Safer Eating and Nutrition Policy

Policy Statement

We are committed to providing safe, nutritious food and drink for all children in our care. This policy supports children's health, wellbeing and development while meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2025.

We recognise that mealtimes are an important part of children's learning, wellbeing and social development. All food and drink provided or consumed within the setting will be managed safely, with particular attention to allergies, dietary needs, choking risks and respectful feeding practices.

2. Aims of the Policy

We aim to:

- Promote children's health and wellbeing through safe, nutritious food
- Prevent allergic reactions and food–related illness
- Ensure safe feeding practices appropriate to each child's age and stage
- Meet individual dietary, cultural and medical needs
- Ensure all staff understand their responsibilities for safer eating

3. Legal and EYFS Framework

This policy is informed by:

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework 2025
- Food Safety Act 1990
- Food Information Regulations 2014
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

4. Managing Allergies and Dietary Requirements

4.1 Collection of Information

- Allergy and dietary information is collected on registration and updated regularly
- Parents/carers must provide written confirmation of all allergies, intolerances and medical dietary needs
- Allergy information is clearly recorded and shared with all relevant staff

4.2 Allergy Awareness

- Allergy lists are displayed discreetly in food preparation and serving areas
- Staff are trained to recognise signs of allergic reactions
- Children with allergies are supervised closely during food-related activities

4.3 Preventing Cross-Contamination

- Separate preparation areas and utensils are used where required
- Hands are washed before and after handling food
- Surfaces are cleaned before and after food preparation

4.4 Emergency Procedures

- Emergency medication (e.g. EpiPens) is stored safely and is easily accessible
- Staff are trained in the administration of emergency medication
- In the event of an allergic reaction, emergency procedures are followed and parents are informed immediately

5. Safe Feeding Practices

5.1 Supervision

- Children are always supervised while eating
- Staff sit with children during mealtimes and remain attentive

5.2 Choking Prevention

- Food is prepared appropriately for children's age and development
- High-risk foods (e.g. whole grapes, nuts) are prepared or avoided according to guidance
- Children are encouraged to sit calmly while eating

5.3 Responsive Feeding

- Children are never forced to eat
- Staff respond to children's hunger and fullness cues
- Feeding is calm, unhurried and supportive

6. Nutrition and Healthy Choices

- Meals and snacks provided are balanced and nutritious
- Fresh drinking water is available at all times
- Sugary foods and drinks are limited
- Mealtimes are used to encourage healthy eating habits and positive attitudes towards food

This setting follows nationally recognised healthy eating guidance, including:

- NHS Start for Life – Healthy eating for babies and toddlers: https://www.nhs.uk/start-for-life/baby/feeding-your-baby/
- NHS Start for Life – Children aged 1–5 years: https://www.nhs.uk/start-for-life/child/feeding-your-child/
- Public Health England – Eatwell Guide: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-eatwell-guide
- School Food Standards (where applicable): https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-food-standards-resources-for-schools
- Help for early years providers : Nutrition

Menus and food provision are planned in line with this guidance to ensure children receive a balanced diet that supports healthy growth and development.

7. Respectful Mealtimes

- Mealtimes are relaxed, social experiences
- Staff model positive eating behaviours
- Children's preferences, cultural needs and routines are respected
- Mealtimes are inclusive and supportive of all children

8. Food Preparation and Hygiene

- Food preparation areas meet food hygiene standards
- Staff follow handwashing and hygiene procedures
- Food is stored, prepared and served safely
- Food safety records are maintained as required

9. Roles and Responsibilities

Staff

- Follow this policy at all times
- Undertake relevant food safety and allergy training
- Report concerns relating to food safety immediately

Management

- Ensure staff are trained and supported
- Review allergy and dietary information regularly
- Monitor compliance with this policy

10. Partnership with Parents

- Parents are informed about menus and food provision
- Changes to dietary needs must be shared promptly
- We work in partnership with families to support children's health and wellbeing

11. Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed annually or sooner if legislation or guidance changes.

Signed: _____

Date: _____