Childcare for children,
Childcare for you!

Nutrition, Food and Drink Policy Autumn 2026

The sharing of refreshments can play an important part in the social life of a child, as well as reinforcing the importance of healthy eating. We follow a "Healthy Under 5's" program to ensure the food we provide is in accordance to recent nutritional guidelines. We promote the health and wellbeing of children and their families through food offered and cooked within the settings.

Menus for meals and snacks are offered in advance and the food offered is fresh, wholesome, varied and balanced. These can be supplied on request. We encompass meals from a range of cultures, this ensures that children from all backgrounds encounter familiar tastes and that all children have the opportunity to try unfamiliar foods.

We have staff that are trained to promote our Healthy Under 5s programme. They are responsible for promoting healthy eating and activities both in the setting and offering advice to parents and carers via our app. This ensures the latest advice is followed and appropriately supported by all other staff, so they can be involved.

Drinks:

• Whilst at Smiley Happy People children are to be offered only water throughout the day and milk at snack times.

• Children aged between 6-12 months are offered cooled boiled water in a free-flow cup. Children aged over 12 months are offered water in free flowing or open top cups which are accessible at all times.

• Milk provided for the children is whole/semi skimmed, pasteurised milk. Non-dairy alternatives are available.

• Babies' formula bottles will be prepared following NHS guidelines. Formula sent in must be in its original container with the open date clearly labelled on it. We do not use prep machines. Formula should not be stage 2 follow on milk unless for medical reasons. This follows the Department for Education guidance.

• Breastmilk will be prepared following NHS guidelines. Breastmilk can only be stored for 48 hours in the fridge in the setting. It should not be stored in the fridge door. Breastmilk should be clearly labelled with when it was pumped, the volume and if it has been frozen.

• Suitable sterilising equipment is provided for babies' bottles.

• Safe and comfortable spaces for breastfeeding will be offered at all times.

• Drinks brought into the premises from children's homes are to be left in their bag and they are given a nursery cup as we cannot confirm what is in the drink.

• Hot drinks are available for adults on the premises and MUST be kept out of the children's reach, in leak and heat proof cups and consumed away from children.

Food:

• Children are offered regular meals throughout the day.

o Breakfast and glass of milk/ water is offered to children who book in for it between 8-8.45am.

o Snack and a glass of milk/water is offered at 10am for children that book in for it, otherwise this must be supplied from home.

o Lunch and pudding and a glass of water is offered at 12:30pm for children that book in for it, otherwise this must be supplied from home.

o A piece of fruit and glass of milk/water is offered at 3.30pm for children that book in for it, otherwise this must be supplied from home.

o Tea and pudding is offered to children who book in for it between 4.30-5pm.

• All meals and snacks provided are nutritious; avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar, salt, additives, preservatives and colourings. No salt is added to meal. This is following the food and drink guidelines, found in the "Eat better, Start better" guide.

• All food on the premises is nut free.

• Parents are to provide all meals for their babies, until they are happy for their child to have the meals provided on the menu.

• Foods for babies is to be of the right consistency suitable for the child's individual needs.

• Babies' lunches are to be a cold packed lunch. Any food that needs heating (such as food pouches) should be in their sealed, original container, clearly showing the heating instructions and use by date. We will not reheat home cooked food following food hygiene rules.

• Parents/carers will be provided with advice and guidance as to what they should send in lunchboxes, lunchboxes must be a cold meal. If the lunchbox's nutritional value is not to the standard, support can be given to the parent.

• Packed lunches should have an ice block in them for storage purposes.

• Employees are encouraged to eat with the children at meal times. They can have a portion of hot lunch, if able, or they can bring their own food if preferred. This food needs to follow the same guidelines as the children's or is to be consumed on breaks.

• All children should self-serve or be supported to self-serve their food.

• Children should be supportively encouraged to try new foods, however food may not be used as a reward.

• We follow the Healthy Under 5s guidance on portion sizes at mealtimes.

Dietary needs:

• Before a child starts at the setting, the registration form and our app is to be completed including any allergies or dietary requirements and any other health requirements to ensure the setting can meet the needs of the individual child. These are then accessible on the app and can be updated at any time by parents and practitioners.

