



Food and Mealtimes Policy (to be read in addition to the Healthy Eating Policy and Infant Feeding Policy)

At Little School we believe that mealtimes should be happy, social occasions for children and staff alike. We promote shared, enjoyable positive interactions at these times.

We are committed to offering children healthy, nutritious and balanced meals and snacks, which meet individual needs and requirements.

The majority of food is prepared by Compass, the catering team at Greenfield School. This policy outlines the procedures followed when food is prepared by Little School Staff.

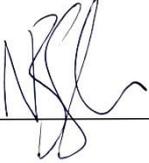
Only staff that have a current Food Hygiene and Safety certificate may prepare food for children.

We ensure that:

- A balanced and healthy breakfast, midday meal, tea and two daily snacks are provided for children attending a full day at the nursery.
- Menus are planned in advance and in line with example menu and guidance produced by the Department for Education, these are rotated regularly and reflect cultural diversity and variation.
- We provide nutritious food at all snack and mealtimes, avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar, salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- Only milk and water are provided as drinks to promote oral health. Fresh drinking water is always available and accessible. It is frequently offered to children and babies and intake is monitored. In hot weather staff will encourage children to drink more water to keep them hydrated.
- Individual dietary requirements are respected. We gather information from parents regarding their children's dietary needs, including any special dietary requirements, preferences and food allergies that a child has and any special health requirements, before a child starts or joins the nursery.
- Where appropriate, we will carry out a risk assessment in the case of allergies and work alongside parents to put into place an individual dietary plan for their child. This information must be kept up-to-date.
- We carefully consider seating to avoid cross contamination of food from child to child. An adult will sit at each table with children in Fledglings, and an adult will sit with children in Owls and Robins during mealtimes to ensure safety and minimise risks.

- Where possible, staff should sit facing children whilst they eat, so they can make sure children are eating in a way to prevent choking and so they can be aware of any unexpected allergic reactions. No child is ever left alone when eating/drinking to minimise the risk of choking and staff should always be within sight and hearing.
- Staff are trained to deal with a choking incident during Paediatric First Aid training.
- Whilst children are eating there should always be a member of staff in the room with a valid Paediatric First Aid certificate
- When a child experiences a choking incident that requires intervention, staff should record details of where and how the child choked and ensure parents and/or carers are made aware. The records should be reviewed periodically to identify if there are trends or common features of incidents that could be addressed to reduce the risk of choking. Appropriate action should be taken to address any identified concerns.
- All staff must be informed of the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis, the differences between allergies and intolerances and that children can develop allergies at any time, especially during the introduction of solid foods.
- Staff must have ongoing discussions with parents and/or carers about the stage their child is at regarding introducing solid foods, including to understand the textures the child is familiar with. Assumptions must not be made based on age. Staff must prepare food in a suitable way for each child's individual developmental needs, working with parents and/or carers to help children move on to the next stage at a pace right for the child.
- Berries and grapes will be cut into quarters lengthways
- Children are encouraged to wash their hands before handling food. Owls and Robins children are supervised to ensure hand washing is thorough and Fledglings children are supported to use clean damp flannels to wash their hands.
- Staff support and encourage good manners. Meal and snack times are organised so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate in small groups. During meals and snack times children are encouraged to use their manners and say 'please' and 'thank you' and conversation is encouraged.
- Staff use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink, and feeding themselves.
- Any child who shows signs of distress at being faced with a meal they do not like will have their food removed without any fuss. If a child does not finish their first course, they will still be given a helping of dessert.
- Children not on special diets are encouraged to eat a small piece of everything.
- Children who refuse to eat at the mealtime are offered food later in the day.
- Children are given time to eat at their own pace and are not rushed.
- Quantities offered take account of the ages of the children being catered for in line with recommended portion sizes for babies and young children.
- We promote positive attitudes to healthy eating through play opportunities and discussions.
- The nursery provides parents with daily written records of feeding routines for all children via Tapestry.
- Details of allergies and dietary preferences are clearly displayed in the kitchen of all Little School rooms and all staff check which children are eating before food is served to ensure they are served correctly.

- Food that needs to be reheated will be microwaved (covered) and stirred thoroughly before a food probe is inserted to check the temperature, which should be over 75°C. A record of this will be listed on the Food Temperature Form which is kept on a clip board in the Fledglings kitchen (next to the microwave).
- The kitchen in the Fledglings room is adequately equipped for food preparation and hygienic preparation of food including sterilisation equipment for babies' food.
- Food should be served to children warm but not hot.

Signed:  _____

Chair of the Board of Governors

Reviewed: August 2025

Next Review: January 2026

Prepared and to be reviewed by: Nursery Manager