



# **HEALTHY & SAFE EATING POLICY**

Written by	S Mackintosh
Date of policy	April 2026
Next review date	April 2028

## Policy Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- Safeguard the health and wellbeing of all children by ensuring safe, nutritious, and appropriate food and drink provision.
- Meet and exceed statutory requirements, including those set out in the EYFS Statutory Framework, Food Safety Act, and Natasha's Law.
- Identify and effectively manage children's allergies, intolerances, and dietary needs, ensuring robust procedures are in place to prevent allergic reactions and other food-related incidents.
- Foster healthy eating habits, oral health, and positive attitudes towards food, in line with national guidance and best practice.
- Promote inclusion and respect for cultural, religious, and medical dietary requirements.
- Ensure all staff are trained, competent, and confident in safe eating practices, food hygiene, and emergency response.
- Engage parents/carers as partners in safe eating, providing clear communication and opportunities for feedback.
- Monitor, evaluate, and continuously improve safe eating practices through regular review and stakeholder involvement.

## Regulatory Requirements

The policy aligns with the requirements of:

- **Department for Education (DfE):** Including the EYFS Statutory Framework, School Food Standards, and guidance on supporting pupils with medical conditions.
- **Ofsted:** Which inspects and regulates schools and early years settings, with a focus on the welfare, health, and safety of children, including food and drink provision, allergy management, and safe eating practices.
- **Food Standards Agency (FSA):** Provides guidance on food safety, hygiene, and allergen management.
- **Local Authority:** Oversees compliance with health and safety, safeguarding, and food safety standards.

## Safe Food and Drink Provision

### Food and Drink Standards

Our Nursery is committed to providing food and drink that is healthy, balanced, and nutritious, in line with the School Food Standards and the EYFS Statutory Framework. Meals and snacks are planned to provide a variety of foods from all food groups, with appropriate portion sizes for the age and developmental stage of the children. The school will ensure that food provided is low in salt, sugar, and saturated fat, and that fresh fruit and vegetables are available daily. Special dietary requirements, including cultural, religious, and medical needs, will be respected and accommodated. Menus will be reviewed regularly, and will be clearly communicated to families in advance.

### Fresh Drinking Water

Fresh, clean drinking water will be available to all children at all times throughout the school day, including during lessons, playtimes, and mealtimes. Staff will encourage children to drink water regularly, particularly during hot weather or physical activity, and will monitor intake for children with specific health needs.

### **Fresh Milk**

One third of a pint of fresh milk is available to all children each day through the Government Milk Scheme. Staff will encourage the children to drink milk and reinforce how good it is for them.

### **Food Preparation, Storage, and Serving**

All food preparation, storage, and serving will be carried out in accordance with the Food Safety Act 1990, Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013, and FSA guidance. The school will maintain high standards of cleanliness and hygiene in all food areas, with regular cleaning schedules and pest control measures. Food will be prepared and cooked by staff who have received appropriate food hygiene training. Allergen cross-contamination will be prevented through the use of separate utensils, equipment, and preparation areas where necessary. Food will be stored at safe temperatures, with regular checks of refrigeration and storage facilities. Leftover food will be disposed of safely, and food past its use-by date will not be served.

### **Food Brought from Home (Packed Lunches, Treats)**

The school recognises that some children bring packed lunches or treats from home for special occasions. Parents/carers are provided with clear guidance on healthy packed lunches, including foods to include and avoid, and are reminded of the importance of not sending in foods that contain common allergens (e.g., nuts) where these are banned due to allergies within the school community. All food brought from home must be clearly labelled with the child's name. Staff will check packed lunches for potential allergens and unsafe items and will contact parents/carers if there are concerns. Treats for birthdays or celebrations can be brought in, but we don't consume these during the day, the treat is sent home for parents to decide whether they wish their child to consume the item.

## **Allergy and Dietary Needs Management**

### **Identification and Documentation of Allergies/Dietary Needs**

The school will collect information on all children's allergies, intolerances, and dietary requirements as part of the admissions process and will update this information when notified of changes by parents/carers. Parents/carers must provide written details of any allergies, including medical documentation where appropriate, and must inform the school immediately of any new or changed dietary needs. All information will be recorded on the school's allergy and dietary needs register, which is on the board in the staff room, accessible to all relevant staff.

### **Individual Health Care Plans**

For children with significant allergies, intolerances, or eating difficulties, the school will develop an individual health care plan (IHCP) in partnership with parents/carers, health professionals, and, where appropriate, the child. The IHCP will set out the nature of the allergy or condition, triggers, symptoms, emergency procedures, medication requirements (e.g., adrenaline auto-injectors), and roles and responsibilities. IHCPs will be reviewed at least annually, or more frequently if the child's needs change, and will be shared with all relevant staff. The school will ensure that IHCPs are implemented consistently and that staff are confident in following them.