• Allergy information is also displayed in the kitchen and all rooms for all staff to see, across all settings.

• All staff are trained in Allergy Awareness and follow all allergen guidelines and legal requirements. At mealtimes, the staff member serving the food must check that the food is dietary requirement appropriate for the children.

• Children with allergies, intolerances or medical conditions will have a Health plan filled out by the staff and parent together with professional input if needed.

• Ongoing conversations are carried out with parents regarding dietary requirements.

Child safety:

• All children who are eating must be sat at a table or in a highchair with a Paediatric First Aid trained member of staff.

• Choking (not gagging) incidents must be recorded on an accident form even if the child cleared the blockage themselves. This is so the parents/ carers are aware and can monitor the child and to record any patterns.

• Food should be prepared suitably in order to prevent choking. The preparation guidelines are attached in this document and displayed in food preparation areas.

• Food is cooled before it is offered for self serving at meal times.

Special occasions where Healthy Under 5s may not be followed:

• For occasions such as seasonal events, foods relevant to this may be offered to expand children's cultural understanding of the world.

• For children who have been on holiday and may want to share some things with their friends. This must be shop bought and in original, unopened packaging and risk assessed by staff on the day.

• When a child has a birthday, a birthday cake or cookies may be brought in. this must be shop bought, in it's original, unopened packaging and "free from". Alternatives can be offered for children who may have other dietary requirements.

• During hot weather ice lollies/ice poles may be offered to the children to help them stay cool.

Food safety:

• Smiley Happy People will observe current legislation regarding food hygiene, registration and training. We also continue to use the SFBB.

• All staff will have a minimum of a Level 2 food hygiene certificate. Certificates can be found at each setting in the SFBB folder.

• Food is bought weekly and where it is bought is stated using a food tracking system and is stored in the food tracking folder.

• All food is cooked by suitably qualified staff in the kitchen, which is kept to a high standard and regularly checked by food standards agency.

• Food is stock rotated weekly.

• Cooked food is temperature checked ensuring it is above 75oC and recorded in the kitchen folder. For cooked food travelling to other settings, the temperature is checked when packed and rechecked when unpacked, before serving. Both temperatures are recorded.

• Fridge and freezer temperatures are recorded daily to ensure food is stored at correct temperature.

• Untouched food is cooled and stored according to Safer Food Better Business standards.

• Notification of food poisoning affecting 2 or more children cared for on the premises is made to OFSTED within 14 days.

Early years food choking hazards

Food Standards Agency
food.gov.uk

Below is a table of advice on key foods for care givers who are involved with preparing and serving food for babies and young children (under 5 years old)

Vegetable and fruits	Advice
Pips or stones in fruit	Always check beforehand and remove hard pips or stones from fruit.
Small fruits	Cut small round fruits like grapes, cherries, berries, strawberries and cherry tomatoes, into small pieces: cut lengthways and then again cut them in halves (quarters).
Large fruits and firm fruits	Cut large fruits like melon and firm fruits like apple into slices instead of small chunks. For very young children, consider grating or mashing firm fruits, or softening them up by steaming or simmering.
Vegetables	Cut vegetables like carrots, cucumber and celery into narrow batons. For very young children consider grating or mashing firm vegetables and legumes like butter beans, chickpeas and tofu, or softening them up by steaming or simmering.
Skin on fruit and vegetables	Consider removing the skin from fruit and vegetables, especially for very young children. Peeled fruit and vegetables can be swallowed more easily.
Cooking fruit and vegetables	Consider softening firm fruit and vegetables (such as carrots, broccoli, yam and apples) by steaming or simmering until soft. Serve cut into slices or narrow batons.
Meat and fish	**Advice**
Sausages and hot dogs	Cut sausages and hot dogs into short strips. Cut them in half and then lengthways or as thinly as possible. Peeling the skin off the sausages helps them to be swallowed more easily.
Meat or fish	Remove bones from meat or fish. Cut meat into strips as thinly as possible. Remove skin and fat from meat and fish, it will help the food pass smoothly down the throat.
Cheese	**Advice**
Grate or cut cheese	Grate or cut cheese into short strips. Cut lumps of cheese as narrow as possible.
Nuts and seeds	**Advice**
Chop or flake whole nuts	Chop or flake whole nuts, peanuts and seeds. Whole nuts should not be given to children under five years old.
Bread	**Advice**
White bread and other breads	White bread can form a ball shape with a dough-like texture at the back of a child's throat, if not chewed properly. Brown bread or toasted white bread are good alternatives. Cut bread, chapatis, naan bread and other breads into narrow strips.
Snacks and other foods	**Advice**
Popcorn	Do not give babies and young children popcorn.
Chewing gum and marshmallows	Do not give babies and young children chewing gum or marshmallows.
Peanut butter	Do not give babies and young children peanut butter on its own, only use as a spread.
Jelly cubes	Do not give babies and young children raw jelly cubes.
Boiled sweets and ice cubes	Do not give babies and young children boiled, hard, gooey, sticky or cough sweets, or ice cubes.
Raisins and other dried fruits	Do not give babies under the age of 1 whole raisins or dried fruits. Cut them into small pieces.

