



Extend Learning
Academies Network

ELAN Catering Policy

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 From September 2025 Extend Learning Academies Network (ELAN) catering service is an 'in-house' centrally managed provision. The service will be managed by ELAN estates services.

The catering service aligns with the trust values and will provide direct control over food quality and costs, safety, and menu customisation (with an emphasis on providing appropriate quantities and nutritious food), to support pupils' experience, as well as investing in our staff and sustainability aims.

ELAN has a responsibility to comply with all relevant legislation and Codes of Practice regarding food safety.

1.2 To achieve this the ELAN catering service will:

- ensure robust food safety practices and management procedures are in place across the trust
- train staff to a level commensurate with their responsibilities
- promote awareness of the nature of food allergies and bring these to the attention of catering staff
- undertake routine audits of food safety practices and management procedures, to ensure that the arrangements detailed in this Catering Policy and management procedures are observed and implemented in a consistent manner
- complete and maintain all necessary written records regarding operational and training procedures.

2.0 Purpose and Scope

2.1 This policy, which is issued with the approval of the Board of Trustees, details the trust's commitment to maintaining a high standard of food safety and service delivery to its pupils, staff, and visitors. The policy also describes the organisation and arrangements which have been established by the trust to achieve these standards.

2.2 ELAN has produced this policy to comply with the requirements of the relevant food safety and standards regulations.

3.0 Related Policies and Documents

Signpost	Document Title	Responsibility
Policy	ELAN Health & Safety Statement and Policy	Estates Manager

	ELAN Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs and First Aid Policy	Estates Manager / Headteachers
Supporting documents / procedures	Food Safety Management Procedures	Catering Operations Manager
	Whole School Food Policy or Nut Aware & Food Allergen Policy and School Packed Lunch Policy (<i>as appropriate to local arrangements</i>)	Headteachers (<i>Templates available on staff portal</i>)
	Risk Assessment of First Aid requirements (<i>pupil allergens</i>)	Headteachers

4.0 Organisation and Responsibilities

4.1 The accountability for the provision of catering within each ELAN school lies with ELAN estates services.

4.2 ELAN has:

- a responsibility to provide up to date information with regard to catering legislation and or government / national guidance
- a responsibility to ensure that the actions stated in the ELAN Catering Policy are implemented and monitored
- a responsibility to review this Catering Policy

4.3 Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees has responsibility for the approval of this policy.

4.4 Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for:

- ensuring the trust has systems and processes in place to implement this policy
- ensuring that adequate resources and appropriate facilities are available to meet the requirements of the policy
- ensuring that inspections, audits, reports, recommendations and changes to legislation are fully considered and acted upon.

4.5 Trust Estates Manager

The estates manager has delegated responsibility for managing the trust's catering provision within the context of estates services offered to its schools, reporting to the CEO to:

- developing and reviewing this policy
- monitoring resources and ensuring appropriate facilities are available to meet the requirements of the policy
- ensuring that inspections, audits, reports, recommendations and changes to legislation have been fully considered and acted upon.

4.6 **Trust Catering Operations Manager**

Reporting to the estates manager, the catering operations manager is the trust's designated lead for food safety and operational management of the trust's catering service delivery. As such, they are responsible for ensuring that systems are in place and adhered to in order to minimise the likelihood of enforcement action, penalties or prosecutions.

The catering operations manager has management responsibility for all catering staff within their assigned unit, and will ensure that:

- the trust's food production kitchens are fit for purpose
- food and allergen policies/arrangements are reviewed annually or as needed in order to ensure compliance with current legislation and guidelines, and that there are sufficient resources to ensure their implementation
- there is a process for escalating food safety concerns to the estates manager, where recommendations and/or instructions have not been followed by the chef managers
- monitoring of food safety audits drive changes to policy and procedures where required
- trust food suppliers have been appropriately vetted and conform to all relevant food hygiene regulation and codes of practice, and that they provide accurate allergen information for their products
- develop menus that meet regulatory standards, and which ensure a healthy and balanced diet for pupils, ensuring recipes contain relevant allergen information
- implementation of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) at all sites ensuring chef managers adhere to procedures
- risk assessments are in place for catering tasks or equipment use (and uploaded into the Smartlog compliance portal), and regularly reviewed
- all employees are provided with induction training which includes the trust's food safety and allergens policies and procedures, and that these are understood
- monitors all food safety training, including first aid training (if applicable)
- they work with external food agencies/bodies (e.g., EHO) to ensure food standards, premises and product adhere to regulation ensuring kitchen procedures, environments and equipment remain fit for purpose
- they support catering teams and schools if any pupils or staff have complex dietary requirements.

