



Food and Nutrition Policy

Policy Statement

We recognise the importance of providing children with healthy, balanced food to support their growth, development and wellbeing. The setting promotes healthy eating habits and encourages children to try a variety of nutritious foods.

We work in partnership with parents to ensure children receive food that meets their individual dietary needs.

Healthy Eating

The setting aims to provide meals and snacks that:

- are balanced and nutritious
- include a variety of fruits and vegetables
- include healthy sources of protein and carbohydrates
- encourage children to develop positive attitudes towards food

We support children to develop independence during mealtimes and encourage them to try new foods.

Meals Provided by the Setting

Where meals are provided by the setting or an external provider, we ensure food meets appropriate nutritional and hygiene standards.

Food will be stored, prepared and served safely in line with the setting's **Food Hygiene Policy**.

Packed Lunches

Parents may choose to provide a **packed lunch** if they opt out of the setting's meal payment scheme.

Packed lunches should ideally include:

- a main item such as a sandwich, pasta or rice
- fruit or vegetables
- a healthy snack such as yoghurt or cheese
- a drink such as **water**

To promote healthy eating we ask that packed lunches **do not include**:

- sweets or chocolate bars
- fizzy drinks
- **fruit juices or sugary drinks**

Foods that pose a choking risk (such as whole grapes) should be prepared appropriately.

All lunchboxes and containers should be **clearly labelled with the child's name**.

Nut-Free Environment

The setting operates as a **nut-free environment** to protect children with severe allergies.

Parents must **not include nuts or nut products** in packed lunches or snacks. This includes items such as:

- peanuts
- peanut butter
- nut-based spreads
- foods containing nuts

Staff will monitor food brought into the setting and may remove items if they pose a risk to children with allergies.

Food Allergies and Dietary Requirements

The setting works closely with parents to ensure that children with allergies, intolerances or dietary requirements are supported safely.

Parents must inform the setting of any allergies or dietary needs when their child starts. Staff will ensure that all dietary information is shared with relevant staff members.

Where required, individual care plans may be developed to support children with medical dietary needs.

Mealtimes

Mealtimes provide an important opportunity for children to develop social skills and independence.

During mealtimes staff will:

- supervise children at all times
- encourage good table manners
- promote handwashing before and after eating
- support children in developing independence

Mealtimes are calm, social experiences where children can enjoy food together.

Food Safety

Food will always be handled safely to reduce the risk of contamination and illness. Staff follow appropriate hygiene procedures when preparing food or supporting children during meals.

Lunchboxes and packed food will be stored appropriately during the day.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or when guidance changes.