Food Safety, Hygiene and Allergen Policy

Wayland Stables Care Farm

Policy owner: Jake Payne, Business Manager

Approval date: 06/08/2026

Effective date: 01/09/2026

Next review: August 2027, or sooner after an allergy incident, outbreak or change in food arrangements

> **Current food arrangement:** WSCF does not prepare, cook, sell or routinely provide food on site. Students bring their own packed food and drinks. This policy controls the hygiene, storage, eating, allergy and emergency risks created by that arrangement; it must be reviewed before WSCF begins preparing or supplying food.

1. Policy statement

Wayland Stables Care Farm (WSCF) will provide clean, supervised and inclusive arrangements for students to eat food brought from home. Food will be kept away from animals, animal feed, manure, soil, chemicals, tools and other contamination sources. Staff will teach and reinforce effective handwashing, safe eating and respectful allergy awareness.

WSCF operates a no-nuts rule: peanuts, tree nuts and foods intentionally containing them must not be brought onto the site. This is an important risk-reduction measure, but WSCF will not describe the site as nut-free or allergen-free because traces, incorrectly labelled food, animal feed and environmental exposure cannot be guaranteed to be absent.

> **Allergy emergency:** If anaphylaxis is suspected, use the person's prescribed adrenaline auto-injector immediately in accordance with their plan and staff training, then call 999 and say 'anaphylaxis'. Do not wait for a manager, parent/carer or symptoms to worsen. Follow the First Aid and Medical Policy and never leave the person alone.

2. Scope and responsibility boundary

This policy applies to students, staff, volunteers, visitors and contractors wherever food or drink is consumed during WSCF activities, including the site, WSCF-controlled transport and off-site visits. It covers packed food brought from home, hygiene facilities, eating areas, known allergies, cross-contact, cleaning, food waste and emergency action.

Parents/carers are responsible for supplying food that is suitable for their child, safely packed, within any agreed dietary or allergy controls and consistent with the no-nuts rule. WSCF does not inspect every ingredient or certify a packed lunch as safe. WSCF is responsible for communicating its rules, managing its

environment and activities, following known individual plans, supervising reasonably and escalating concerns.

The commissioning school or local authority must provide current allergy, medical, dietary, communication and emergency information before attendance and coordinate with the parent/carer. WSCF remains accountable for controls within its own provision and will not assume that another organisation has completed a necessary handover.

If WSCF begins preparing, cooking, reheating, portioning, selling or routinely providing food, the Business Manager must first review food-business registration, food-hygiene, labelling, allergen-information, training, premises and inspection requirements. This policy alone would not be sufficient for a catering operation.

3. Legal and guidance framework

1. Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999;
2. Food Safety Act 1990, Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 and retained food information requirements, to the extent applicable to WSCF's activities;
3. Equality Act 2010, including disability-related reasonable adjustments and protection from discrimination;
4. UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 for health, allergy and dietary information;
5. Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 for biological agents and zoonotic exposure from farm activities;
6. Food Standards Agency allergen and cross-contact guidance, used proportionately for safe practice;
7. HSE guidance on preventing ill health from animal contact, including effective handwashing before eating; and
8. DfE Non-school Alternative Provision: Voluntary National Standards, adopted by WSCF as its operating benchmark while non-statutory.

4. Roles and responsibilities

Role	Required action
Business Owners	Provide suitable washing and eating facilities, resources and oversight; approve material changes to food provision; review serious allergy, hygiene or outbreak events.
Jake Payne - Business Manager	Own this policy; confirm the current food arrangement; maintain rules, allergy controls, training and checks; coordinate families and commissioners; restrict unsafe practice and review incidents.
Manager / supervisor on duty	Check daily readiness, staff awareness and individual plans; manage unsuitable food or contamination discreetly; coordinate emergency action, notifications, records and follow-up.

