

Food and Nutrition Policy

1. Policy Statement

Our setting is committed to promoting the health and well-being of all children by providing nutritious, balanced meals and snacks in a safe and inclusive environment. We adhere to the EYFS statutory framework and the latest nutrition guidance to ensure that every child receives appropriate nourishment to support their growth and development.

2. Objectives

- We provide a two course lunch and a high tea and snacks morning and afternoon that are healthy, balanced, and nutritious.
- We accommodate individual dietary requirements, including allergies, intolerances, and cultural or religious preferences. Please refer to our Dietary Requirements Policy.
- We promote positive attitudes towards healthy eating and mealtimes.
- We ensure all staff are trained in food hygiene and allergy awareness.
- We engage parents and carers in promoting consistent healthy eating practices.
- We ensure portion sizes are tailored to the child's age and appetite, typically using smaller plates and serving sizes appropriate for children under five.

4. Food and Drink Provision

- **Snacks:** Prepared onsite, incorporating a variety of foods from all four main food groups. In accordance with the Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance (May 2025), children under 12 months old do not need any snacks. If we think a child is hungry in between meals, extra milk feeds will be offered instead. Any variations to this policy will only be agreed in discussion with parents, based on the needs and stage of development of the individual child.
- **Meals:** Lunch and tea are cooked by Slice of Pie (nursery catering specialist). All hot meals are prepared fresh daily off site and transported to us in insulated containers.
- **Drinks:** Only water and milk are offered to support oral health. Sugary drinks, including fruit juices and smoothies, are not provided. We ask that parents provide their child with a named water bottle every day they are in nursery.
- **Special Occasions:** Celebrations involve healthy food choices, for example a fruit platter, and we encourage non-food-based festivities, such as blowing bubbles and singing. We do not accept birthday cakes to give to the children.

5. Allergy and Dietary Management

- Obtain detailed information on each child's dietary needs before admission.
- Develop and regularly update individualised Allergy Action Plans in collaboration with parents/carers and healthcare professionals.
- Ensure all staff are aware of children's dietary requirements and trained to recognise and respond to allergic reactions.
- Prevent cross-contamination by adhering to strict food preparation and serving protocols. Children are provided with a coloured placemat and colour coded plate. The placemat includes their picture and details of their specific food requirements. Children use placemats at all mealtimes, including snacks, in order to ensure they are not given any restricted foods.

6. Safer Eating Practices

- A staff member with a valid Paediatric First Aid certificate is present during all meal and snack times.
- Children are supervised closely while eating, seated appropriately to minimise choking risks.
- Food is prepared in sizes and textures suitable for the child's developmental stage to prevent choking.
- Any choking incidents are documented, and parents/carers are informed promptly.

7. Mealtime Environment

- Create a calm, sociable atmosphere during meals to encourage positive eating behaviours.
- Staff model healthy eating habits and engage children in conversations about food.
- Children are encouraged to self-serve the food and use appropriate cutlery for their age. They are also encouraged to scrape their plates at the end of their meal.
- Children are encouraged to try new foods but are never forced to eat.
- Children are not incentivised to finish their food.
- We do not disguise food. Children should know about vegetables, salads, fruit, cereal, fish and meat and learn to distinguish and value all these food groups.
- Children are offered a rolling snack, mid-morning and mid-afternoon. Children are not taken away from an activity they are engaged in, however they are offered snack. They are also encouraged to take turns choosing and giving out snack.
- All children wash their hands or use a foam sanitiser hand mousse before coming into contact with food.

8. Food Education and Activities

- Incorporate food-related activities, such as cooking and gardening, to teach children about nutrition and healthy choices.
- Use educational resources to support learning about different foods and their benefits.

9. Parental Engagement

- Share menus and nutritional information with parents/carers regularly.
- Encourage feedback and collaboration to ensure consistency between home and setting.

10. Staff Training and Development

- All staff involved in food preparation and handling receive up-to-date training in food hygiene and allergy management.
- Regular professional development opportunities are provided to keep staff informed about best practices in nutrition and food safety.

11. Policy Review

This policy is reviewed annually or sooner if there are significant changes in guidance or the needs of the children. Feedback from staff, parents/carers, and children is considered during the review process.

By adhering to this policy, we aim to foster a healthy relationship with food among children, laying the foundation for lifelong well-being.

This policy was reviewed on: 2nd January 2026
By: Lucy Whitehead (Director)