

Celebrations

Any school celebration or class party that features a food component will be organized by the classroom teachers and school staff. Staff will have the sole responsibility for providing food, but may ask for a donation of money to support the event. Parents should wait for direction from the classroom teachers before sending in items to school when they are aware of a party or celebration. This policy is in keeping with the York Region Public Health Guide for Child Care Providers (2015), which provides guidelines for the Harry Bowes Child Care Center.

Celebrations, or in-class activities, that involve the preparation/cooking of food, will have those preparations done at school, under the direction of school staff, using only ingredients purchased by school staff. This may

be, but is not limited to, curriculum-based food preparation and cultural celebrations by in-school or external clubs.



Pizza Days, and other Fundraising events

Fundraising that involves the sale or distribution of food is organized with the health and safety of the students as paramount in the selection of food products and providers. Decisions around what food is sold are made cooperatively by the School Council and school staff and administration, and is also in keeping with Ministry guidelines (PPM #150— School Food and Beverage Policy).

Communication

We will, on an on-going basis, communicate with the wider Harry Bowes community about our policy and procedures. As the needs arise we will communicate directly with families where unsafe items are sent to school to ensure understanding.

In school, all staff, including lunch assistants, are made aware of every student with a life-threatening allergy in each class. Where appropriate, bus drivers are also made aware of any students on their regular route who have life-threatening allergies, or other medical concerns.

Further Information

Further information about Anaphylaxis and other food-related guidelines can be found at the following sources:

- YRDSB Policy and Procedure #661.0— Anaphylactic Reactions
- A Public Health Guide for Child Care Providers: Protecting and Promoting Health in Child Care, 2015.—York Region Public Health
- PPM # 150—School Food and Beverage Policy—Ontario Ministry of Education
- Sabrina’s Law, 2005

This policy developed during the 2015-16 school year by a committee of parents and staff and administrators.



Safe Foods at Harry Bowes

A policy to protect students with food allergies

We Are an Allergy Aware School.



Introduction

In the past, attempts were made to create an approach to the safeguarding of foods at Harry Bowes in order to both respect the needs of students and staff to be safe from allergy-inducing foods, and at the same time allowing for activities that involve food to take place for the enjoyment of all.

Unfortunately, this has become difficult to achieve as we still have too many incidents of unsafe food being sent, brought into, or consumed at school. We continue to have issues with products like Nutella and granola bars with peanuts being sent in, nuts provided as snacks, as well as baked products (home and store-bought) where ingredients cannot be verified. While parents are well meaning, there are just too many incidents to manage on a daily basis, and, as a school, we always have to err on the side of safety.

This policy is a change to past practices, and is made for the safety of those students who have life-threatening allergies.



A number of students at Harry Bowes P.S. have allergies to various food products, including, but not limited to peanuts, and other tree nuts (cashews, almonds, walnuts, etc), and products that contain peanut and nut products. These allergens can cause students to have an anaphylactic reaction, which can be life-threatening. As well we have many other students with allergies to a wide variety of foods such as wheat, seafood, dairy, etc., which can also cause anaphylactic, or other serious reactions that require medical attention. Therefore, **we cannot allow anaphylactic-inducing foods to be sent, or brought into the school.**

Education

Each year in September we review the procedures for the use of epinephrine auto-injectors (Epi-pens) with all staff. As the needs arise on an on-going basis, we communicate with all staff about specific students and their needs. Each year we develop a list, with photos, of every student in the school who has life-threatening allergies, the class they are in, and the specific allergens. These lists are posted in all classrooms, and in other high-traffic areas for quick reference. As new students are identified, the list is updated and new versions are sent to all staff. For context, see Board Policy and Procedure #661.0 Anaphylactic Reactions.

Parent Expectations

As a staff we do not inspect lunches, but will remove unsafe foods when it is brought to our attention, or when it is noticed by staff or supervisors. On an on-going basis we will notify and educate the community on which foods are unsafe to send to school, and about specific allergies that may be present in each classroom. We also have students who are on special diets where gluten, dye or sugar intake is carefully monitored and controlled by parents. In an effort to ensure that we are safeguarding the foods consumed at school, and respecting the wishes of students and parents, we are asking the following:

- That parents do not send into school any products that contain tree nuts and peanuts.
- That parents respect the needs of each class where students are present who have other specific food allergens that may cause distress; including, but not limited to eggs, sesame seeds, seafoods, and some fruits. Classroom teachers will communicate with families in their class with these specific concerns.
- That parents do not send in any home-baked or store-bought baked or packaged food items for your child **to share with classmates**. This includes treats brought in for celebrations. If you are asked to

share in a celebration, consider sending in loot bags with pencils, stickers and other small, inexpensive items. (see *Celebrations* below).

- That parents ensure that whoever is preparing and packing lunches is aware of what foods are not acceptable at school, or in their child's classroom, and that food labels are read for any products you are unsure about.

Student Expectations

Students need to be made aware of their own specific health and safety needs, and should be educated about what foods may cause them harm. Younger students may require extra support in this area. It is expected that students who are prescribed an epinephrine auto-injector (Epi-pen) should wear one at all times, where age and/or developmentally appropriate (Board Policy #661.0).

We are asking that all students:

- Be knowledgeable about their own safety needs as the first line of defense.
- Not share food at any time with classmates.
- Immediately notify an adult if they see any food that they believe to contain allergens, including anything in their own lunch that is questionable.