Role	Required action
All staff and volunteers	Model and supervise handwashing and safe eating; know relevant allergy plans; prevent food sharing; keep eating areas separate from farm hazards; report concerns and act immediately in an emergency.
Parents/carers	Provide suitable food in a clean, secure, labelled container; use an insulated bag/cool pack where needed; follow the no-nuts rule; disclose allergies and changes; remain contactable.
Commissioner / registered school	Supply accurate current allergy, medical and dietary information and emergency contacts; provide or coordinate plans, medication, training and review; participate in incident and placement decisions.
Students	Follow handwashing and eating-area rules; do not bring nuts, share or swap food; keep food closed until the meal break; tell staff about spills, symptoms or unsafe food.

5. Designated eating and drinking arrangements

9. Food may be eaten only in the designated clean eating area or another area specifically approved by the manager/supervisor after a risk check. Drinking water may be used in other approved safe areas.
10. Do not eat or carry open food in animal pens, stables, feed stores, barns, manure/compost areas, growing areas using manure, workshops, chemical stores, machinery areas, toilets or vehicles unless a visit/transport assessment specifically provides a clean arrangement.
11. Outdoor eating must be on a clean surface away from animals, animal faeces, feed, chemicals, dust and waste, with handwashing available before food is handled.
12. Tables and contact surfaces are cleaned before eating and after spills or use. Eating equipment is kept separate from animal, gardening, craft, chemical and cleaning equipment.
13. Students remain appropriately supervised. Staff support dignity, sensory needs, communication and reasonable adjustments without drawing unnecessary attention to allergy or dietary information.
14. Clean drinking water is available. Personal drink containers are named or otherwise identifiable and are not shared.

6. Handwashing and personal hygiene

Soap-and-water handwashing is a critical control on a care farm. Staff must ensure students can reach and use suitable facilities, with adaptations or direct support where required. Hand sanitiser may be an additional control, but it is not a substitute for washing visibly dirty hands or hands contaminated through animal, soil, manure or feed contact.

Wash hands	Minimum method
Before eating, drinking from an open cup, handling food or helping another person with food	Use running water and liquid soap; rub all hand surfaces, between fingers, thumbs, fingertips and wrists; rinse and dry with a clean disposable or approved hygienic method.

Wash hands	Minimum method
After touching animals, animal housing, feed, bedding, soil, manure, compost, waste or contaminated clothing/equipment	Go directly to the handwashing point; supervise as needed; do not eat, touch the face or use a phone first.
After using the toilet, blowing the nose, coughing/sneezing into hands, dealing with bodily fluids or removing gloves	Wash thoroughly with soap and running water and dry hygienically. Cover cuts with a clean waterproof dressing.
When facilities fail	Stop the affected food/animal activity. Use a safe alternative facility or postpone eating/handling until effective handwashing is available; report and record the defect.

15. Do not use communal bowls of standing water for handwashing.
16. Staff teach and observe the routine rather than relying only on signs. Support is proportionate to age, understanding, disability, sensory needs and independence.
17. Anyone handling another person's food must have clean hands, avoid bare-hand contact where practical, and follow any individual allergy plan. Disposable gloves do not replace handwashing and must be changed between tasks.

7. Packed-food storage and safe use

18. Food arrives in a clean, closed, leak-resistant container or bag marked with the student's name or another reliable identifier. Medication must never be stored loose with food.
19. Parents/carers decide whether the food requires temperature control and provide an insulated bag and sufficient cool packs unless a refrigerator arrangement has been agreed in advance.
20. WSCF does not guarantee refrigeration. If a refrigerator is offered, food is contained, separated from medicines and chemicals, protected from drips and unauthorised access, and the arrangement is included in cleaning and temperature checks where assessed as necessary.
21. Packed food is stored away from sunlight, heaters, animals, animal feed, chemicals, tools, soil and pests. Bags are not placed on animal-area floors or work surfaces.
22. Students eat only their own food. Food, drinks, bottles, cutlery and utensils must not be shared or swapped, even when both students say they have no allergy.
23. Staff do not taste-test, reheat, cook, cut up or alter food as a routine service. Any disability-related assistance must be individually agreed, hygienic and within staff competence, without changing the policy's no-preparation model.
24. Food that appears spoiled, leaking, contaminated, damaged by pests, wrongly identified or contrary to a known allergy control is not eaten. Staff provide water, contact the parent/carer and commissioner as needed, and agree a safe solution without shaming or depriving the student.
25. Uneaten perishable food is not kept on site for later use. It is returned home in the closed container where safe and agreed, or disposed of in a lidded bin.