4.7 **Headteachers**

Headteachers are responsible for implementing and complying with the trust's Catering Policy. Food prepared and served within the kitchen environment is not managed by the school, however all food matters outside of this core function remains with the school who are expected to have in place appropriate food safety procedures, up to date allergen information and procedures, associated safety management procedures (e.g. for food technology lessons,

breakfast clubs, packed lunches, or afterschool events). Schools are responsible for the day-to-day provision of supervision of dining areas within their school setting.

Headteachers are responsible for ensuring that pupil allergen data is gathered and provided to the catering service (via the catering operating platform – *SchoolGrid*), and the management of dining facilities. Headteacher responsibilities are as far as is reasonably practicable:

- providing information to catering staff, of any pupils who have any food allergies or intolerances and ensure food prepared and provided meets the needs of the pupils
- ensuring information concerning pupil's allergies is kept up-to-date, and risk assessed
- ensuring that pupil food allergens are recorded onto the *SchoolGrid* management platform, and that the school has procedures in place to cascade such information to the chef manager and to school lunchtime supervision staff to ensure that such staff are fully informed
- that school staff and members of the public (e.g., PTA) are not permitted to access or use the main food preparation kitchen or equipment unless authorised by the catering operations manager, who will ensure that the school has in place specific food preparation risk assessment and hygiene procedures. This is to maintain the integrity of the main catering lunchtime service provision. (*see section 16*)
- ensuring that the school has in place local nut aware and food allergens policies, that ensures food safety outside of the main estates catering service provision, such as in food technology lessons or breakfast clubs, and packed lunch provision for pupils not provided by the catering service, all which are a school managed provision
- working in partnership with parents/carers to support them with children who are showing signs of food preference or aversion
- ensuring sufficient school staff are directed to manage pupil behaviour, support catering staff in setting up dining facilities, supporting pupils during their lunchtime experience, to clear food waste or liquid spills from dining areas, and to wipe down tables at the start, between services, and on conclusion of the lunchtime service
- schools have a responsibility to ensure that all packed lunches brought from home and consumed in school (or on school trips) provide children with healthy and nutritious food. The headteacher will ensure that the school will work with families to ensure its pupils are provided with a balanced lunch that meet the national standards for schools.

These duties may be delegated to other competent persons within the school, but oversight and responsibility remains with the headteacher.

4.8 **Chef Managers**

Chef managers, under the direction of the catering operations manager, have delegated duties and responsibilities for food safety and service delivery within their school kitchen unit, and management of the catering team. This involves:

- the day-to-day responsibility for all food safety
- ensuring that all food is prepared in a safe and hygienic manner and contamination is prevented as far as is reasonably practical
- ensuring that catering staff follow personal hygiene rules, particularly in relation to hand washing, protective clothing and reporting of illness and infections
- ensuring that all work areas are kept clean, and any pest infestation is reported promptly
- ensuring that the operational procedures and record keeping in relation to food safety are maintained and monitored, and that all such documentation is available at all times for auditing purposes
- recording and reporting all non-conformances to the policy standards
- ensuring information concerning pupil's allergies is monitored, food preparation complies to the guidelines and ensuring any risks are mitigated
- ensuring any concerns are reported immediately to the catering operations manager, particularly assessment and reporting of any food safety risks beyond their control
- ensuring catering staff receive induction training which includes food safety and allergens policies and procedures issued by the trust relevant to their job role
- actions from food safety audits and reports are completed / resolved within the specified time frames
- liaising with appropriate school staff to identify pupils that have special dietary needs and follow agreed procedures on how to identify these, ensuring pupils with severe food allergies are served via the correct procedures at all times, and that catering teams are aware of information and identity regarding pupils and their allergies and dietary requirements
- ensuring regular allergen checks or audits and follow up on any actions
Immediately reporting any concerns or allergen issues to the catering operations manager.

