



Food and Nutrition and Safer Eating Policy – EYFS (Nursery and Reception)

Introduction

Kirkby and Great Broughton School and Nursery is committed to promoting the health, development and wellbeing of all children through healthy eating and positive experiences around food.

We recognise that good nutrition plays an important role in children's physical development, emotional wellbeing, concentration, learning and long-term health. We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework effective from September 2026 and have regard to the Department for Education's Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition guidance.

We aim to provide nutritious, balanced and age-appropriate food and drink and to develop positive attitudes towards food and healthy eating from an early age. A healthy and balanced diet can help children to:

- receive the nutrients and energy they need for healthy growth and development;
- maintain a healthy weight;
- develop positive eating habits that can continue throughout life;
- support their concentration, learning and physical activity; and
- reduce inequalities in health and wellbeing.

Our Values

We believe that healthy eating is fundamental to children's health and wellbeing. We aim to create a positive, inclusive and supportive food environment where children can develop healthy attitudes towards food, enjoy eating together and learn about making healthy choices. We recognise and respect children's individual dietary, cultural, religious and medical needs.

Aims

Our aims are to:

- promote healthy eating habits that support children's growth and development;
- ensure that meals, snacks and drinks provided are healthy, balanced, nutritious and appropriate for young children;
- follow statutory EYFS requirements and relevant nutrition guidance;
- provide food and drink safely and minimise the risk of choking and allergic reactions;



- work in partnership with parents and carers to meet children's dietary and nutritional needs;
- provide a positive, inclusive and sociable dining experience;
- support children to develop independence and positive relationships with food;
- provide opportunities for children to learn about food, nutrition, hygiene, cooking and healthy lifestyles; and
- recognise and accommodate individual dietary, cultural, religious and medical requirements.

Food and Drink Provided

Where food and drink are provided, we ensure that meals and snacks are healthy, balanced and nutritious. Food and drink are planned to provide a wide variety of foods and include appropriate foods from the main food groups, including:

- fruit and vegetables;
- starchy foods such as bread, rice, pasta and potatoes;
- sources of protein such as meat, fish, eggs, beans and pulses; and
- dairy foods or suitable alternatives.

We provide age-appropriate portions and consider children's individual needs. Fresh drinking water is available and accessible to children throughout the day. Milk is provided at snack times where appropriate. Menus are planned on a rotating basis, normally over 3–4 weeks, and are reviewed regularly to ensure that they continue to provide a healthy and varied choice.

Foods and Drinks We Avoid or Limit

We aim to minimise foods and drinks that are high in:

- added sugar;
- salt; and
- saturated fat.

Sugary drinks are not provided.

We do not routinely provide foods or drinks containing artificial sweeteners as part of our provision. Celebrations and special occasions are managed sensitively so that children can enjoy shared experiences while maintaining our commitment to healthy eating.

Safer Eating and Choking Prevention

We recognise that young children are at particular risk of choking and that choking can be silent. Food is prepared and served in a way that minimises the risk of choking. We consider the age and developmental stage of children when selecting, preparing and presenting food.



Children are seated safely in an appropriately sized chair while eating. Children are always within the sight and hearing of a member of staff while they are eating. Where possible, staff sit facing the children so that they can actively supervise eating and:

- monitor children's eating;
- help to prevent choking;
- prevent food being shared between children where this could create a risk;
- identify possible allergic reactions; and
- support children to eat safely and independently.

Children are encouraged to eat at an appropriate pace and are supported to develop safe eating habits. Children are never left eating or drinking unattended. At each meal and snack time, staff check that the food served to each child is suitable for their individual dietary requirements and has been prepared appropriately to minimise the risk of choking.

If a choking incident requires intervention, the incident is recorded, including where and how it occurred. Parents or carers are informed as appropriate. Records of choking incidents are reviewed regularly so that any common features or patterns can be identified and appropriate action taken.

Paediatric First Aid

At least one person with a valid paediatric first aid certificate is present in the room and available to children while children are eating. Staff understand the importance of responding promptly to choking and other medical emergencies. Paediatric first aid arrangements are maintained in accordance with the EYFS statutory requirements.

Supervision During Meals and Snacks

Adults provide close and active supervision during all meal and snack times. Staff sit with children wherever possible and model positive eating behaviours.

Staff monitor:

- safe eating;
- choking risks;
- children's individual dietary requirements;
- food sharing;
- allergic reactions; and
- children's general wellbeing.

Children are encouraged to develop independence, but staff remain responsible for ensuring that children are eating safely.



Special Dietary Requirements and Food Allergies

We take children's food allergies, intolerances and special dietary requirements seriously. Before a child starts at the setting, we obtain information from parents and carers about:

- food allergies and intolerances;
- dietary requirements;
- cultural or religious dietary requirements;
- food preferences where relevant; and
- any special health requirements relating to food and drink.

This information is recorded, kept up to date and shared appropriately with staff who need to know. Individual dietary requirements and allergy information are clearly communicated to staff and are accessible in food preparation and eating areas where appropriate. Where a child has a significant allergy or medical dietary requirement, an individual healthcare or allergy care plan is developed with parents/carers and, where appropriate, relevant health professionals.

Staff receive appropriate information and training to understand children's dietary requirements, recognise possible allergic reactions and know how to respond to an emergency.

At every meal and snack time, a member of staff checks that the food being served to each child meets their recorded dietary requirements. Children are not given food that is known to be unsuitable for their dietary or medical needs. Parents and carers are informed of any significant changes to their child's dietary requirements.

