

# Little Explorers Preschool

## Food and Nutrition Policy

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### Policy Statement

At Little Explorers Preschool, we understand the vital role a healthy, balanced diet plays in young children's development and wellbeing. We aim to provide nutritious breakfasts and snacks, while working in partnership with parents to ensure all packed lunches meet healthy eating guidelines, in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory requirements.

### Aims

- To support children's health, development, and concentration through balanced nutrition.
- To provide healthy breakfasts and snacks that meet children's dietary needs.
- To support parents in providing healthy packed lunches.
- To encourage positive food habits and independence around food and mealtimes.
- To ensure food is handled and prepared safely and hygienically.

### Legal Framework and Guidance

This policy is informed by:

- EYFS Statutory Framework (2025) – Sections 3.62 to 3.71  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/687105a381dd8f70f5de3ea9/EYFS\\_framework\\_for\\_group\\_and\\_school\\_based\\_providers.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/687105a381dd8f70f5de3ea9/EYFS_framework_for_group_and_school_based_providers.pdf)
- EYFS Nutrition Guidance  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6839b752210698b3364e86fc/Early\\_years\\_foundation\\_stage\\_nutrition\\_guidance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6839b752210698b3364e86fc/Early_years_foundation_stage_nutrition_guidance.pdf)
- Food Standards Agency food hygiene guidance
- Allergen Labelling and Natasha's Law
- Healthy Start Scheme and NHS Better Health, Healthier Families.  
<https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/>  
<https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/>

### Food Provision at Little Explorers

Breakfast and Snacks Provided by Preschool:

- A nutritious breakfast is offered each morning, typically including whole grains, fruit, and milk or water.
- Healthy snacks are provided mid-morning and mid-afternoon, including fresh fruit, vegetables, wholegrain crackers, or similar.
- All food provided will usually be low sugar options.

- Fresh drinking water is available to children at all times.

### **Drinks from home:**

- Children must be sent in each day with a bottle from home. This bottle will be available to each child at all times throughout the day and therefore must only contain water.
- Squash is discouraged, but if it is provided must be in a second bottle and will only be offered to a child to accompany their lunch.

### **Packed Lunches:**

- Parents/carers are responsible for providing a healthy, balanced packed lunch for their child each day.
- We provide a “Healthy Packed lunch guidance” to families on suitable lunchbox items, based on current healthy eating advice and must be followed.

Packed lunches must:

- Include items from a range of food groups (e.g. whole grains, protein, dairy, fruits, vegetables).
- Avoid foods high in sugar, salt, and saturated fats (e.g. sweets, crisps, sugary drinks).
- Not include nuts or nut-based products due to allergy risks.
- Puddings- We have a “one pudding policy”. This is one pudding which does not include fruit.

### **Dietary Needs and Allergies**

- All dietary requirements are collected upon admission, including allergies, intolerances, and cultural/religious food preferences.
- We are a nut-free setting.
- Staff receive training in allergy awareness and anaphylaxis management.
- Children with severe allergies have clearly communicated care plans.

### **Mealtimes**

- Mealtimes are structured to be calm, sociable experiences.
- Children are encouraged to sit together and develop independence (e.g. opening containers, using cutlery).
- We ensure that children are supervised at mealtimes and that children are within sight and hearing of a member of staff at all times and where possible staff are sat facing children when eating to ensure they are eating in a way that prevents choking and so they can prevent food sharing and be aware of any unexpected allergic reactions.
- Staff sit with children, model good eating habits, and offer support and encouragement.
- Children are never forced to eat, and are gently encouraged to try new foods.

### **Food Hygiene and Safety**

- All food served on-site is stored, prepared, and handled in line with Food Standards Agency (FSA) guidance.
- Staff involved in food handling have up-to-date Food Hygiene Level 2 training.
- Daily checks are completed for cleanliness and safety of kitchen and eating areas.

- Packed lunches are stored in a clean, cool area; parents are encouraged to include an ice pack.

## Promoting Healthy Eating and Learning

Healthy eating is embedded in the curriculum through:

- Cooking activities
- Discussions and stories
- Role play (e.g. play kitchens and pretend shops)
- Children learn about where food comes from, good hygiene, and the importance of variety and balance.

## Celebrations and Special Occasions

- Birthdays and cultural celebrations are acknowledged in inclusive, healthy ways.
- We discourage cakes or sweets being brought from home and offer alternative suggestions in our “Healthy Packed Lunch Guidance”.
- Where food is shared for cultural events, we request clear labelling of ingredients and allergen information in advance.

## Partnership with Parents

- We provide clear guidance on packed lunch expectations and offer healthy lunchbox ideas.
- Regular feedback is shared with parents about what and how much their child has eaten.
- We encourage consistency between home and setting around healthy eating.

## Monitoring and Review

- This policy is reviewed annually, or as needed based on changes in legislation or guidance.
- Parents and staff are invited to provide feedback as part of the review process.
- Lunchboxes are monitored informally to ensure they meet the policy expectations, and concerns are discussed sensitively with parents.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_September 2025

Review Date: \_\_\_\_\_September 2026