

Green Lane Nursery and Childcare Centre

Food and Nutrition Policy

This policy was adopted by Green Lane Nursery and Childcare Centre on:	25 - 09 - 2025
Signed on behalf of the provider:	<i>[Signature]</i>
Name of signatory:	ANTHONY MAWER
Role of signatory:	DIRECTOR
Date policy will next be reviewed:	2 YEARS

Policy Statement

Green Lane Nursery and Childcare Centre is committed to meeting all statutory food safety requirements and fulfils the relevant Early Years Foundation Stage Safeguarding and Welfare requirements.

Aim

Snack and mealtimes are an important part of the day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating. We aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs and preferences.

Procedures

- We provide nutritionally sound snacks which promote health and reduce the risk of obesity and heart disease that may begin in childhood.
- Meals are provided by professional outside caterers who follow strict guidance to promote healthy eating whilst considering any individual dietary needs. The caterer provides allergen information for the food supplied.

- We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance for identifying food allergens when planning snack menus based on the four food groups:
 - meat, fish, and protein alternatives
 - milk and dairy products
 - cereals and grains
 - fresh fruit and vegetables.
- Parents/carers share information about their children's particular dietary needs with staff when they enrol their children and on an on-going basis with their key person. This information is shared with all staff who are involved in the care of the child.
- Staff discuss and record children's dietary needs, allergies and any ethnic or cultural food preferences with their parents/carers.
- Staff record information about each child's dietary needs in the individual child's registration form; parents/carers sign the form to confirm that it is correct.
- Up-to-date information about individual children's dietary needs is displayed, along with a picture of the child so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed.
- Foods provided by the setting for children have any allergenic ingredients identified on the menus.
- We ensure that children are supervised at mealtimes and that all children are within sight and hearing of a member of staff.
- Care is taken to ensure that children with food allergies do not have contact with food products that they are allergic to.
- Risk assessments are conducted for each individual child who has a food allergy or specific dietary requirement.
- The Nursery Manager is responsible for informing the directors immediately of any food poisoning affecting two or more children in our care. OFSTED must be notified as soon as possible and at least within 14 days.

Legal references

Regulation (EC) 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the hygiene of foodstuffs.

Food Information Regulations 2014

The Childcare Act 2006

Further guidance

Safer Food Better Business for Caterers (Food Standards Agency)

Meeting Dietary Requirements

- The meal and snack menus are displayed on the notice board for parents/carers to view. Foods that contain any food allergens are identified.
- Staff aim to include food from children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones.
- Through on-going discussion with parents/carers and research by staff, staff obtain information about the dietary rules of religious groups to which children and their parents belong, and of vegetarians and vegans, as well as food allergies. Staff take account of this information when providing food and drink.
- Staff provide a vegetarian alternative when meat and fish are offered and make every effort to ensure Halal meat or Kosher food is available to children who require it.
- Where it is not possible to source and provide Halal meat or Kosher food, a vegetarian option is available; this will be discussed and agreed with parents at the time of the child's registration.
- All staff show sensitivity in providing for children's diets, allergies and cultural or ethnic food preferences. A child's diet or allergy is never used as a label for the child, they are not made to feel 'singled out' because of their diet, allergy or cultural/ethnic food preferences.

- Fresh drinking water is available throughout the day. Staff inform children how to obtain the drinking water and tell them that they can ask for water at any time during the day.
- Meal and snack times are organised as social occasions.
- Children are not forced to eat anything they do not want to.
- Staff recognise the signs that a child has had enough and remove uneaten food without comment.
- Children are not made to stay at the table after others have left if they refuse to eat certain items of food.
- Staff work in partnership with parents/carers to support them with children who are showing signs of 'food preference or aversion' and sign post them to further advice, for example, How to Manage Simple Faddy Eating in Toddlers (Infant & Toddler Forum) <https://infantandtoddlerforum.org/health-and-childcare-professionals/factsheets/>

Food Preparation, Storage and Purchase

General

- All staff have up to date certificated training on Food Safety and Hygiene Level 2 and Food Allergy Awareness in Early Years.
- The Nursery Manager is responsible for ensuring that the requirements in Safer Food Better Business are implemented.
- The Nursery Manager is responsible for overseeing the work of all food handlers to ensure hygiene and allergy procedures are complied with.
- The Nursery Manager is responsible for conducting risk assessments based on the 'Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point' method set out in Safer Food Better Business.
- The Nursery Manager maintains a Food Allergy and Dietary Needs folder containing:

- a list of all children with known food allergies or dietary needs updated at least once a term (the personal/medical details about the allergy or dietary needs remain in the child's file along with a copy of the risk assessment). This is displayed for all staff and the risk assessment shared.
- a record of food menus along with any allergens
- a copy of the FSA booklet 'Allergen information for loose foods' available at www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/loosefoodsleaflet.pdf
- a copy of the Food Allergy Awareness in Early Years training certificate for each member of staff that has undertaken the training