4.9 **Catering staff**

Catering staff are expected to co-operate with the chef managers / catering operations manager on all aspects of food safety including but not limited to:

- ensuring they are aware of the trust's (or individual school) food safety, allergens policies and associated procedures
- completing all training as directed by the trust within specific timescales
- comply with ELAN instructions on matters of food safety by correctly using work items and not misusing anything provided for purposes of

food safety and production. Reporting any food safety concerns to the chef manager or the catering operations manager as appropriate.

Furthermore, catering staff will:

- commit to producing safe food and ensure food is kept free from harm of any kind so far as is reasonably practicable
- maintain personal hygiene standards in accordance with those standards set out in food safety management procedures
- maintain quality hygiene standards in cleaning, temperature controls, deliveries, maintenance, pest control and stock control
- assist with record keeping as instructed by the chef manager.

4.10 **Pupils, Staff, Parent/Guardian or Carers**

Our schools cannot provide appropriate care for pupils with food allergies or intolerances without the cooperation of parents. Our schools will request that parents and carers observe the trust's nut-free policy (*see section 21*).

Only items purchased by estates catering service can be stored in the food preparation kitchens.

On starting at our schools, parents must inform the school via its new starter procedures of any history of allergy or intolerance, indicating the severity of allergy, highlighting previous severe allergic reactions, and any history of anaphylaxis.

Parents of new or existing pupils must:

- provide written medical documentation, instructions, and medications as directed by a doctor to the school
- ensure the school has all up-to-date emergency contact information for parents and GP
- ensure any required medications (EpiPen's or other adrenalin injectors, inhalers and any specific antihistamine to be kept on site) are supplied, in date in the original container and replaced as necessary
- work with school staff to develop a workable plan that accommodates the child's needs throughout the school including in the classroom, in the dining room and on school trips
- educate their child in the self-management of their food allergy including safe and unsafe foods, strategies for avoiding exposure to unsafe foods, how to read food labels (age appropriate), the symptoms of allergic reactions, how and when to tell an adult they may be having an allergy-related problem

- inform the school if their child suffers an episode of anaphylaxis outside school
- where food allergy is a major concern, the school will arrange for the parent/s and pupil (age appropriate) to meet with the trust's catering operations manager so that the parents and pupil can understand the relevant catering procedures.

5.0 Free school meals

5.1 All schools will provide school meals free of charge if the pupil and/or parent meets eligibility criteria set within the Education Act 1996. This will be managed by the school, who will encourage eligible families to maximise uptake of this entitlement.

5.2 All pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are currently entitled to a free lunch under the Universal Infant Free School Meal Funding Arrangements.

5.3 Arrangements must be in place at each ELAN school to ensure that any pupil entitled to a universal free meal has the option to have a well-balanced, two-course meal.

5.4 The trust requires all its schools to actively work towards achieving a minimum level of Free School Meal uptake as follows:

- Universal Infant Free School Meal uptake of 85% (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2)
- benefit-related free meal uptake of 75% (Year 3 and above)

6.0 Catering Meal Prices and Uptake of the ELAN Food Service

6.1 The cost of an ELAN meal option will align with the government allocation for free school funded meals to ensure that provision is not discriminatory.

6.2 Price reviews will be undertaken annually (or if the government funding allocation changes) and taken to the trust's Advisory Group for consultation and approval prior to implementation.

6.3 Increased uptake supports a reduced or zero subsidised food service.

The trust estates and finances operations have set a notional target of not less than 70% uptake of hot school lunches at each school to ensure that the service can operate on a viable footing. Both the estates catering service and schools are jointly responsible for taking measures and approaches to support this target.

The catering operations manager in consultation with the school shall carefully consider any changes to the service, operation, layout, and operations that may have a negative effect on achieving this target.

