



Safer Eating Policy

VERSION/DATE:	October 2026
NEXT VERSION DUE BY:	October 2027

In September 2025 changes to the Early Years Statutory Framework were introduced to ensure safer eating practices are adhered to, to keep your children safe whilst eating at Nursery.

We recognise the importance of keeping children safe, so already had procedures in place, but this change has encouraged us to put into a policy how we keep your child/ren safe at mealtimes and whilst eating throughout the day.

We will minimise the risk of choking by ensuring that food is prepared in a way that is safe for your child/ren to eat.

- Removing stones/pips from fruit
- Cutting small round fruits and vegetables lengthways and then into quarters
- Large fruits and hard fruit or vegetables will be cut into slices instead of small chunks
- NO raisins to children under 12 months
- When weaning babies from 6 months we will soften hard fruits and vegetables and remove skins
- No whole nuts or seeds to children under 5 years. REMEMBER we are an allergy aware setting!
- NO chocolate spread in lunches.
- Cheese will be cut into strips rather than chunks
- Cut sausage into thin strips rather than chunks and remove skin
- Remove bones from meat and fish
- Wholemeal or toasted bread will be offered rather than plain white bread, as this can form a doughy ball in the throat, all types of bread will be cut into strips for younger children.
- NO popcorn
- NO marshmallows or jelly cubes as snacks or food play
- NO hard-boiled sweets including lollipops.

Whilst it is lovely that people send in treats for birthdays, please don't be offended if we send it back, sometimes it is not suitable even to hand to parents for their discretion about whether it should be given. Any treats or sweets that are sent in to send home must be in the original packaging so that we can check ingredients for allergy sufferers. You may want to think about a non-edible option such as bubbles or party bag favours.

We will ensure adequate supervision of your child whilst eating both indoors and outdoors, babies and young children will be securely seated in high chairs or appropriate low chairs whilst eating and will not be left alone. A member of staff will always be within sight of eating children. In our pre-schools children will have access to toast. The children will be seated on the floor in a large circle time with all faces visible to staff. The

member of staff will position themselves facing the children, and make sure that the children are eating in a way to prevent choking and food sharing. The staff member will also be aware of unexpected allergic reactions and familiar with any allergies that the children in their care may have. If you call between the hours of 11:30 and 12:30 you will not be put through to the room, this is to keep distractions to a minimum for staff and children during mealtimes.

Members of staff supervising your child/ren whilst eating will hold a paediatric first aid certificate, these are updated every 3 years. If a choking incident does occur that requires a staff member to administer any kind of first aid, they will record on an incident form and parents/carers will be notified, this will help spot trends that might cause these incidents.

Whilst we would prefer only water in your children's bottles, it is important they maintain a healthy intake of fluids, so if they will not drink water, we do allow weak diluted squash, but please do not send in fizzy drinks, energy drinks or anything similar. These bottles can be picked up by other children occasionally, please also remember NEVER to put medicine in a bottle that you are leaving onsite, this could be dangerous to your child or others, as we wouldn't know when doses have been given, and another child may pick up the bottle and drink from it.

We will discuss weaning needs with parents as and when appropriate (around 6 months) we can also give advice on healthy foods and processes if needed. Please if you are sending in foods for your child and not requiring a hot meal, ensure that the consistency is suitable and choking hazards are kept to a minimum. On occasion food may be sent home that is untouched, due to guidance in the policy, staff will communicate with parents the reason for this.

Within the rooms we have a process in place of colour coded placemats, this helps staff to know which children can eat certain foods, who has intolerances, and any other dietary requirements. On admission we will discuss dietary requirements with you, but please note it is your responsibility to inform us of a change in dietary needs so we can update the child's details. The staff will always check that the food being provided to each individual child meets their dietary requirements and is prepared in a way that keeps them safe.

We can offer advice on healthy foods and healthy eating if you find you are struggling, please come to a member of staff and we can point you in the right direction.