Purchasing and Storing Food

- Food is purchased from reputable suppliers.
- Pre-packed food is checked for allergen ingredients, and this information is available to parents alongside menu information. For example, a loaf of bread bought at a supermarket or a tin of baked beans or the ingredients for a recipe prepared on site.
- Parents/carers are requested not to bring food that contains (or may contain) nuts. Staff check packets to make sure they do not contain nuts or nut products.
- Bulk buy is avoided where food may go out of date before use.
- All opened dried food is stored in airtight containers.
- Dried packaged food is not decanted from packaging into large bins or containers as this prevents monitoring of sell by/use by dates and allergen information.
- Food is regularly checked for sell by/use by dates and any expired items are discarded.
- Bottles and jars are cleaned before returning to the cupboards.
- 'Squeezy' plastic bottles are not used for sauces.
- Items are not stored on the floor; floors are kept clear so they can be easily swept.
- Perishable foods such as dairy produce, meat and fish are used the same/next day.

- Fridge thermometers are in place. The recommended temperature for a fridge is 37 degrees Fahrenheit (3 degrees Celsius). Temperatures are recorded daily to ensure correct temperatures are being maintained.
- Fridge Freezers are defrosted every 3 months or according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Meat/fish is stored on lower shelves and in drip-free dishes.
- Fruit and vegetables stored in the fridge are washed thoroughly before refrigeration to reduce risk of pests and E. coli contamination.
- Staff's own food or drink is kept in a separate designated area of the fridge.
- Items in fridges are regularly checked to ensure they are not past their use by dates.

Preparation of Food

- Food handlers must check the content of food/packets to ensure they do not contain allergens.
- Food allergens must be identified on the menus and displayed for parents/carers.
- Food handlers wash hands and cover any cuts or abrasions before handling food.
- Separate boards and knives are used for chopping food, usually colour coded.
- Raw and cooked foods are prepared separately.
- Meat and fish are washed and patted dry with paper towels. This does not include chicken which must not be washed because of the risk of campylobacter.
- All vegetables and fruit are washed before preparing.
- Food left out is covered, for example when cooling down.
- Meat and fish are cooked thoroughly; a food probe is used to check temperatures of roasted meat or baked meat products.
- Where a microwave is used, food is cooked according to food manufacturer's instructions.
- Microwaved food is left to stand for a few minutes before serving.

- A food probe is used to check the temperature of food, including when heated in a microwave; it is checked in several places to avoid hot spots.
- Food is cooked in time for serving and is not prepared in advance of serving times.
- Hot cupboards or ovens are not used to keep food warm.
- Potatoes and vegetables are peeled when needed, not in advance and left in water.
- Food prepared and cooked for different religious dietary needs and preferences, such as Halal or Kosher meat, is cooked in separate pans and served separately.
- Food cooked for vegetarians does not come into contact with meat or fish or products.
- Food cooked and prepared for children with specific dietary needs is cooked in separate pans and served separately.
- Food prepared for children with dietary needs and preferences is clearly labelled and every effort is made to prevent cross-contamination.
- Raw eggs are not given in any form, such as mousse or mayonnaise.
- When given to children, eggs are fully cooked.

Serving Food

- Food is served for children on individual plates.
- Staff risk assess the likelihood of children with dietary restrictions accessing the food of other children and take appropriate action to prevent this from happening, for example:
 - check the list of children's dietary requirements displayed in the food preparation area
 - individual plates
 - place mats
 - other methods as agreed by the Nursery Manager
- Food served to children with identified allergies is checked to ensure that the meal (and its ingredients) does not contain any of the allergens for that child.

- Staff ensure that children receive only food and drink that is consistent with their dietary needs and cultural or ethnic preferences, as well as their parent/carer's wishes. At each mealtime, a member of staff is responsible for checking that the food provided meets the dietary requirements for each child.
- Tables are cleaned before and after meals and snacks, with soapy water or a suitable non-bleach product.
- Members of staff serving food wash hands and cover any cuts or abrasions with a plaster before serving.

E.coli Prevention

Staff who are preparing and handling food, especially food that is not pre-prepared for consumption e.g. fruit and vegetables grown on the premises, must be aware of the potential spread of E.coli and must clean and store food in accordance with the E.coli 0157 guidance, available at:

www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/guidancenotes/hygguid/ecoliguide#.U7FCVGIOWdI

Further guidance

Eat Better, Start Better (Action for Children 207) www.foundationyears.org.uk/eat-better-start-better/

www.gov.uk/government/publications/example-menus-for-early-years-settings-in-england

Safer Food Better Business www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/safer-food-better-business-sfbb

Allergen information for loose foods (Food Standards Agency 2017)

www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/loosefoodsleaflet.pdf

Campylobacter (Food Standards Agency) www.food.gov.uk/news-updates/campaigns/campylobacter/fsw-2014

Food Allergy/Anaphylaxis Guidance

[https://www.bsaci.org/wp-](https://www.bsaci.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/BSACIAllergyActionPlan2018NoAAI2981-2.pdf)

[content/uploads/2020/02/BSACIAllergyActionPlan2018NoAAI2981-2.pdf](https://www.bsaci.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/BSACIAllergyActionPlan2018NoAAI2981-2.pdf)

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/anaphylaxis/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/food-allergy/>

Milk and Baby Food Preparation and Storage

Purchasing and Storing Food

- Where parents/carers provide infant formula to be made up at the setting, this is checked to make sure it is in date and that the seal is not broken, then labelled with the child's name.
- Parents/carers must not send in bottles containing pre-boiled and cooled water ready for formula to be added. They should instead send in empty, sterilised bottles in accordance with current NHS guidance on the preparation of formula milk.
- If parents/carers are providing formula milk already made up at home, or breast milk, it should already be made up into sterilised bottles and clearly labelled with the child's name.
- Parents/carers are advised to follow the manufacturer's guidance and to transport the prepared feeds or breast milk in a cool bag. On arrival, feeds are taken out of the cool bag and put straight into the fridge.
- Made up feeds or breast milk is always used on the same day.
- In line with current Food Standards Agency guidance, parents are advised not to give toddlers and young children (ages 1 - 4.5 years) rice drinks as a substitute for breast milk, infant formula or cow's milk. Parents/carers should speak to their child's health visitor for further guidance if their child has a milk intolerance and needs an alternative.

- A small store of infant formula is usually kept in case of emergency. This is regularly checked to make sure it is still in date. Parents/carers are consulted before it is made up.
- If parents/carers provide weaning cereals, these need to be checked to make sure they are in date and should be in unopened packets. These are labelled with the child's name.
- Parents/carers are informed that they should not bring in food that contains nuts. Staff check packets to make sure they do not contain nuts or nut products.
- Packaged baby cereal is kept in plastic airtight containers to prevent contamination and to ensure freshness.

Preparation

- Members of staff wash hands upon entering the kitchen.
- All weaning foods provided by the setting i.e. bread, cakes, biscuits, cheese and any foods in the 14 allergens list are identified and listed on children's menus.
- Scoops of milk are levelled off with a knife to make sure they are the correct amount.
- All water is boiled first before making milk feed, mixing food or preparing a drink for all babies under one year and is allowed to cool for no more than 30 minutes. Water that has already been boiled once is not boiled again.
- Bottles are cooled under cold running water and the temperature checked on the inside of an adult's wrist to ensure that it is body temperature, which means it should feel warm or cool but not hot.
- Only sterilised bottles, spoons, plates are to be used for babies under one year and these items are to be kept in the kitchen.
- Raw fruit or vegetables given to babies are washed, peeled, cut or blended.
- Finger foods, such as fruit and vegetables, are served in a dish.

Further guidance on making up bottles in advance for use at the setting can be found at:
www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/breastfeeding-and-bottle-feeding/bottle-feeding/formula-milk-questions/

Guidance for the storage of breast milk is available from:
www.nhs.uk/start4life/baby/feeding-your-baby/breastfeeding/expressing-your-breast-milk/storing-breast-milk/

Food for Play and Cooking Activities

Some parents/carers and staff may have strong views about food being used for play. It is important to be sensitive to these issues. For example, children who are Muslim, Jewish, Rastafarian, or vegetarian, should not be given any food to play with that contains animal products (Gelatine). Parents/carers' views should be sought on this. In some cases, it is not appropriate to use food for play, particularly in times of austerity.

- Food for play may include dough, corn flour, food colourings/flavourings.
- Food for play is risk assessed against the 14 allergens referred and is included in the written risk assessment undertaken for children with specific allergies.
- Staff are constantly alert to the potential hazards of food play, in particular choking hazards and signs of previously undetected allergies.
- Pulses are not used as they can be poisonous when raw or may choke.
- Foods that are cooked and used for play, such as dough, have a limited shelf life.
- Cornflour is always mixed with water before given for play.
- Cornflour is discarded after an activity, as there is a high risk of bacteria forming.
- Utensils used for play food are washed thoroughly after use.

Children's Cooking Activities

- Before undertaking any cooking activity with children, members of staff should check for allergies and intolerances by checking children's records.
- Children are taught basic hygiene skills such as the need to wash hands thoroughly before handling food, and again after going to the toilet, blowing their nose or coughing.
- The area to be used for cooking is cleaned; a plastic tablecloth is used.
- Utensils provided are for children to use only when cooking, including chopping/rolling boards, bowls, wooden spoons, jugs, and are stored in the kitchen.
- Members of staff encourage children to handle food in a hygienic manner.
- Food ready for cooking or cooling is not left uncovered.
- Cooked food to go home is put in a paper food bag and refrigerated until home time.
- Food play activities are suspended during outbreaks of illness.