7.0 Water in Schools

- 7.1 Research has shown the value to pupils of gaining regular access to fresh, chilled drinking water throughout the school day. Intake of water is linked to good health, better concentration and increased attainment. The trust promotes its schools to be 'water only schools', with the exception of the free milk entitlement for all primary free school meal pupils. Our schools will ensure that clean drinking water will be available for all pupils throughout the day, and pupils will be encouraged to drink water at frequent intervals.
- 7.2 Water bottles will be managed by school local arrangements.
- 7.3 All packed lunch pupils have access to water at lunch time.
- 7.4 No drinks other than water should be brought into school by pupils, unless recommended by a doctor for medical needs. Schools will have in place local arrangements how they manage this.

8.0 Packed Lunch Pupils

- 8.1 Each school is responsible for ensuring pupils that bring a packed lunch from home have an area where they can be eaten and under supervision, so that pupils can eat food in a safe and social environment.
- 8.2 Packed lunches, brought from home, do not have to meet the School Food Regulations or School Food Standards, but our schools are advised that guidance should be available to support parents and carers to prepare a healthy, packed lunch box that is comparable to the standards that have to be observed for pupils having lunch in school.
- 8.3 Schools should formulate their own guidance for parents to enable adherence to any school policy requirements for packed lunch boxes.

9.0 Minimum Food Standard Requirements

- 9.1 The government encourages all schools to promote healthy eating and provide healthy, tasty and nutritious food and drink. Compliance with the requirements for School Food Regulations 2014 is mandatory for all maintained schools, academies and free schools. These school food standards are to ensure that food provided to pupils in school is nutritious and of high quality; promote good nutritional health; protect those who are nutritionally vulnerable; and promote good eating behaviour.

- 9.2 The regulations set out the requirements for school lunches provided to registered pupils, whether on the school premises or not, and to any other person on the school premises.
- 9.3 The regulations also set out the requirements for food and drink other than lunch, provided to pupils on school premises up to 6pm, including breakfast clubs, tuck shops, mid-morning break, vending and after school clubs. They also apply to other food provided before 6pm on school trips where the trip is for at least 7 days.
- 9.4 The trust will aim to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with particular requirements, for example to reflect medical, dietary and cultural needs.
- 9.5 Although there is no requirement that lunches must be hot meals, hot lunches will be provided wherever possible to ensure that all pupils are able to eat at least one hot meal every day.
- 9.6 The School Food Regulations do not apply to food provided:
- at parties or celebrations to mark religious or cultural occasions at fund-raising events as rewards for achievement, good behaviour or effort
 - for use in teaching food preparation and cookery skills, including where the food prepared is served to pupils as part of a school lunch
 - on an occasional basis by parents or pupils
- 9.7 All Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 children are provided daily fruit or vegetables as part of the Government scheme.
- Any snacks that are brought from home will be restricted to fruit or vegetables unless recommended by a doctor on medical grounds (e.g., dietary need, diabetes etc.).
- Any additional snacks provided by the school will meet the School Food Standards.
- 9.8 All children who are under 5 years old are eligible for free milk under the Nursery Milk Scheme which provides a carton (189ml or 1/3 of a pint) of full fat milk.
- From the age of 5, and unless in receipt of free school meals, pupils are no longer entitled to a portion of milk each day. *[Parents should contact their child's school for more information]*
- 9.9 ELAN encourages its schools to formulate and adopt a Whole School Food Policy, taking account of all food within an individual school (template policy is available to schools via the staff portal) and engage with the resources

provided in the 'School Food Plan' (see website: schoolfoodplan.com). The catering operations manager will support and advise schools accordingly.

10.0 Menus

- 10.1 Menus are designed by the catering operations manager and will satisfy all DfE school meal service requirements and will provide balanced and healthy options.
- 10.2 The catering operations manager will ensure that menus are discussed with school representatives, before the catering team introduces them, to ensure that they match the needs of the schools.
- 10.3 The SchoolGrid catering software platform offers pupils, parents and staff the opportunity to provide feedback on food choice and quality. In order to shape continuous menu improvement and development, the catering operations manager will give such feedback due consideration.
- 10.4 Current menus will be displayed within each dining room, on the trust and each school website.
- 10.5 Menu choice for pupils should reflect the local and regional cultural variations of each school.
- 10.6 A process should be in place at each school to ensure that pupils with medical dietary needs are discussed with the catering operations manager and arrangements made, where possible, to accommodate said needs.

