



Food, Drink and Safer Eating Policy

Safer Eating and Choking Prevention

This section of the policy outlines how we minimise the risk of choking during snack and mealtimes and ensure children eat safely and with supervision. It reflects current government guidance on choking prevention in early years settings and applies to all children attending the pre-school.

Key Safety procedures

- Children must always be within sight and hearing of a member of staff when eating
- Children are always seated while eating.
- Children are not permitted to move about with food in their mouths. If they need the toilet during snack or mealtimes, practitioners who are supervising must ensure they have finished what they are eating.
- A practitioner with full paediatric first aid certificate is always supervising children in close proximity when eating.
- Children are sat and supervised face to face, with attention paid to posture, chewing and swallowing.

High risk food

The following foods are not served whole due to choking risk:

- Grapes
- Cherry tomatoes
- Large pieces of raw apple or carrot

Where appropriate, some foods may be:

- Peeled
- Halved and quartered lengthways
- Grated or thinly sliced

Staff Awareness and Training

- All staff are made aware of choking risks and the supervision expectations.
- Choking prevention is included in risk assessment log and staff are trained to recognise signs of choking including silent choking and have all staff have up to date paediatric first aid.
- I review this policy regularly in line with guidance from the Department of Education.

If a choking incident occurs

When a child experiences a choking incident that requires intervention, providers should record details of where and how the child choked and ensure parents and/or carers are made aware by telephone.



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Snack-times and Lunchtimes

Managing Allergies

- Before a child is admitted to the setting the provider must obtain information about any special dietary requirements, preferences, food allergies and intolerances that the child has, and any special health requirements
- This information is displayed in the area where the children eat snack and lunch, in the kitchen and a copy kept in the medical folder
- Staff have ongoing discussions with parents and/or carers and, where appropriate, health professionals to develop allergy action plans for managing any known allergies and intolerances.

Snack times

- A 'snack' is prepared mid-morning and mid-afternoon and can be organised according to the discretion of the setting manager e.g. picnic on a blanket.
- Children may also take turns to help set the table. Small, lidded plastic jugs are provided with choice of milk or water.
- Children wash their hands before and after snack-time.
- Children are offered semi-skimmed milk or water as a main drink.
- A choice of fruit and a dry snack is offered, children use tongs to pick up fruit.
- Staff join in conversation and encourage children's independence by allowing them to pour drinks, butter toast, cut fruit etc.

Packed Lunches

Parents provide packed lunches. The pre-school works together with parents to encourage healthy eating and encourage them to follow the same safety advice.

- No nuts to be bought into the setting (We are a nut free environment - this also applies to staff).
- No sweets, chocolate or marshmallows to be included in lunchboxes
- No popcorn due to the risk of choking

We reserve the right to remove or modify food we feel are unsafe to serve

Lunch times

- Tables are never overcrowded during mealtimes.



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- Children help staff set tables.
- Children wash their hands and sit down as food is ready to be served.
- Children are not made to eat what they do not like and are only encouraged to try new foods slowly.
- In order to protect children with food allergies or specific dietary requirements, children are discouraged from sharing and swapping their food with one another.
- Mealtimes are relaxed opportunities for social interaction between children and the adults who care for them.

Guidance used to shape the policy

<https://help-for-early-years-providers.education.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/food-safety#food-and-drinks-to-avoid>

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68c024cb8c6d992f23edd79c/Early_years_foundation_age_statutory_framework_-_for_group_and_school-based_providers.pdf

To be updated annually or in line with updated legislation.

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