

Food and Nutrition Policy

At Precious Little Souls, I support children's health and wellbeing by providing nutritious food, safe eating routines, and positive mealtime experiences. This policy outlines my commitment to safe, healthy, and inclusive food provision in line with the EYFS 2025, **Safer Eating requirements**, and the **Nutrition Guidance** (April 2025).

Working in Partnership with Families

I work closely with families to ensure:

- All allergies, dietary needs, medical requirements, and food preferences are met and respected.
- Weaning approaches and home routines are followed.
- Menus (where applicable) are shared and adapted collaboratively.
- Ongoing communication supports safe and healthy choices for every child.

Food and Drink Provision

I provide (or ask parents to provide):

- Meals and snacks based on the **four food groups** outlined in the Nutrition Guidance.
- Healthy drinks: plain water and milk only (no sweetened or fizzy drinks).
- Meals low in salt, sugar, and saturated fat; ultra-processed foods are avoided
- On occasions vegan meals are provided.

Mealtime Environment and Supervision

- Mealtimes are calm, screen-free, and social experiences
- Children are seated in high or low chairs and distractions are minimised
- I sit with the children to encourage and model healthy eating and to closely supervise
- Children are encouraged to develop independent skills in feeding
- Cooking activities are encouraged to support learning and enjoyment

Allergy and Dietary Needs Management

Before starting, I collect details on:

- Allergies and intolerances
- Medical dietary needs
- Cultural and religious food requirements

This information is:

- Documented securely on the tiney app
- Shared with assistants
- Reviewed and updated regularly

For children with allergies:

- A **Child health care plan** is developed with parents
- If there is an allergy action plan in place for your child from a medical professional this should be shared with me, to ensure I can follow this in my setting.
- Plans and individual children's information are shared with all staff and accessible (but confidential) and reviewed regularly.
- I will ensure all meals and snacks are checked by myself or an assigned staff member before serving food.
- All staff/assistants are trained in allergy awareness.

Safer Eating and Choking Prevention

To minimise risk, I follow the safer eating requirements outlined in the EYFS 2025.

I will ensure:

- I prepare food in a way to prevent choking.
- I carefully consider the size, shape, and texture of foods offered — cutting food into narrow batons, avoiding round shapes and firm foods. I will soften firm fruit and vegetables by cooking them where needed.
- Ensure that babies and young children are alert and safely seated in a highchair or appropriately sized low chair while eating.
- Supervise babies and young children at all times during meals, so I can quickly identify early signs of choking and respond to prevent harm.
- Make sure food is suitably prepared and served for babies and children under 5 years old, in line with NHS guidance
- Children are **never left unsupervised while eating**.
- An adult with **Paediatric First Aid (PFA) training** is always present during mealtimes.

If a choking incident or allergic reaction occurs:

- It is responded to immediately by a Paediatric First Aider
- Parents are informed as soon as possible
- The incident is recorded, reviewed, and risk controls updated.

Cultural and Individual Preferences

I respect and accommodate all:

- Religious or cultural dietary needs
- Ethical preferences (e.g., vegetarian, halal)
- Family routines, traditions and preference
- If we have any celebrations in the setting I ensure these are inclusive and any food provided is healthy. If families wish to provide items for a celebration they are encouraged to provide alternatives to sweets (for example, small keepsakes or gifts e.g. stickers, mini bubbles)

Food From Home

If you are providing food from home please refer to my Food from Home Policy

Food Safety and Hygiene

I follow **Food Standards Agency** guidance and use *Safer Food, Better Business for Childminders*. This includes:

- Clean food preparation and storage areas
- Separation of allergen-containing foods
- Prevention of cross-contamination
- Safe labelling of ingredients and prepared foods
- Routine hygiene checks and safe kitchen practices.

Teaching Children About Food and Sustainability

- Children learn about food through play, stories, and discussion
- Seasonal and local ingredients are used where possible
- Children are taught about food origins, waste reduction, and respectful attitudes to eating

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