11.0 Service Delivery

- 11.1 Schools will assist ELAN estates services in providing adequate dining room facilities to ensure that hot food can be kept at or above 63 degrees during a food service period.
- 11.2 Should hot food for service be moved between buildings it must be transported in hot holding boxes or transported in a hot mobile trolley.

12.0 Food Purchasing

- 12.1 Catering provided by ELAN estates services will aim to ensure that:
 - no genetically modified ingredients are used
 - no fish is served from the Marine Conservation Society 'fish to avoid' list
 - no undesirable additives or artificial trans fats are used
 - in respect of the use of fresh produce, menus are designed to reflect the natural growing or production period in the UK
 - ethical trading – at least 50% of the tea, coffee and bananas used are fairly traded
 - ELAN is conscious of its environmental responsibilities and would encourage those companies with which it works to adopt environmentally sound practices

- sourcing goods from local suppliers will be encouraged where practical and possible
- we aspire to remove all single use plastic from service.

13.0 First Aid

- 13.1 The catering operations manager will liaise with headteachers to ensure that suitable first aid arrangements are in place in each school production kitchen.
- 13.2 It is recommended that in each kitchen there are adequate Emergency Appointed First Aiders who hold a current certificate; taking into account planned and unplanned absence and working hours that might fall outside of the school's general provision to staff. However, it is recognised that some of our kitchens operate with small teams where such arrangements are not possible. Such arrangements will be considered between the school and catering manager, and any first aid training requirements managed by the catering operations manager.
- 13.3 A First Aid Box must be made available in the kitchen, stocked and checked on a regular basis as part of the school requirements for its first aid provision. Any accidents must be recorded via the *Smartlog* portal for recording and monitoring purposes.

14.0 Fire Safety

- 14.1 Catering staff will be required to follow the school's local procedures and practices in the case of fire.
- 14.2 Kitchens must formulate a shut down procedure in the event of a fire and this should form any arrangements for evacuating the school kitchen.
- 14.3 Each school must ensure their fire safety arrangements are communicated to catering staff and evacuation procedures and routes of exits are clearly in place.
- 14.4 Catering staff must be included on any induction or other routine training for evacuation procedures.

15.0 Hierarchy of Control for ELAN Catering Operations

- 15.1 The hierarchy of control, a key concept in workplace safety, is a system used to minimize or eliminate risks. It prioritizes control measures in a specific order, starting with the most effective and ending with the least.

The following is a breakdown of the hierarchy of control, applied to the ELAN school catering service:

- 1) **Elimination:** this involves removing the hazard completely. For example, if a specific cooking process poses a risk, eliminating that process altogether (if possible) would be the ideal first step.

- 2) **Substitution:** if elimination is not feasible, replacing a hazardous element with a safer alternative is the next step. An example, switching to pre-chopped vegetables or using equipment other than knives to reduce the risk of knife injuries.
- 3) **Engineering Controls:** these controls isolate people from hazards. In a kitchen, this might involve using enclosed ventilation systems to remove fumes or installing safety guards on machinery (i.e., safety guards on meat slicers).
- 4) **Administrative Controls:** these involve changing how work is done to reduce risks. This could include implementing safe working procedures, providing training on safe food handling practices, or establishing a system for regular equipment maintenance. (*refer the Food Safety System: section 6*)
- 5) **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** gloves, aprons, or safety glasses are examples of PPE, are the least effective but still important control measures. They act as a last line of defence when other controls are not sufficient.

By following this hierarchy, the trust's catering services can proactively manage risks and create a safe environment. This includes ensuring food safety, preventing accidents, and maintaining a healthy work environment for catering staff.

