be tailored to meet their needs so they can be involved.

Managing allergic reactions

Details of the Hamlet User's known allergies, type of reaction and steps to be taken in the event of a reaction will be recorded in their [support plan](#).

A Hamlet User may have allergies that have not yet been identified. The Hamlet staff should be aware of signs of possible allergic reactions:

- Swelling of tongue and/or throat
- Difficulty in swallowing or speaking
- Wheeze or persistent cough or severe asthma
- Difficult or noisy breathing
- Stomach cramps or vomiting after eating a food or an insect sting
- Dizziness / collapse / loss of consciousness (due to a drop in blood pressure) / floppiness in babies
- Vocal changes (hoarse voice)

Adrenaline auto-injectors

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If a service has a Hamlet User that has an adrenaline auto-injector (e.g. EpiPen or Jext), The Hamlet should ensure training for auto injectors is included in the First Aid Training. At least one staff member who is trained to administer the adrenaline auto-injector should be on hand for the Hamlet User while they are in The Hamlet's care. (See also [Medication Management Policy](#))

Managing sensitivities and intolerances

Details of the Hamlet User's known sensitivities or intolerances, reactions and treatment should be recorded in their [Support Plan](#). This should include how and when their representative should be informed.

Recording and Reporting

If a Hamlet User is exposed to a known allergen, staff should complete an Incident Form and notify their representative unless their support plan says otherwise. There may be times where allergens cannot be completely avoided such as exposure to Pollen and Dust.

If a Hamlet User has a suspected reaction to an allergen, staff should complete an Observation Form and notify their representative if necessary.

Training

All support staff will receive food hygiene training appropriate to their roles and tasks. This will include training in food allergies and allergic reactions.

A qualified emergency first aider will be onsite at The Hamlet at all times. Groups going offsite should include at least one qualified emergency first aider.

F. Regulations (Health and Social Care Act) and other legal references

- The Care Act 2014
- Food Safety Act 1990
- The Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Mental Capacity Act Code of Practice

This policy should be read in conjunction with any other relevant Hamlet policies and accompanying procedures.

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