8. No-nuts rule

> **No peanuts or tree nuts:** Students, staff, visitors and contractors must not bring peanuts, tree nuts or foods intentionally containing them onto the WSCF site or into WSCF-controlled vehicles and activities. The rule applies every day, whether or not a person with a known nut allergy is expected.

Examples include loose nuts, peanut or other nut butter, nut bars, nut-based confectionery, cakes or biscuits made with nuts, pesto containing nuts, marzipan, praline and foods where peanuts or tree nuts are listed as an ingredient. Coconut, seeds and legumes are not automatically tree nuts, but an individual plan may restrict them for a particular person.

26. Families and staff must check the ingredient label each time because recipes change. Homemade or repacked food must not contain peanuts or tree nuts.
27. A precautionary label such as 'may contain nuts' does not mean the product intentionally contains nuts. Whether such a product is acceptable is determined by the current individual Allergy Action Plan and communicated controls; WSCF will not invent a universal clinical rule.
28. If food clearly breaches the rule, staff discreetly isolate it, prevent it being opened or eaten, arrange its safe return/disposal, clean any contacted surface and provide a safe interim response with the family/commissioner. The student is not punished for an adult packing error.
29. WSCF cannot guarantee an allergen-free environment. Animal feed, bird seed, craft materials, visitors' belongings and trace contamination may create exposure; these must be considered in individual and activity risk assessments.

9. Other food allergies, intolerances and dietary needs

The no-nuts rule does not replace controls for milk, egg, cereals containing gluten, fish, crustaceans, molluscs, celery, mustard, sesame, soya, lupin, sulphites or any other clinically relevant trigger. Allergy, intolerance, coeliac disease, diabetes-related food needs, texture/swallowing requirements, religious practice and ethical choice must not be treated as interchangeable.

30. Obtain current information before first attendance and whenever circumstances change. Record the trigger, likely route and severity, early signs, required avoidance, emergency action, medication, communication needs and review date.
31. Use a clinician-approved Allergy Action Plan where anaphylaxis is possible. Ensure prescribed adrenaline devices accompany the person, remain immediately accessible and are checked under the First Aid and Medical Policy.
32. Brief only staff who need the information for safety or support. Provide an appropriate explanation to peers without disclosing private medical information unnecessarily.
33. Assess non-food exposure, including animal feed, bedding, latex, cleaning products, insects, plants, craft materials, dust and contamination transferred on hands, clothes, phones, tools or tables.
34. Make reasonable adjustments so the student can eat safely and socially. Avoid unnecessary isolation; use separate seating, timing, utensils or enhanced cleaning only where the individual assessment supports it.

10. Preventing cross-contact and contamination

Cross-contact occurs when an allergen is transferred unintentionally to another food, surface, object or person. Microbiological contamination can also transfer from animals, soil, manure, waste, hands or equipment. WSCF controls both risks through separation, handwashing, cleaning and supervision.

35. Stop use of the affected area and keep people, animals and uncovered food away.
36. Check whether anyone has eaten, touched or developed symptoms. Follow the individual plan and emergency procedure immediately if there is any concern.
37. Remove the food or contamination source without spreading it. Use suitable protective equipment for bodily fluids, chemicals, manure or other hazardous material.
38. Clean the surface and relevant objects using the approved product and method; physical cleaning with detergent is normally required to remove food residue. Do not rely on a quick wipe or hand sanitiser to remove an allergen.
39. Dispose of waste safely, wash hands, replace contaminated cloths/equipment and check the area before reopening.
40. Record and report a significant contamination, allergy exposure, pest event or control failure and review the individual/activity arrangements.

