



Food & Nutrition Policy

1. Purpose

To promote children's health, well-being, and development by ensuring nutritious meals, safe food practices, and positive mealtime experiences in line with EYFS and Ofsted guidance.

2. Scope

Applies to all meals, snacks, and drinks provided at Penguin Preschool for children aged 2–4 years, as well as staff, parents, and volunteers involved in food preparation, serving, and supervision.

3. Nutritional Standards

- **Balanced, healthy meals and snacks**
All food provided must be healthy, balanced, and nutritious, covering key food groups, and guided by the UK Eatwell Guide for children aged 2 and above.
 - **Variety and exposure**
Children will be exposed to varied fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and dairy, including foods from diverse cultures and local produce.
 - **Sensory food education**
Incorporate free, pressure-free exploration of food using all senses. Let children see, touch, smell — and optionally taste — new foods. Encourage sensory vocabulary (e.g., squishy, crispy, fragrant) to support language development and healthy eating habits.
 - **Portions**
Serve age-appropriate portion sizes using official portion guides for 1-to-5-year-olds.
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4. Food Safety & Allergies

- **Food safety procedures**
Ensure hygienic food preparation, cleaning, storage, and cooking: hot foods must reach safe temperatures, surfaces and utensils must be washed, etc. All food handlers must have food hygiene competence.
 - **Supervision and choking prevention**
Children must be seated safely, within sight and hearing of a staff member at all times during eating. From September 2025, a staff member with a valid Paediatric First Aid certificate must always be present during mealtimes.
 - **Allergy and intolerance management**
Before admission, collect clear information on each child's dietary needs, allergies, and intolerances — including coeliac disease. Use and regularly update allergy action plans and ensure staff are trained to recognize and respond to allergic reactions and anaphylaxis.
 - **Food checks**
Assign a designated person (ideally the child's key person) to check each child's food before it's served to confirm it aligns with dietary requirements.
 - **Incident recording**
Record any choking incidents (or near misses) and share with parents; periodically review records to identify trends and improve safety.
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5. Partnership with Parents & Community

- **Communication & updates**
Collect and regularly update dietary information regularly, and engage in dialogue with parents about weaning, food preferences, tolerances, and cultural considerations.
- **Home-setting extension**
Share ideas for healthy recipes, sensory food experiences, or supermarket exploration. Encourage families to contribute culturally meaningful foods for group exploration.

6. Staff Training & Development

- **Paediatric first aid**
Ensure at least one staff with valid Paediatric First Aid is present during all eating times (required from Sept 2025).
- **Food hygiene & allergy training**
All staff in contact with food must be trained in food hygiene and understand allergy management, choking prevention, and use of allergy action plans.
- **Continuous professional learning**
Staff engage with EYFS nutrition guidance, sensory food education practices, and relevant local training and development programmes.

7. Monitoring & Review

- **Policy implementation**
Regularly review how the policy is applied during inspection-quality evaluations and mealtime observations.
- **Self-evaluation & improvement**
Reflect on strengths, challenges, and parent/staff feedback to inform improvements in nutrition provision and routines.

Reviewed 17/8/2026 Sarah Fielding