16.0 The Food Safety System

16.1 ELAN recognises the importance of food safety. As part of its statutory duties, the estates catering service ensures that arrangements are in place to comply with all current legislation including, but not limited to:

- Food Safety Act 1990
- Food Hygiene Regulations 2006
- The Food Safety & Hygiene Regulations 2013
- Food Information Regulations 2014
- Natasha's Law 2021

16.2 The ELAN food safety system consists of:

- The Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP)
- Daily Logbook
- Legislative food safety procedures (Environmental Health Officer)
- Food safety training
- Monitoring

- 16.3 The HACCP is a system to achieve food safety from biological, chemical, physical hazards as well as allergen control measures.

The chef manager is responsible for the HACCP being implemented fully into their units and reviewed every 6 months. This review is recorded in the HACCP plan and report, and completed copies are then filed in the safety records directory.

- 16.4 The daily logbook is where all information required by HACCP processes are recorded, for example fridge and freezer temperatures, cooking temperatures, cleaning schedules, delivery checks and opening checks and closing checks. In some units these checks may differ, but all will follow the same principal to achieve a high standard of food safety.
- 16.5 Environmental health officer (EHO) visits must be reported by the chef manager to the catering operations manager within the same working day.
- 16.6 ELAN acknowledges that one of the most effective ways for its employees to work safely and efficiently is to provide them with relevant knowledge and training. All catering staff will be directed to the Smartlog platform (the trust's training platform and matrix) to complete food safety training in addition to other training requirements that the trust determines. The trust requires its catering team to successfully complete:
- Food Hygiene (level 2)
 - HACCP training (level 2)
 - Food allergy awareness

Users of the kitchen that are not part of the estates catering team (after school, social events etc.), should receive basic food hygiene training via an accredited course. It is the responsibility of the headteacher to ensure that such a requirement is managed by the school. Formal approval must be gained from the catering operations manager to use the kitchen facilities.

To ensure that the catering provision in each school is delivered safely, the following training will form part of an ongoing training programme, produced and managed by the catering operations manager:

- Health and Safety Awareness
 - Manual Handling training
 - Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Assessment and training (C.O.S.H.H.)
 - Safe Systems of Work and Risk Assessments
 - E. coli Safe Working Good Practice
- 16.7 The objective of monitoring food safety compliance is to ensure that ELAN policies and procedures are effective and are achieving a high standard of food

safety and hygiene. The catering operations manager will lead compliance checks across the trust via a combination of methods:

- review of daily logbook records
- review of catering and school/parental feedback, suggestions, complaints
- EHO inspection reports and ratings
- incident reports and investigations
- termly unit checks
- food safety audits

16.8 With regards to use of the catering facilities by anyone other than the estates service provision (after school activities, weekend events), organisations that are regular users must ensure that they have a HACCP in place or are trained to use the HACCP documentation in place within the kitchen.

17.0 Kitchen Premises Compliance

17.1 The trust compliance manager ensures that contracts/contractors are in place to undertake scheduled compliance checks on building and plant. The catering manager will ensure that the kitchens are health and safety compliant, and work with the compliance manager to demonstrate the following measures are in place:

- annual commercial gas appliances inspection (if applicable) (CP42 Catering Gas Safety Certificate)
- ventilation extraction system has been cleaned to the standards outlined in the Building Engineering Services Association (BESA) TR19 guidelines.
- Periodic inspections of fixed electrical equipment e.g., ovens, cookers, and heaters (Electricity at Work Regulations 1989)
- annual electric portable appliance testing (PAT) e.g. food mixers, toasters and electric weighing scales etc.

17.2 Certification will be uploaded to the trust's Smartlog compliance portal.

17.3 Whilst it is not a legal requirement under food safety law to have a pest control contract, there is a legal requirement to manage pest control. Under due diligence, within a food safety system, it is good practice to have such measures in place. The estates service will therefore ensure that such measures are in place and maintained to satisfy this requirement.