11. Cleaning, waste, pests and facilities

41. Use an identified cleaning schedule for eating tables, chairs, touch points, handwashing facilities, food-storage surfaces, bins and any refrigerator provided. Record completion and defects where the risk assessment requires.
42. Use cleaning chemicals under the COSHH Policy, store them away from food and drinking vessels, follow dilution/contact instructions and prevent chemical residue or unlabelled decanted products.
43. Use separate or clearly controlled cloths and equipment for eating areas and animal/toilet/high-contamination areas. Clean and dry reusable equipment between uses.
44. Food waste goes promptly into closed, suitable bins protected from animals and pests. Bins are emptied and cleaned at a frequency that prevents odour, leakage and attraction of pests.
45. Evidence of rodents, insects, birds, animal access, droppings or damaged packaging is reported immediately. Affected food and areas are isolated, cleaned and assessed before use.
46. Failure of water, soap, drainage, waste removal, refrigeration where relied upon, or safe eating-space separation may require the activity or meal arrangement to stop until a safe alternative is in place.

12. Illness and infection control

A person with vomiting, diarrhoea, fever or another potentially infectious illness should not attend or handle another person's food contrary to current public-health advice and their individual plan. Parents/carers and staff must report relevant symptoms promptly. WSCF will seek current UKHSA/NHS advice for outbreaks or unusual illness rather than rely on an outdated fixed rule.

If illness occurs on site, separate the person from food and eating areas, provide first aid and supervision, arrange safe collection or emergency care, clean contamination under the bodily-fluid/COSHH procedure, and notify the manager and relevant contacts. A pattern linked to shared exposure, animal contact, water or the site environment is treated as a serious health concern and escalated for competent advice.

13. Allergic reaction and emergency response

Situation	Immediate response
Possible mild reaction under a current plan	Stay with the person; stop exposure; follow the person's plan exactly; monitor closely; obtain trained help. Escalate immediately if symptoms progress or the plan directs.
Suspected anaphylaxis	Give the person's prescribed adrenaline auto-injector immediately as trained; call 999 and say 'anaphylaxis'; follow positioning and second-device instructions in the plan/training; send someone to open the gate; do not leave the person alone.
Uncertain trigger or symptoms	Do not delay emergency action because the food is unknown or the first symptom seems mild. Use the person's plan, staff training and 999 advice. Antihistamine is not a substitute for adrenaline in anaphylaxis.
After emergency treatment	Provide responders with the plan, devices, packaging and factual timeline; inform parent/carer and commissioner; preserve relevant food/labels; record the event; review allergy, food, cleaning and access controls before return.

Any staff member may call 999 without managerial permission. The padlocked gate must be opened promptly for responders in accordance with the Emergency Response and Visitor arrangements. Emergency care is never delayed while locating a manager or completing a form.

14. Visits, transport, events and visitors

47. Before transport or a visit, confirm where food will be stored and eaten, handwashing arrangements, known allergens, medication, trained supervision, emergency access and what happens if the plan cannot be met.
48. Food and emergency medication remain with the correct person or named responsible adult and are not left in an inaccessible or hot vehicle. Food bags are kept separate and reliably identified.
49. Visitors and contractors who may bring food are told the no-nuts rule when booking and must follow staff instructions. Staff manage an unexpected item discreetly and safely.
50. A celebration, reward, donated item, cooking activity or food-based curriculum activity must not be introduced informally. Jake Payne must approve a written risk/allergen plan and verify any additional legal, training, consent and facility requirements first.
51. Students must not be asked to feed animals with leftovers. Animal feed is used only as directed under the animal/biosecurity and COSHH controls and may itself require an individual allergy assessment.

