

Home-Grown in Malvern @ the Wyche Institute
Safer Eating Policy

Policy Statement:

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework sets out requirements for providers to ensure the safety and well-being of children. Ensuring that early year's settings provide safe eating environments for children is essential. This involves offering appropriate types and textures of food, establishing secure mealtime arrangements with adequate supervision, and implementing proactive measures to safeguard all aspects of dining.

Statement of Intent:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that children in our care are provided with a safe eating environment that supports healthy eating, minimises food-related risks, and ensures compliance with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework, including the changes introduced in September 2025.

Understanding the Child's Needs

Prior to a child's enrolment at Preschool, details regarding any specific dietary needs, preferences, food allergies, and special health requirements are collected from parents or carers. This information is obtained from parents/carers during an enrolment meeting to discuss requirements prior to their child attending. All relevant information is recorded, stored on site and shared with staff. Staff can refer to them through them being recorded/stored:

1. On the child's contract and emergency information form
 2. Our allergen and intolerances list on the inside of the food cupboard.
 3. In the medical information folder located in the lockable cabinet in the main preschool room (if required - i.e. health care plan).
- An allergy/intolerance action plan will be completed by the parent/carer at the time of their enrolment at preschool which takes place before the child starts at the setting.
 - Parents are required to document any dietary requirements related to the religious beliefs of their child. This information is taken into consideration when providing food and/or drinks for the child.
 - Parents also record if their child is a vegetarian or vegan. We take account of this information in the provision of their child's food and/or drinks.
 - All staff are made aware of any special dietary needs or allergies of children
 - All staff will read the contents of any food carefully to check against the list of allergies.
 - We are a nut free setting. Any foods or drinks containing nuts are not permitted at preschool.
 - Staff will liaise with parents/carers prior to any cooking or food tasting activities which involve food provided by Preschool. This is to receive permission for the child to take part/arrange alternative ingredients if required to ensure all children are included.
 - Conversations about a child's needs remain ongoing throughout their time with us, and recorded information is updated as required - staff are informed of any changes.

Food Preparation

All food is prepared in the kitchen where there are suitable facilities for the hygienic preparation of food and staff preparing the food are Level 2 Food Hygiene trained.

Please see our policy - Health & Safety (Food and Drink) for more detailed information.

Staff Competency

At Preschool we ensure that staff responsible for preparing and handling food are competent to do so. In our setting all staff involved in preparing and handling food receive training in food hygiene and these qualifications are refreshed as per required.

There is always a member of staff who is Paediatric First Aid trained and who are present during mealtimes. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) requires that at least one person who has a current paediatric first aid certificate is always on the premises and available when children are present.

We ensure that:

- There is always a Paediatric First Aider on premises when the Preschool is open, and all staff are aware of who the Paediatric First Aiders are.
- All Paediatric First Aiders renew their qualifications when required.
- Paediatric First Aiders are present near children during mealtimes.
- Staff who supervise or provide food have knowledge of Paediatric First Aid advice for choking incidents in children.

Recording and Learning from Incidents:

Any choking incidents involving children are logged, and parents or carers are informed according to standard procedures and the severity of the event. Details such as where and how the child choked, what the outcome was, and what steps or lessons learned will be acted upon to minimise the risk of a similar incident happening again in future.

Incident logs are reviewed periodically to identify if there are trends or common features of incidents that could be addressed to reduce the risk of choking.

Eating Environment:

Children are seated at the table in age appropriately sized low chairs while eating. Distractions are minimised whereby all toys and activities are tidied away, and we ensure children do not have toys at the table. Children must not be left unattended during meals and should be closely supervised at all times. There is always a staff member present at mealtimes who is Paediatric First aid trained.

Responding to Choking:

Ensuring staff are prepared to address the possibility of a child choking enhances their readiness to respond effectively should such an incident arise. Despite preventative measures, it is still possible for children to choke, and staff who are equipped to respond are most likely to be able to intervene safely. A First Aid box is easily accessible from the main room and the kitchen, with appropriate content for use with children. All staff know where the location of the First Aid box is, and which staff members are Paediatric first aid trained. The contents of our First Aid box are checked regularly to ensure used or out-of-date items are replaced.

Written by: Natalie Luce (Manager)

Date created: 01/09/2025 Date Reviewed:

Signed by all staff: