

03 Food safety and nutrition procedures

Lunch box policy

Our aim: To support the health, development and school readiness of children aged 2-4 years, by promoting nutritious, balanced and age-appropriate packed lunches. This policy is based on current government advice and best practice in early years nutrition.

What to include in a healthy lunchbox: parents and carers are encouraged to pack a variety of foods from the four main food groups, in suitable child- sized portions.

- 1- Starchy carbohydrates- soft wholemeal bread, mini pitta, wraps, pasta, potato, rice, crackers or low sugar cereals.
- 2- Fruit and vegetables- soft fruits, banana, pear, melon, blueberries, strawberries etc, or cooked or soft vegetable sticks- carrot, cucumber, sweetcorn
- 3- Proteins- Soft, cooked chicken, egg, lentils, hummus, fish fingers, tofu etc
- 4- Dairy or dairy alternatives- full fat plain yoghurt, cheese cubes etc

Water is available by the setting throughout the day, we do not provide squash/ juice, and we encourage the children to have water in their water bottles you provide.

Foods to avoid and to keep the children safe:

NO NUTS- we are a nut free preschool

No sweets, chocolate bars- except for maybe a wafer type bar such as a kit kat

Biscuits and cakes in moderation

No whole grapes, cherry tomatoes or mini sausages (these should be chopped length ways) or hard raw vegetables.

No popcorn or hard foods

Birthdays and celebrations:

We love to celebrate birthdays and special occasions and will allow a birthday cake to be shared with the children at snack time, unless parents specifically ask us not to give their child cake.

We will no longer allow sweets/ party bags to be brought in, this supports an inclusive, safe and health focused environment for all children, especially those with allergies, dietary needs or sensory sensitivities.

Practical tips for parents and carers:

- 1- Use a child friendly portion guide (about the size of your child's fist)
- 2- Include a cool pack or insulated lunch box to keep food fresh
- 3- Encourage your child to help pack their lunch- it helps build independence and interest in healthy eating.

Supporting you:

We understand that making healthy choices isn't always easy, staff are happy to support with:

- Sample lunchbox menus
- Translations or adapted versions of this policy

Allergy reminder:

Our setting is strictly nut-free

Please inform us of any allergies or dietary requirements.

For full guidance, visit: <https://help-for-early-years-providers.education.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/nutrition>

Equality and inclusion:

We understand that families have different needs and circumstances. If your child has sensory needs, dietary restrictions, or if you are finding it difficult to provide a lunch, please speak to us in confidence, we are here to support you.