Make sure food is prepared appropriately for children under 5 years old, see: https://www.nhs.uk/start4life/weaning/

It is also advisable that care givers are familiar with how to respond to a choking incident, see: How to stop a child from choking: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/first-aid-and-safety/first-aid/how-to-stop-a-child-from-choking/

and How to resuscitate a child: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/first-aid-and-safety/first-aid/how-to-resuscitate-a-child/

ALLERGY AWARENESS

THE FOOD INFORMATION REGULATION 2014 REQUIRES ALL FOOD BUSINESSES TO PROVIDE INFORMATION BY LABEL, MENU OR OTHER MEANS ABOUT THE 14 MAJOR ALLERGENIC INGREDIENTS USED IN ANY FOOD THEY SELL OR PROVIDE

THE 14 MAJOR ALLERGENS ARE:-



CELERY
This includes celery stalks, leaves, seeds and the root called celeriac. Celery can be found in celery salt, salads, some meat products, stock cubes and soups.



CEREALS (GLUTEN)
Wheat, Rye, Barley and Oats found in foods containing flour, some baking powders, batters, breadcrumbs, bread, cakes, couscous, pasta, pastry, meat products, sauces, soups and fried foods dusted with flour.



CRUSTACEANS
Lobster, Crabs, Prawns and Scampi are Crustaceans. Shrimp paste often used in Thai and southeast Asian curries or salads



EGGS
Eggs are found in cakes, mayonnaise, some meat products, mousses, pasta, quiche, sauces and pastries or food glazed with egg.



FISH
Found in some fish sauces, pizzas, saladdressings, stock cubes and Worcester sauce



LUPIN
Lupin flour and seeds can be found in some types of bread, pastries and even pasta.



MILK
Milk is a common ingredient in butter, cheese, cream, milk powders and yoghurt. It can also be found in foods brushed or glazed with milk, powdered soups and sauces.



MOLLUSCS
These include Mussels, land Snails, Squid and Whelks, but can also be found as an ingredient in oyster sauce and fish stews.



MUSTARD
Liquid mustard, powder and seeds fall into this category. Also found in bread, curries,marinades, meat products, salad dressings, sauces and soups.



NUTS
Not to be mistaken with peanuts, tree grown nuts, such as almonds, Brazil nuts, walnuts, hazelnuts, macadamia nuts, pistachios, pecans and cashews. Also found in breads, biscuits, crackers, desserts, curries, stir-fried dishes, Ice cream, marzipan, nut oils and sauces.



PEANUTS
Sometimes called groundnuts, grown underground, Peanuts are often used in biscuits, cakes, curries, desserts, sauces (such as Satay sauce) as well as oils and flour.



SESAME SEEDS
Halvah, hummus, and tahini are common Middle Eastern foods made with sesame. Baked goods such as buns, crackers, cookies, and bagels frequently use sesame seeds



SOYA
Often found in bean curd, Edamame beans, Miso paste, Soy sauce and Soy-based flour, grits, nuts, or sprouts. Soy-based milk, yogurt, ice cream, or cheese. Soy protein. Also meat, sauces and vegetarian products.



SULPHUR DIOXIDE
Used in dried fruits such as raisins, apricots and prunes. Also found in Wine and Beer, meat products, soft drinks and vegetables. If you have asthma you have a higher risk of developing a reaction.