18.0 Food Information Regulations

- 18.1 ELAN estates services have systems in place to ensure compliance with the Food Information Regulations 2014.
- 18.2 The catering operations manager ensures that all catering teams have a level of knowledge of controlling and managing and allergens that is commensurate with their job role.
- 18.3 Information on the Food Information Regulations and the compliance system in place should be on display at all service points.
- 18.4 'Natasha's Law' came into force in October 2021. This legislation requires all food businesses to provide full ingredient and allergen labelling on foods which are pre-packed for direct sale. The ELAN catering service currently do not operate a system of pre-packed sale options to its pupils or staff but will ensure that its service meets this legislation in full whenever it applies.
- 18.5 Portion sizes shall not be less than those set out in the DfE guidance document 'Portion Sizes and Food Groups'.

19.0 Other Relevant Minimum Standards

- 19.1 The service at all times shall comply with the requirements of a compliant service covered by the following legislation and published guidance:
- Food Safety Act 1990 (as amended)
 - Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
 - Food and Labelling Regulations 1996

20.0 Managing Food Allergens

- 20.1 A food allergy is a hypersensitivity to a foodstuff of substance that is normally harmless, but which produces an immune response reaction in some people. This can be a minor reaction such as itching or a severe response known as an anaphylaxis. Anaphylaxis is a severe reaction affecting the entire body which can be life threatening.

There are 14 major allergens that have to be declared as allergens by law. The trust's allergen list includes those identified in law, as well as any additional foodstuffs to which any current pupil is known to have a severe anaphylactic response within any of its schools.

A food intolerance is a difficulty digesting certain foods which causes an unpleasant physical reaction. Food intolerances affect the digestive system only and are more common than food allergies. The onset of symptoms is usually slower and delayed. People can usually tolerate more of the food in comparison to an allergy.

20.2 Food allergies can affect an individual at any time of their life and the trust, and its schools has policies and procedures in place to manage these allergies.

Parents/guardians know their child's allergies best and so it is vital that schools work with parents to ensure they have the most up to date knowledge of each child's allergies and medication. Parents will be encouraged to

- provide an Allergy Action Plan signed by a healthcare professional
- provide two in-date AAls for their child, which should ideally be kept with the child rather than away from them.

20.3 The school will ensure that a detailed risk assessment is in place to identify gaps in their systems and processes for keeping allergic children safe.

20.4 The common causes of allergies relevant to this policy are the 14 major food allergies and this is not an exhaustive list:

- cereals containing gluten
- celery including stalks, leaves, seeds and celeriac in salads
- crustaceans, (prawns, crab, lobster, scampi, shrimp paste)
- eggs - also food glazed with egg
- fish - some salad dressings, relishes, fish sauce, some soy and Worcester sauces
- soya (tofu, bean curd, soya flour)
- milk - also food glazed with milk
- nuts, (almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, pecan nuts, brazil nuts, pistachio, cashew and macadamia (Queensland) nuts, nut oils, marzipan)
- peanuts - sauces, cakes, desserts, ground nut oil, peanut flour
- mustard - liquid mustard, mustard powder, mustard seeds
- sesame seeds - bread, bread sticks, tahini, houmous, sesame oil
- sulphur dioxide/sulphites (dried fruit, fruit juice drinks, wine, beer)
- lupin, seeds and flour, in some bread and pastries
- molluscs, (mussels, whelks, oyster sauce, land snails and squid).

20.5 The allergy to nuts is the most common high-risk allergy and as such headteachers within the trust will take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure our school premises and dining areas (and the catering operations manager for the kitchens) are kept nut free. (*see section 21 – Nut-free policy*)

20.6 Parents/carers are required to inform the school of any allergies when the child starts at the school or when the child's allergy becomes known to the parent. The school has procedures in place for ensuring such information is formally

recorded and pertinent detail provided onto *SchoolGrid* (the trust's catering management system).

20.7 *SchoolGrid* will only offer to pupils/parents meal options that do not contain allergens that have been notified to the school. It is important that parents inform the school of such allergens and of any updated allergen information as soon as possible – confirmed by a medical professional applicable to their child.

