

Review schedule	Every 3 years
Last review	August 2026
Next review due	August 2029
Owner	Rosie Hall

1. Purpose

SELFA is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and supportive environment for all children, young people, staff, volunteers and visitors.

This policy sets out how SELFA manages allergies and allergens to reduce the risk of allergic reactions and ensure that appropriate procedures are in place to safeguard anyone with known or suspected allergies.

Some allergic reactions can be severe and life-threatening (anaphylaxis). SELFA recognises its responsibility to take reasonable steps to minimise risks, promote awareness and respond effectively in the event of an allergic reaction.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All children and young people attending SELFA activities.
- Parents and carers.
- Employees.
- Volunteers.
- Trustees.
- Visitors and contractors attending SELFA premises or activities.

The specific requirements relating to SELFA's Nut and Sesame-Free Setting apply to all sessions, activities, events and locations where children and young people are present.

3. Definitions

Allergy

An allergy is an immune system response to a substance that is normally harmless. Reactions can range from mild symptoms to severe anaphylaxis.

Allergen

An allergen is a substance capable of triggering an allergic reaction. Common food allergens include:

- Peanuts

- Tree nuts
- Sesame
- Milk
- Eggs
- Fish
- Crustaceans
- Molluscs
- Soya
- Wheat and other cereals containing gluten

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are responsible for:

- Informing SELFA of any diagnosed allergies or medical conditions.
- Providing up-to-date medical information and emergency contact details.
- Ensuring any prescribed medication, including adrenaline auto-injectors, is available where required.
- Informing SELFA promptly of any changes to allergy management plans.

Staff and Volunteers

Staff and volunteers are responsible for:

- Following this policy and any individual allergy management plans.
- Taking reasonable steps to reduce exposure to known allergens.
- Ensuring food provided during activities complies with any relevant restrictions.
- Reporting allergy concerns, incidents or near misses.
- Acting promptly in line with emergency procedures.

Management

Management is responsible for:

- Maintaining appropriate records of known allergies.
- Ensuring risk assessments are completed where required.
- Providing information, guidance and training to staff and volunteers.
- Reviewing incidents and implementing improvements where necessary.

5. Recording and managing allergies

SELFA will:

- Record known allergies disclosed by parents, carers, staff or volunteers.
- Maintain appropriate records in accordance with data protection requirements.

- Share relevant allergy information with those who need to know in order to keep individuals safe.
- Develop individual support arrangements and risk assessments where a child, young person, staff member or volunteer has a significant or life-threatening allergy.

6. Food and Allergen Control Measures

To reduce the risk of allergic reactions:

- Food brought into sessions should be checked against any communicated allergen restrictions.
- Staff and volunteers should consider allergen risks when planning activities involving food.
- Good hygiene practices must be followed before and after handling food.
- Surfaces and equipment used for food preparation or consumption should be cleaned appropriately.
- Cross-contamination risks should be considered whenever food is present.
- Additional allergen control measures may be implemented where required following an individual risk assessment.

7. Nut and Sesame-Free Setting Requirements

Due to severe nut and sesame allergies amongst some children and young people attending SELFA activities, SELFA operates as a:

NUT AND SESAME-FREE SETTING

The following requirements apply in all sessions, activities, events, trips, transport and locations where children and young people are present:

- Children and young people must not bring nuts, sesame, or products containing nuts or sesame into SELFA activities, including in packed lunches.
- Nuts, sesame, and foods containing nuts or sesame must not be provided, shared or consumed during SELFA sessions, activities or events.
- Staff, volunteers and visitors must not bring nuts, sesame, or products containing nuts or sesame into sessions, activities, trips, vehicles used for activities, or any area where children and young people are present.
- Cakes, treats and food items containing nuts or sesame must not be brought to SELFA for birthdays, celebrations, fundraising activities or events.
- Packaging, containers or craft materials that have contained nuts, sesame or products containing these ingredients must not be used within activities.

Examples of restricted products include:

- Peanuts and peanut butter
- Almonds, walnuts, hazelnuts, cashews, pistachios and other tree nuts
- Nut-containing chocolate spreads

- Nut-containing cereal or snack bars
- Tahini
- Hummus made with tahini
- Sesame seeds
- Sesame oils and sesame pastes
- Bread products topped with sesame seeds

Staff Office Areas

The Nut and Sesame-Free Setting requirements do not normally apply within staff-only office spaces, meeting rooms or staff welfare facilities where children and young people are not present.

However, staff should remain mindful of allergen risks when attending sessions, activities or meetings with children and young people and take reasonable steps to avoid cross-contamination.

Products Labelled "May Contain"

Products carrying precautionary statements such as:

- "May contain nuts"
- "May contain sesame"
- "Produced in a factory handling nuts and/or sesame"

may be permitted provided nuts or sesame are not listed as ingredients.

8. Managing Incidents

If a prohibited food item is identified:

1. The item will be removed politely and safely.
2. An age-appropriate explanation will be given to the child or young person.
3. Parents or carers will be informed where appropriate.
4. The incident will be recorded if necessary.
5. Repeated concerns may result in further communication with families.

9. Recognising an Allergic Reaction

Symptoms may include:

- Itching, rash or hives
- Swelling of the lips, face or eyes
- Abdominal pain, nausea or vomiting
- Difficulty breathing
- Wheezing
- Persistent coughing

- Dizziness
- Collapse

Any suspected severe allergic reaction must be treated as a medical emergency.

10. Emergency Procedures

Where a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) is suspected:

1. Call 999 immediately.
2. State that anaphylaxis is suspected.
3. Assist with administration of prescribed emergency medication where trained and authorised to do so.
4. Contact parents or carers as soon as possible.
5. Ensure the individual is not left alone.
6. Record the incident following the event and review any lessons learned.

11. Training

SELFAs will ensure that relevant staff and volunteers receive appropriate information, instruction and training regarding:

- Allergy awareness.
- Recognition of allergic reactions.
- Emergency procedures.
- The use of prescribed emergency medication where appropriate.
- Relevant individual allergy management plans.

12. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if:

- Legislation or guidance changes.
- A serious incident occurs.
- New allergy risks are identified within the organisation.
- Operational requirements indicate that a review is necessary.

Change Record

Date of change:	Changed by:	Comments
26/08/2026	R. Hall	Policy created