



Nutrition and Safer Eating Policy

Objectives

Promote the good health of children through providing a healthy, balanced and nutritious breakfast, snacks and drinks in an environment that promotes healthy choices. The 2025 Early Years Foundation Stage safeguarding reforms introduce clearer, more specific requirements for safer mealtimes to prevent choking and manage food allergies.

Procedure

- The Nursery School is committed to being a Health Promoting Early Years setting.
- All food hygiene matters will be included in staff induction and training for all staff.
- We will advise Ofsted within 14 days of any food poisoning affecting two or more children looked after on the premises.
- When parents/carers register with the Nursery School information will be taken which will include their specific dietary needs, their likes and dislikes, any allergies which may be triggered by certain foods/drinks. Cultural and religious diets will be respected and valued. Information will be shared on healthy lunch boxes.

- Staff will be given information about the specific dietary needs of the children in the setting. The allergy sheets are displayed around the setting with the permission of the parents/carers. Whilst this information is confidential to the school nursery it is essential that everyone involved in the handling, preparation and serving of food ensures that each child's specific requirements are met.
- Milk is served at snack times and water is available throughout the day in the setting (both indoors and outdoors). Older children will be able to access the water independently. Younger children will be supported in accessing water by the staff, being offered drinks on a regular basis. We will ensure that children are not dehydrated after exercise and sleep and in hot weather, in addition to the regular drinks in the day. Care will be taken to ensure all children have regular drinks of water or milk at all times.
- We will provide a healthy nutritious diet for the children attending the setting. The snacks will be developed with the support of member of the Leadership Team and PANCO to ensure that we are promoting healthy eating in line with current guidance. We will ensure that religious/dietary needs are sourced and prepared appropriately. We will encourage the children to enjoy the variety of diets within our communities.
- Children will be encouraged, where appropriate, to help prepare foods for snack time. Opportunities will be given to grow vegetables in the outdoor areas and give the children the opportunity to sample the products of their work.

We will meet the nutritional needs of individual children at all times

For 30 hours children, parents/carers are encouraged to provide a healthy/balanced packed lunch for their children. Tips are given out in welcome packs to give an idea of what a healthy lunch should look like. This is also discussed on our home visits and settle in visits.

Only staff who have received Basic Food Hygiene training will be able to prepare snacks.

The individual dietary needs of children will be met, with discussion with parents/carers prompting when changes to their child's dietary needs will be implemented.

Staff will wash hands before preparing any breakfast or snacks, using the anti-bacterial hand wash provided. Only paper towels or hand-driers will be used in an attempt to minimise cross-infections. Staff will demonstrate good practice and be positive role models for the children and trainees.

Staff should wear gloves when preparing food. All children will wash their hands before and after every snack, supported by staff where appropriate. We support children's healthy teeth by providing water, milk and nutritious breakfast and snacks throughout their day.

We will celebrate special occasions and birthdays and food may be part of these celebrations.

We will promote social eating when having breakfast and snacks with all the children. Staff and children will sit together in a designated eating area within the classroom (small groups at tables within the rooms). Children will sit in low level chairs while eating and staff will supervise children until they have finished.

Children with SEND will be supported 1:2 by a member of staff who will model safe eating to mitigate any risks of choking or sharing food.

When having breakfast or snacks, bowls, plates and utensils will be provided when needed. We will acknowledge the cultural differences in eating within our local community.

- We will promote the Unicef Baby Friendly Initiative within the childcare setting. Mothers are welcome to breast feed within all areas of the Nursery School and Children's Centre. If they wish to feed in a quiet area, this will be arranged for them.
- Good hygiene will be practiced in all areas of the Nursery School. The kitchen and food preparation area will meet the requirements of the Environmental Health Inspectorate, who may visit at any time to ensure compliance with their regulations.

Safer Eating

Whilst children are eating there will always be a member of staff in the room with a valid paediatric first aid certificate.

Before a child is admitted to the nursery school staff will obtain information about any special dietary requirements, preferences, food allergies and intolerances that the child has, and any special health requirements. This information will be shared with all staff involved in the preparing and handling of food.

At each mealtime and snack time staff must be clear about who is responsible for checking that the food being provided meets all the requirements for each child.

The nursery school will have ongoing discussions with parents and/or carers and, where appropriate, health professionals to develop allergy action plans for managing any known allergies and intolerances. This information will be kept up to date by the nursery and shared with all staff.

Providers will refer to the British Society for Allergy and Clinical Immunology (BSACI) allergy action plan. The nursery school will ensure that all staff are aware of the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis, the differences between allergies and intolerances.

Children should be seated safely in a highchair or appropriately sized low chair while eating. Children will never be left alone while they are eating and will always be within sight and hearing of a member of staff.

Where possible staff will sit facing children while they eat so they can:

- make sure children are eating in a way to prevent choking
- prevent food sharing
- be aware of any unexpected allergic reactions

When a child experiences a choking incident that requires intervention from a member of staff, such as back pats, we will record the details of the incident on an incident form and inform parents and carers. This is to help spot any trends with the types of food that might be causing choking incidents.

Food will be stored, prepared and presented in a safe and hygienic environment. Through the wellbeing curriculum, children will also be taught basic hygiene rules such as:

- not eating food that has fallen on the floor
- washing their hands with soap and warm water before eating meals or snacks and after going to the toilet or handling animals.

Monitoring and review

This policy was agreed and implemented on 8th September 2025 and is due for review in August 31st 2026.