



Healthy Eating Policy

Last Review: 21/08/2025

Next Review: 21/08/2026

1.0 Policy Statement

Meal and snack times are an important, social part of the nursery day and a key opportunity to support healthy choices. We provide nutritious food and drink, meet individual dietary, cultural and medical needs, and keep children safe from allergens, especially nuts, which are not permitted on site.

2.0 Our Legal Obligations

EYFS Statutory Framework (2025): provide healthy, balanced food and fresh drinking water; safe preparation and hygiene; record accidents/incidents and inform parents the same day; appropriate supervision at mealtimes.

Food Safety Act & Food Hygiene Regulations: safe food handling, HACCP-based controls, temperature control, and staff training/competence.

Food Information (Allergens) Regulations: clear allergen management and information for meals provided; robust procedures to prevent cross-contact.

UKHSA infection control guidance: kitchen/serving hygiene and illness exclusion.

Equality Act 2010: reasonable adjustments for disability, medical and cultural/religious diets.

UK GDPR & Data Protection Act 2018: secure handling of dietary/medical information.

3.0 Procedures

Meals, Snacks and Drinks

We provide healthy snacks and freshly cooked lunches on site. Menus are displayed and shared with parents; a vegetarian option is available on request. Fresh drinking water is available to children at all times; milk or water is offered with snacks and lunch. Children not taking a cooked lunch bring a balanced packed lunch from home (see guidance below).

Dietary needs and allergens (including nuts)

Before a child starts, we collect dietary and allergy information and keep it up to date with parents. Current allergy/medical dietary needs are clearly visible to kitchen and room staff (on a need-to-know basis). We do not allow nuts or nut products on site (including in packed lunches). Children are supervised closely at mealtimes; food sharing/swapping is discouraged. We minimise cross-contact through careful storage, preparation, serving and cleaning. Children with significant allergies have an Individual Health Care Plan; emergency medication (e.g., adrenaline auto-injectors) is accessible, and staff are trained.

Packed lunches from home

Parents who choose packed lunches should provide a simple, balanced meal. We can store labelled items in the fridge. We do not reheat food brought from home; families may send a suitable flask for warm items the child can pour with help. Water or milk is provided. Please avoid chocolate and sweets; sugar-free juice/squash may be sent if preferred. No nuts or nut products (e.g., peanut butter, some snack bars, pesto). Check dates and packaging size; label all containers.

Mealtimes

Mealtimes are calm, social and inclusive. Staff sit with children, model good eating habits and table talk, and support self-help skills with appropriate utensils. Cultural and religious practices around food are respected. Seating is arranged to manage allergy risks and support children who need a quieter space.

Hygiene and cleanliness

We follow cleaning schedules for kitchens/eating areas, wash hands before handling food or eating, and use appropriate PPE where needed. Surfaces/equipment are sanitised before and after food service. Illness and exclusion periods follow our Illness & Exclusion Policy.

Communication with parents

We explain our healthy eating approach, nut-free rule and packed-lunch guidance at enrolment and through the welcome information and notice board. Changes to a child's diet or allergies must be shared immediately so we can update records and signage.

Cooking and special occasions

We include occasional tasting/cooking linked to curriculum themes and celebrations (e.g., Pancake Day, Eid, Diwali, Chinese New Year). Ingredients are checked against children's allergy lists and alternatives are provided.

Parent/Family events (with parents present)

When food is offered at events where parents attend (e.g., stay-and-play, celebrations), parents decide what their own child can eat. We still maintain our nut-free rule and manage allergens safely:

- An Allergy Awareness poster is placed at the front of the food table to remind families about common allergens and our no-nuts rule.

- For nursery-provided food, we add a simple allergen label to each dish. For any parent-provided dishes, we ask for an ingredient/allergen card; items without information are placed on a clearly marked “ingredients unknown” section and are not offered to children with known allergies.
- Foods likely to contain common allergens (e.g., dairy, egg, gluten, sesame) are kept separate with their own utensils to reduce cross-contact.
- Parents supervise their own child’s choices and eating during the event and can bring safe alternatives if preferred.
- A Paediatric First Aider and the child’s emergency medication (where applicable) are on hand; any incidents are treated, recorded the same day, and parents informed.
- Basic food safety is followed (hand hygiene; clean surfaces; hot/cold foods managed sensibly; perishable food not left out for extended periods).

4.0 Roles and Responsibilities

Nursery Manager: ensures menus and practices meet legal standards; oversees allergy management and nut-free compliance; ensures training and supervision at mealtimes; monitors record and responds to incidents.

Staff: follow allergy/packed-lunch rules; supervise mealtimes; prevent food sharing; seat children safely; uphold hygiene; report concerns or incidents immediately.

Parents/Carers: provide accurate, up-to-date dietary/allergy information; follow packed-lunch guidance and the no-nuts rule; discuss any changes or concerns prompt; supervise their own child’s eating and make final decisions about what their child consumes, taking account of allergy information and the no-nuts rule.