15. Records, training and review

52. Keep current allergy/health plans, emergency contacts, agreed food adjustments, staff briefings, training/competency, cleaning/check records, incidents, near misses, emergency treatment and corrective actions under the Data Protection and retention arrangements.
53. Induction and refresher training cover site food arrangements, handwashing, animal-contact hygiene, no-nuts communication, food sharing, cross-contact, symptom recognition, access to emergency plans/medication, 999 action, cleaning and reporting.
54. Only staff trained and authorised under the First Aid and Medical Policy administer medication. Food-hygiene awareness does not qualify a person to diagnose allergy or give medicine.
55. Jake Payne reviews readiness and incident/action closure at least termly. Business Owners review this policy annually and before any change to food preparation or supply.
56. A serious reaction, suspected foodborne/zoonotic illness, repeated rule breach, facility failure, pest problem, outbreak or material change triggers immediate risk review and appropriate external advice or reporting.

Appendix A - Staff meal-break readiness check

57. Today's students, allergies, emergency plans, prescribed devices and trained staff cover are confirmed.
58. The designated eating area is clean, dry, separated from animals/feed/soil/chemicals and free from pest evidence.
59. Running water, liquid soap and hygienic drying are available; students have washed after farm contact and before eating.
60. Food bags are closed, identified, stored safely and not visibly leaking, spoiled, contaminated or in breach of the no-nuts rule.
61. No food or utensils are shared; individual communication, sensory, dietary and reasonable-adjustment arrangements are ready.
62. Waste, cleaning materials, emergency contact method and gate-access arrangements are ready; any gap is controlled before eating begins.

Appendix B - Staff immediate-action guide

Issue	Do now
Hands not effectively washed	Stop food handling/eating; use soap and running water; support the person; remedy or report the facility failure.
Nut-containing or unsafe food	Do not open/eat it; isolate discreetly; prevent sharing; check exposure/symptoms; clean if needed; contact the family/commissioner and record a significant breach.

Issue	Do now
Food spill or contamination	Keep people/animals away; check allergy exposure; remove and clean using the approved method; dispose safely; wash hands; reopen only when safe.
Possible allergic reaction	Stay with the person; follow the current plan; give prescribed adrenaline immediately for suspected anaphylaxis; call 999; arrange gate access; notify and record after urgent action.
Vomiting/diarrhoea or suspected infection	Separate from food/eating areas; support and assess; arrange collection/emergency care; control bodily-fluid contamination; inform the manager and relevant contacts.
Food provision proposed	Do not start informally. Refer to Jake Payne for legal, premises, allergen, training and risk review before any food is prepared or supplied.

Appendix C - Minimum food/allergen incident record

Field	Required information
Person and context	Name/identifier, date/time, location, activity, supervision and relevant plan.
Food/exposure	Item, ingredients/label, supplier/packer if known, quantity, route, animal/feed/environment link and packaging retained.
Symptoms and timeline	First signs, progression, observations and exact times; avoid diagnosis beyond competence.
Immediate action	Exposure stopped, cleaning, first aid, medicine/device/time, 999/clinical advice, position/monitoring and responder handover.
Notifications	Manager, safeguarding lead, parent/carer, commissioner, insurer/regulator/public health as applicable; time and person contacted.
Follow-up	Welfare outcome, records linked, investigation, plan/risk/training changes, owner, due date and action closure.

Sources and related guidance

Allergen Guidance for Food Businesses — Food Standards Agency, updated July 2026.

Allergen Guidance for Institutional Caterers — Food Standards Agency.

Preventing or Controlling Ill Health from Animal Contact at Visitor Attractions or Open Farms — Health and Safety Executive.

Zoonoses in Agriculture — Health and Safety Executive.

Anaphylaxis: Recognition and Emergency Action — NHS.

Non-school Alternative Provision: Voluntary National Standards — Department for Education, August 2025.

WSCF First Aid and Medical, COSHH, Whole-Site Risk, Health and Safety, Visitor, Emergency Response and Data Protection policies — Wayland Stables Care Farm.

Approval record

Approved by	Role	Signature	Date
Jake Payne	Business Manager	Jake Payne	06/08/2026

Next review due: August 2027, or sooner under section 15.