Food Hygiene and Preparation

All food is prepared, stored and served hygienically. We follow appropriate food hygiene procedures and guidance, including relevant Food Standards Agency requirements. Staff involved in preparing or handling food receive appropriate food hygiene information or training. Food preparation areas and equipment are kept clean and hygienic. Staff follow appropriate procedures for:

- handwashing;
- cleaning food preparation and eating areas;
- safe food storage;
- preventing cross-contamination;
- handling allergens;
- safe preparation of food; and



- disposal of food waste.

Any concerns relating to food safety are reported immediately to the appropriate member of staff. Where food poisoning affects two or more children, the school will follow the relevant EYFS requirements and notify Ofsted as soon as possible and within 14 days of the incident.

Learning About Healthy Eating

Mealtimes provide valuable opportunities for children to develop their understanding of healthy eating and wellbeing. Children are supported to:

- learn about healthy foods and drinks;
- understand the importance of eating a balanced diet;
- develop good hygiene habits;
- learn about safe eating;
- develop appropriate table manners;
- talk about different foods;
- take part in cooking and food preparation activities;
- develop independence; and
- understand where food comes from.

Children are encouraged to explore and try a variety of foods in a positive and pressure-free environment. Children are never forced or pressured to eat food. Staff use positive language around food and avoid labelling foods as 'good' or 'bad'.

Positive Mealtimes

We aim to make mealtimes calm, enjoyable, sociable and inclusive. Children are encouraged to sit with staff and other children and to enjoy positive social interaction during meals and snacks. Where appropriate, staff act as positive role models by demonstrating healthy eating habits and appropriate table manners. Children are supported to develop independence, including age-appropriate opportunities to:

- choose between appropriate foods;
- pour drinks;
- use cutlery;
- serve themselves where appropriate; and
- clear away after eating.

Staff respond sensitively to children's individual appetites and needs. Children are not expected to finish all the food provided.



Guidance for Children Aged 1–5

For children aged 1–5, we promote a varied and balanced diet which includes a wide range of foods. We have regard to the Department for Education's nutrition guidance for children aged 1–5 and use it to inform our approach to food and drink. Children are encouraged to eat together where possible, as this supports social development and allows children to learn through positive peer and adult role modelling.

Parents and Carers

We work in partnership with parents and carers to promote healthy eating and safe eating practices. Menus are shared with families where appropriate. Parents and carers are encouraged to provide information about:

- allergies and intolerances;
- dietary requirements;
- cultural and religious requirements;
- relevant medical conditions; and
- changes to their child's needs.

We provide information and guidance to families about healthy packed lunches and snacks where these are provided from home. We encourage parents and carers to discuss any concerns about their child's eating habits, allergies or dietary requirements with staff. Where appropriate, families may be signposted to relevant health and nutrition guidance.

Sustainability

We recognise the importance of helping children develop an understanding of sustainability and the environment. Where appropriate, children are encouraged to:

- learn where food comes from;
- grow and care for fruit, vegetables and herbs;
- avoid unnecessary food waste;
- recycle appropriately; and
- understand the importance of caring for the environment.

Cooking and Food Experiences

Cooking and food preparation activities provide valuable opportunities for learning. Children may be involved in preparing simple foods appropriate to their age and stage of development. Cooking activities support children's:

- independence;



- language and communication;
- mathematical understanding;
- understanding of healthy eating;
- fine motor skills;
- sensory exploration; and
- understanding of food and where it comes from.

Food preparation activities are appropriately supervised and food safety and allergy requirements are considered before activities take place.

Celebrations and Special Occasions

We recognise that food can form an important part of celebrations and cultural experiences. We aim to ensure that celebrations are inclusive and that children's dietary, cultural, religious and medical requirements are respected. Where food is provided for celebrations or special occasions, staff check that it is suitable for individual dietary requirements and allergies. We promote alternatives to using food as the main focus of celebrations wherever appropriate.

Cultural and Dietary Requirements

We recognise and respect the different cultural, religious and family practices relating to food. We work with families to ensure that children's dietary needs are understood and appropriately accommodated. No child is disadvantaged because of their dietary, cultural, religious or medical requirements.

Monitoring and Review

The implementation of this policy is monitored by the EYFS staff and school leadership team. We monitor:

- the nutritional quality of food and drink provided;
- menu planning;
- children's dietary requirements;
- allergy information;
- food hygiene;
- safe eating and choking prevention;
- staff training;
- children's experiences of mealtimes; and
- feedback from parents and carers.



Any choking incidents, allergic reactions or food-related concerns are recorded and reviewed so that appropriate action can be taken. This policy will be reviewed regularly and updated in response to changes in statutory requirements, national guidance, school practice or identified need.

References

This policy should be read alongside:

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework for Group and School-based Providers – effective from 1 September 2026;
- Department for Education – Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance;
- Department for Education – Help for Early Years Providers: Food Safety;
- Department for Education – Help for Early Years Providers: Food Allergies and Intolerances;
- Food Standards Agency – Safer Food, Better Business;
- NHS Start for Life guidance;
- relevant school policies, including the First Aid Policy, Medical Conditions Policy, Allergy/Anaphylaxis procedures, SEND Policy and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; and
- applicable school food standards where these apply to food provided within the school.

Policy reviewed: 2026

Next review: 2027