

Food and Drink Policy



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Food and Drink Policy

Statement of intent

This policy is completed in accordance with [School food standards: resources for schools - GOV.UK](#) and [Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition - GOV.UK](#)

‘The early years are a crucial time to reduce health inequalities and set the foundations for a lifetime of good health’

This guidance is for early years providers in England who are caring for early years children aged 0 to 5 years.

It supports providers in meeting the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework requirement ‘Where children are provided with meals, snacks and drinks, these must be healthy, balanced and nutritious’.

From September 2025, the EYFS statutory framework will include a safeguarding and welfare requirement that asks providers to follow this nutrition guidance unless there is good reason not to.

Aim

At snack and meal times, we aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children’s individual dietary needs. We aim to support the development of positive eating habits early on which can impact children’s long term health

Methods

- Before a child starts to attend the setting we find out from parents their children’s dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies;
- We record information about each child’s dietary needs and parents sign the record to signify that it is correct;
- Child allergies are displayed in the rooms for staff to see – all staff are notified;
- We implement systems to ensure that children receive only food and drink that is consistent with their dietary needs

- We plan breakfast and snack in advance.
- We provide nutritious food avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings;
- We include a variety of foods:
 - Dairy foods;
 - Meat and meat products
 - Grains, cereals and starch vegetables and
 - Fruit and vegetables.
 - We aim to include foods from the diet of each of the children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones;
- We take care not to provide any food containing nuts or nut products and are especially vigilant where we have a child who has a known allergy to nuts;
- Through discussion with parents and research reading by staff, we obtain information about the dietary rules of the religious groups, to which children and their parents belong, and of vegetarians and vegans, and about food allergies. We take account of this information in the provision of food and drinks;
- We require staff to show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. Staff do not use a child's diet or allergy as a label for the child or make a child feel singled out because of her/his diet or allergy;
- We organise meal and snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate;
- We use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and feeding themselves;
- We provide children with utensils that are appropriate for their ages and stages of development and that take account of the eating practices in their cultures;
- We have fresh drinking water constantly available for the children. We inform the children about how to obtain the water and that they can help themselves at any time during the session/day;
- In accordance with parents' wishes, we offer children arriving for Breakfast Club an appropriate meal;
- We inform parents who provide food for their children about the storage facilities available in the setting;
- We give parents who provide food for their children information about suitable containers for food;

- In order to protect children with food allergies, we have rules about children sharing and swapping their food with one another;
- For children who drink milk, we provide semi skimmed pasteurised milk using the Cool Milk Scheme.

Staff Training

- We have an appointed food and drink lead – Carol Walding – she is fully trained in food hygiene with the HSE
- Other staff that prepare food on a regular basis are also trained with the HSE

Packed Lunches

- Packed lunches are stored on a trolley. Parents are informed to add ice packs to lunch boxes in warmer weather
- We encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit, and milk based deserts such as yoghurt or crème fresh (petit filou). We discourage sweet drinks and can provide children with water or milk
- We discourage packed lunch contents that consist largely of crisps, processed foods, sweet drinks and sweet products such as cakes or biscuits. We reserve the right to return this food to the parent as a last resort;
- We ensure staff sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.

Food Purchasing

- Food purchased for breakfast and snack will be obtained from reputable suppliers and will be delivered to the premises under appropriate conditions (i.e. cold storage for meat and dairy products).
- Semi skimmed milk is provided using the Cool Milk scheme.

Debra Thwaites
6 May 2025