20.8 The trust's school kitchens are single production kitchens with no separate facilities to cook allergen-free meals. However, the kitchen maintains careful procedures to minimise the risk of cross contamination both at the preparation and the serving stage. It also maintains procedures to minimise the risk of meals containing allergens being wrongly served to individuals with allergies/intolerances. Key kitchen procedures maintained in regard to allergens include:

- an allergen matrix is prepared for every meal detailing all items on the menu and the allergens they contain (or may contain)
- this is made available (to staff and pupils) at each meal for reference
- the allergen matrix is signed off by the unit chef manager
- freshly prepared and stored food is labelled using industry-approved allergy labels allowing the identification of 14 main allergens

20.9 A process is in place for ensuring that as far as possible, ensures:

- meals for allergy pupils are standardised so that they can be eaten by as wide a range of allergies/intolerances as possible. This minimises the risk of mistakenly providing an unsuitable meal to an allergic/intolerant pupil. Where this is not possible, the clear labelling will minimise the risk of mistakes
- allergy meals are never frozen for later consumption
- staff and visiting adults, with allergies or intolerances are invited to discuss with the chef manager what may be suitable for them to eat if they are unsure
- teaching staff must be aware of the allergy/intolerant pupils to help ensure that they are only served their labelled food on trips.

20.10 Catering staff are aware how to prevent cross contamination. This is directed through the chef manager or catering operations manager, for example:

- different utensils are used for preparation and service e.g., chopping boards and utensils and food is prepared in isolation. Strict personal hygiene must be adhered to i.e., clean aprons, clean hands etc.
- where dishes are prepared for individuals, these must be kept separately from other meals, covered and labelled accordingly
- if, in the unlikely event, cross contamination has taken place, the First Aider and a member of the school senior leadership team are informed immediately, and steps outlined in the child's care plan are implemented and the parents are informed and/or ambulance is called
- a review process takes place to identify how this was caused and what steps need to be undertaken to mitigate cross contamination taking place again.

20.11 Due to the existence of severe allergies in some of our schools, there are further additional measures:

- no nuts are used as ingredients in the kitchen at all
- any externally manufactured items that identify 'may contain nuts' or 'not suitable for individuals with a nut allergy' are clearly identified
- the kitchen maintains a stock of dairy-free and gluten-free products stored in allocated areas of the dry stores. Where possible an alternative gluten free option is made available for desserts, where this is not possible fresh fruit is freely available.

20.12 Chef managers must complete all trust directed food allergen training. This information is then cascaded to all catering staff with that unit.

21.0 Nut-free Policy

21.1 Although the trust recognises that this cannot be guaranteed, all ELAN schools aim to be a nut-free so far as is reasonably practicable. This policy serves to support its schools to reduce the risk to those pupils and adults who may suffer an anaphylactic reaction if exposed to nuts to which they are sensitive. Our schools aim to protect pupils who have allergies to nuts yet also help them, as they grow up, to take responsibility as to what foods they can eat and to be aware of where they may be put at risk.

21.2 The trust's 'Nut-Free' policy means that the following items should not be brought into its schools:

- packs of nuts
- peanut butter sandwiches
- fruit and cereal bars that contain nuts

- chocolate bars or sweets that contain nuts
- sesame seed rolls (children allergic to nuts may also have a severe reaction to sesame)
- cakes made with nuts

21.3 We have a policy not to use nuts in any of our food prepared on site. Our catering provision suppliers provide us with nut-free products. However, we cannot guarantee freedom from nut traces.

21.4 ELAN schools ensure that nuts are not knowingly used in any area of the curriculum. This does not guarantee a nut free environment, and therefore pupils should not be complacent while at school, as traces of nuts are found in a great deal of foodstuffs, but it will certainly reduce the chances of exposure to pupils with nut allergies

21.5 ELAN schools will ensure that it has in place local policies and procedures to ensure management of nut-free environments and food allergens are maintained in compliance with this policy.

22.0 Monitoring and Review

22.1 This policy will be reviewed every three years or in the following circumstances:

- changes in legislation and /or government guidance
- as a result of any other significant change or event
- in the event that the policy is determined not to be effective.

22.2 The catering operations manager will facilitate monitoring of this policy at school and trust level.

22.3 This policy and associated food safety management procedures will be disseminated to all catering staff, and by schools to staff involved in catering operations.