

03 Food Safety and Nutrition Policy

Aim

RCC is a suitable, clean, and safe place for children to be cared for, where they can grow and learn. We meet all statutory requirements for food safety and fulfil the criteria for meeting the relevant Early Years Foundation Stage Safeguarding and Welfare requirements.

Objectives

- We recognise that we have a corporate responsibility and duty of care for those who work in and receive a service from Rainbow Children's Corner, but individual employees and service users also have responsibility for ensuring their own safety as well as that of others. Risk assessment is the key means through which this is achieved.
- Procedure **1.03 Kitchen** is followed for general hygiene and safety in food preparation areas.
- We provide nutritionally sound meals and snacks which promote health and reduce the risk of obesity and heart disease that may begin in childhood.
- We ensure that children are supervised at mealtimes and that children are within sight and hearing of a member of staff at all times and where possible staff are sat facing children when eating to ensure they are eating in a way that prevents choking, prevents food sharing and enables staff to be aware of any unexpected allergic reactions.
- We follow the main advice on dietary guidelines and the legal requirements for identifying food allergens when planning menus based on the four food groups:

* meat, fish, and protein alternatives

* milk and dairy products

* cereals and grains

* fresh fruit and vegetables

- Following dietary guidelines to promote health also means taking account of guidelines to reduce risk of disease caused by unhealthy eating.
- Parents/carers share information about their children's particular dietary needs and allergies with staff when they enrol their children.
- We take into account every child's individual development needs and work in partnership with parents/carers to support children with weaning in line with current guidance.

- RCC ensures that all staff are aware of the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis and the differences between allergies and intolerances.
- Foods provided by the setting for children have any allergenic ingredients identified on menus.
- Care is taken to ensure that children with food allergies and intolerances do not have contact with food products that they are allergic to.
- We notify Ofsted or the childminder agency (CMA) of any food poisoning affecting two or more children as soon as possible and at least within 14 days.
- Risk assessments are conducted for each child who has a food allergy or specific dietary requirement.
- If a child chokes at mealtime and intervention is given, the incident is recorded and parents/carers are informed.

Receipt and Service of Externally Prepared Food

RCC does not prepare main meals on site. Meals are freshly cooked off-site by a registered café and collected daily by the setting once staff are notified that the food is ready for collection.

Receipt of Food

- Food is freshly cooked and collected daily from the café.
- Meals are provided individually wrapped and clearly labelled to minimise handling by staff.
- On collection, staff visually check that food is in clean, intact packaging and at a safe temperature.
- Allergen information provided by the café is checked against children's dietary records prior to service.

Holding and Service

- Meals are served immediately on return to the setting wherever possible.
- If short-term holding is required, suitable hot-holding equipment is used.
- Food temperatures are monitored and recorded to ensure food remains at safe serving temperatures.

Plating and Handling

- Individually wrapped meals minimise direct contact with food.
- Staff wash hands thoroughly before service and wear disposable aprons.
- Food is only handled for serving purposes and direct hand contact is avoided wherever possible.

Allergen Management

- All allergen requirements are shared in advance with the café.
- The café confirms that meals for children with allergies or intolerances are prepared separately and clearly labelled.

- Staff check meals before serving to ensure the correct child receives the correct meal.

Training and Monitoring

- Staff involved in food service understand food hygiene principles and allergen risks.
- Procedures are reviewed regularly and updated as required.

Growing and Preparing Home-Grown Produce

RCC provides opportunities for children to grow fruit and vegetables such as tomatoes, peppers, pumpkins and potatoes in a designated vegetable patch. This supports children's understanding of healthy eating, food origins and food hygiene.

- Activities are supervised by staff at all times.
- Children are taught that all fruit and vegetables must be washed thoroughly before being prepared or eaten.
- Staff ensure produce is cleaned appropriately before tasting activities.
- Gardening and preparation tools are age-appropriate and cleaned thoroughly after use.
- Soil-covered produce is cleaned and prepared by staff before use.
- Activities are risk assessed, including consideration of allergies and hygiene.
- Children wash hands before and after gardening and food-related activities.

Legal References

Regulation (EC) 852/2004 – Hygiene of Foodstuffs

Food Information Regulations 2014

The Childcare Act 2006

Further Guidance

Safer Food Better Business – Food Standards Agency

Paediatric Allergy Action Plans – BSACI

Food Allergy – NHS

Anaphylaxis – NHS

Weaning – Start for Life (NHS)

Help for Early Years Providers: Food Safety

Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance (2025)

3.01 Food Preparation, Storage and Purchase

General

- Staff have up-to-date certificated food safety training.
- Staff refer to EYFS Nutrition Guidance (2025).
- The setting manager ensures Safer Food Better Business requirements are met.
- All food handlers complete Food Allergy Online Training.
- The setting manager oversees compliance with hygiene and allergy procedures.
- HACCP-based risk assessments are completed.
- Cleaning, opening and closing checks are recorded.
- A Food Allergy and Dietary Needs folder is maintained and updated regularly.

Purchasing and Storing Food

- Food is purchased from reputable suppliers.
- Pre-packed and loose food allergen information is shared with parents.
- Nut-containing foods are not permitted.
- Food is stored correctly, labelled, dated and monitored.
- Fridge and freezer temperatures are checked and recorded daily.

Preparation of Food

- Allergens are checked and identified on menus.
- Separate equipment is used to prevent cross-contamination.
- Food is cooked thoroughly and temperatures checked.
- Raw eggs are not given to children.

Serving Food

- A named person checks meals meet children's dietary needs.
- Allergy controls are implemented discreetly.
- Tables and equipment are cleaned before and after meals.
- Staff wash hands and cover cuts appropriately.

E. coli Prevention

Food handling follows E. coli O157 guidance and Safer Food Better Business principles.

3.02 Food for Play and Cooking Activities

Food play is risk assessed, allergen-aware and supervised. Raw flour is not used. Children wash hands before and after activities. Safe alternatives are provided where necessary.

3.03 Menu Planning and Nutrition

Menus are balanced, inclusive, displayed clearly and reflect dietary, cultural and religious needs. Allergens are clearly identified.

3.04 Meeting Dietary Requirements

Children's dietary needs are recorded, shared with staff and reviewed regularly. Staff ensure all food meets individual requirements without singling out children. Fresh drinking water is always available.