### **Allergen Management and Labelling**

The school will implement robust procedures for allergen management, in line with Natasha's Law and FSA guidance. All food provided by the school will be clearly labelled with allergen information, using visual aids and written descriptions as appropriate. Staff will be trained to identify and manage the 14 major allergens and will ensure that allergen information is

communicated to children and parents/carers in a clear and accessible manner. Separate utensils, preparation areas, and serving equipment will be used to prevent cross-contamination, and staff will check all ingredients and supplier information before preparing food. Allergen information will be displayed in dining areas and included on menus.

### **Communication with Parents/Carers**

Effective communication with parents/carers is essential for safe allergy and dietary needs management. The school will inform parents/carers of menu changes, planned special events, and any incidents involving their child. Parents/carers will be consulted in the development and review of IHCPs and will be invited to provide feedback on safe eating practices. The school will provide regular updates on allergy management, including reminders about foods not permitted on site, and will respond promptly to any concerns or queries from parents/carers.

### **Staff Training in Allergy Awareness and Emergency Response**

All staff are paediatric first aid trained and know the signs and symptoms of allergic reactions (including anaphylaxis), and emergency response procedures. Training includes the use of adrenaline auto-injectors, first aid for choking, and the management of food-related incidents.

## **Safe Eating Environment and Supervision**

### **Mealtime Supervision**

Children will be appropriately supervised during all meals and snacks, with staff-to-child ratios in line with EYFS requirements. Staff will be vigilant for signs of allergic reactions, choking, or other difficulties, and will ensure that children with allergies or dietary needs are seated in safe locations and supported as needed. Mealtime supervision will be proactive, with staff engaging positively with children, modelling safe eating behaviours, and encouraging social interaction. Staff will ensure that children do not share food or drinks and will monitor for any unsafe practices.

### **To summarise:**

- Children must be supervised at all times while eating.
- Staff should sit facing children to observe eating and respond quickly should a child be seen choking.
- Children must be seated safely (e.g. highchairs or appropriate chairs).
- Mealtimes should minimise distractions and promote focus on eating.
- Children must be within sight and hearing at all times.
- A paediatric first aid-trained member of staff must be present during meals/snacks.
- Staff should:
  - watch for choking (which can be silent)
  - prevent food sharing (important for allergies)
  - encourage chewing and slow eating

### **Choking Prevention and Response**

The school will implement measures to minimise the risk of choking, including providing age-appropriate foods, cutting food into safe sizes and shapes (e.g., quartering grapes), and discouraging running or playing while eating. All staff are paediatric first aid trained which includes the management of choking. In the event of a choking incident, staff will act promptly and in accordance with their training, and the incident will be recorded and reported as required.

### **Inclusive and Supportive Eating Practices**

The school is committed to ensuring that all children, including those with complex dietary needs, sensory issues, or medical conditions, are able to participate fully in mealtimes and food-related activities. Staff will work with parents/carers and health professionals to provide appropriate adaptations, such as alternative foods, modified textures, or additional support. Children will be treated with dignity and respect, and no child will be singled out or excluded due to their dietary needs. The school will promote a culture of inclusion, understanding, and empathy, and will challenge any stigma or discrimination related to food or eating.

## **Hygiene, Food Safety, and Oral Health**

### **Food Hygiene Standards and Procedures**

All staff involved in food preparation, serving, or supervision will follow strict food hygiene procedures, including regular handwashing, the use of clean protective clothing, and the safe handling of food. The school will maintain up-to-date food hygiene certificates for all relevant staff and will provide regular training and refresher courses. Cleaning routines for kitchens, dining areas, and equipment will be clearly documented and monitored, with regular audits to ensure compliance. Food will be stored, prepared, and served at safe temperatures, and all equipment will be maintained in good working order.

### **Infection Control Measures**

The school will implement robust infection control measures to prevent the spread of illness and cross-contamination. Children and staff will wash their hands thoroughly before and after eating, after using the toilet, and after handling food. Handwashing facilities will be accessible, with soap, warm water, and disposable towels provided. Staff will monitor and support younger children to ensure effective handwashing. The school will follow Public Health England (now UK Health Security Agency) guidance on managing illness, including exclusion periods for infectious diseases, and will communicate with parents/carers as needed.

### **Oral Health Promotion**

Oral health is an integral part of the school's safe eating policy. The school will promote good oral hygiene through education, practical activities, and the provision of water instead of sugary drinks. Children will be taught about the importance of brushing teeth, choosing tooth-friendly snacks, and visiting the dentist regularly. The school will participate in local oral health initiatives and will provide information and resources to parents/carers.