

Healthy Eating Policy - Early Years

1. Introduction

This Healthy Eating Policy outlines how our early years setting ensures that all children aged 0-5 receive healthy, balanced, and nutritious food and drinks, in line with the EYFS statutory requirement:

"Where children are provided with meals, snacks and drinks, these must be healthy, balanced and nutritious."

From September 2025, early years providers are required to have regard to and follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance (DfE 2025) unless there is a good reason not to.

Our policy also supports Ofsted's judgement area covering personal development, behaviour, and welfare, where inspectors review how effectively settings promote healthy eating and a whole-setting approach.

2. Aims

We aim to:

- Provide nutritious, balanced meals and snacks to support optimal growth and development.
- Promote positive, sociable mealtime environments that encourage healthy lifelong eating habits.
- Ensure strict safety standards, including allergy management and safe food preparation.
- Work collaboratively with parents/carers to meet individual dietary, cultural, and medical needs.
- Align with current EYFS nutrition guidance, School Food Standards.

3. Food and Drink Provision

3.1 Foods Offered

In line with EYFS Nutrition Guidance:

- Meals and snacks provided are healthy, balanced and nutritious.
- We follow recommended proportions from the 4 food groups and promote variety.

- Water and milk are the only drinks served, as required from 2025.

Meals and snacks include:

- A mix of fruit and vegetables
- Starchy foods (bread, rice, pasta, potatoes)
- Protein foods (beans, meats, fish, eggs)
- Dairy (milk, cheese, yoghurt)

Portion sizes are age-appropriate to avoid under- or over-feeding.

4. Promoting a Positive Mealtime Environment

We ensure:

- Mealtimes are relaxed, sociable and unrushed.
- Staff eat with children where possible to role-model healthy habits.
- Children have opportunities to serve themselves, explore food, and develop independence.
- Food is never used as a reward or punishment.

5. Safety, Allergies & Special Diets

We follow the Safer Eating Regulations (EYFS 2025), which require:

- A Paediatric First Aid-trained member of staff to be present whenever children are eating.
- Collection of detailed dietary, allergy, intolerance and medical information *before admission*.
- Clear documentation and communication of dietary requirements to all staff.
- Safe preparation and appropriate food textures to minimise choking risk.
- Regular review of allergy action plans with parents and healthcare professionals.

6. Food Brought from Home

Packed lunches/snacks

- Parents are guided to provide healthy, balanced options consistent with our policy.
- Sugary drinks and confectionery are discouraged.
- We share nutritional guidance and support parents with healthy choices.

7. Menu Planning & Information for Parents

- Menus are planned by our catering supplier - Edward and Ward using the EYFS Nutrition Guidance and School Food Standards
- Weekly menus are displayed and communicated to families.
- Cultural preferences and celebrations are included where possible.

8. Staff Training

Our staff:

- Receive training in nutrition, food hygiene, and safe feeding practices.
- Are updated on new EYFS requirements.
- Are trained to recognise and respond to choking and allergic reactions.

9. Working with Families

We support families by:

- Discussing dietary needs during induction.
- Providing guidance on nutrition, portion sizes, and healthy habits.
- Encouraging consistency between home and the school.

10. Monitoring, Review & Ofsted Readiness

To ensure compliance:

- A whole-setting approach to healthy eating is maintained through policies, staff practices, curriculum, and family engagement.
- The policy is reviewed annually or sooner if guidance changes



St Leonard's C of E (A) Primary School

Early Years Healthy Eating policy

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