

Food Safety & Hygiene



The Children's Respite Trust is regularly inspected by Environmental Health to ensure compliance with hygiene standards. Staff involved in food preparation follow current legislation and are trained in food hygiene. Although the Trust does not provide hot meals, parents and carers are encouraged to follow the healthy eating policy when preparing packed lunches. High standards of personal hygiene are expected from all staff, and anyone unwell is not permitted to handle food.

Key hygiene practices include:

- Washing hands with antibacterial soap and hot water before and after handling food, using the toilet, or changing nappies.
- Using clean, disposable cloths and colour-coded chopping boards (e.g., red for raw meat).
- Wearing sterile clothing such as hairnets, aprons, and closed-toe shoes.
- Avoiding jewellery and nail varnish and keeping fingernails short and clean.
- Covering any cuts or sores with waterproof dressings.
- Ensuring all fruit and vegetables are washed before serving.

Food preparation areas, fridges, and freezers are cleaned regularly. Fridges are cleaned weekly, and freezers monthly. All surfaces and equipment are sanitised after use. The manager ensures that cross-contamination controls are in place and documented.

Allergies and Food Intolerances

Parents must inform the Trust of any allergies or intolerances when their child starts. A risk assessment and care plan are created for each child with:

- Details of the allergen and level of risk.
- Control measures and emergency procedures.
- Information on symptoms and medication (e.g., EpiPen).
- The child's name added to the Dietary Requirements list and Allergy Board.

All staff are trained to recognise and respond to allergic reactions. No nuts or nut products are allowed on site, and allergens are clearly identified on menus.

Healthy Eating

The Trust promotes healthy eating as part of a healthy lifestyle. Snacks provided are nutritious and balanced, including fruits, vegetables, bread or crackers, and yoghurts. Children are encouraged to understand the importance of food and water for growth and wellbeing. Cultural, religious, and personal dietary needs are respected.

Healthy eating is supported by:

- Following dietary guidelines based on four food groups: protein, dairy, grains, and fruit/vegetables.
- Providing multicultural food options.
- Sharing snack choices with parents in weekly newsletters.
- Working with the **HALO (Healthy Active Little Ones)** programme to promote healthy eating, physical activity, and oral health.

Food for Play and Cooking Activities

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Food used in play is carefully risk assessed, especially for allergens and choking hazards. Staff are sensitive to cultural and ethical concerns around food play.

Guidelines include:

- Avoiding jelly cubes, raw pulses, and raw vegetables for printing.
- Discarding cooked food used for play after the activity.
- Washing utensils thoroughly after use.
- Using separate utensils for cooking activities.
- Teaching children hygiene practices like handwashing before handling food.

Temperature Control

Food is stored at safe temperatures to prevent spoilage and contamination. Fridge temperatures are checked and recorded daily.

Supervision and First Aid

A Paediatric First Aid trained staff member must be present during all mealtimes. Staff must face and closely observe children while eating to respond quickly to choking or allergic reactions. All incidents and near misses are recorded and reviewed regularly.

Weaning and Solid Foods

Solid foods are introduced based on the child's developmental stage, in consultation with parents and carers.

Environment and Equipment

Dining areas are arranged for clear visibility and safe supervision. Age-appropriate seating is used, and distractions during meals are minimised.

Healthy Active Little Ones (HALO)

Since 2016, East Sussex Public Health have been working with Preschool and Nurseries to help transform health and wellbeing outcomes for young children and their families. We have recently begun working with them and will be working on promoting Healthy Eating, Physical Activity and Oral Health within our setting to obtain an award.

The aim of this project is to:

- To ensure that we allow time for gross motor and fine motor movement during all sessions, both indoors and outdoors.
- To make staff and parents/carers more aware of the importance of physicality in the early years.

The impact of the use of this project and new equipment will be:

- Children will enjoy and seek out physical challenge and opportunities to be physical.
- Children's physicality and gross motor skills will be stronger and develop more fluidly.
- We will see physical play through climbing, running, cycling, carrying, pushing, pulling and varied level activity.

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Useful resources

Food Standards Agency

Website: <https://www.food.gov.uk/>

Email: envhealth@rother.gov.uk

Report a food crime

Tel: 0800 028 1180 hot line will be answered are 9am to 4pm, Monday to Friday

HALO

Website: <https://czone.eastsussex.gov.uk/teaching-and-learning/early-years/ey-resources/halo/resources>

This policy was adopted by: Michelle Hulse	Date: 09/01/2026
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