

Food and Nutrition Policy

Introduction

This policy applies to all children attending Buckles and Bows Pre-School Nursery.

We have a statutory duty, as part of the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) safeguarding and welfare requirements**, to ensure that the snacks and drinks we provide are healthy, balanced, and nutritious.

This policy has been written using information and guidance from the **Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance (April 2025)**:

 [Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance 2025](#)

Meals Provided

- Buckles and Bows **does not provide full meals**.
 - Parents are responsible for providing a **packed lunch** for their child.
 - Any **cultural, dietary, or allergy needs** can be catered for by parents. Parents are kept informed of our **healthy eating policy** and how it applies to their child.
 - All staff handling food must hold **up-to-date food hygiene training**.
 - In the event of **food poisoning affecting two or more children**, Buckles and Bows will **notify Ofsted within 14 days** of the incident, as required by statutory guidance.
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Main Allergens

The 14 recognised main allergens are:

- Celery
- Cereals containing gluten (e.g., wheat, barley, oats, some flours)
- Crustaceans (e.g., prawns, crabs, lobsters)
- Eggs
- Fish
- Lupin (e.g., bread made with lupin seeds)
- Milk
- Molluscs (e.g., mussels, oysters)
- Mustard
- Peanuts
- Sesame
- Soybeans

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- Sulphur dioxide and sulphites (found in dried fruit and fruit juices)
 - Tree nuts (e.g., almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, cashews, pecans, pistachios, brazil nuts, macadamia nuts)
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Allergies

- Parents must complete an **Allergy Action Plan** with the manager/administrator before their child starts or as soon as an allergy is confirmed.
 - To protect children with allergies, we discourage food sharing and swapping between children.
 - Through discussion with parents and research by staff, we gather information about:
 - Religious dietary rules
 - Vegetarian and vegan diets
 - Food allergies and intolerances
 - This information is carefully considered in all food and drink provision.
 - Allergy information will be **displayed by the washing-up station** and shared with all staff.
 - Staff are trained to recognise allergic reactions and treat **anaphylaxis** in line with NHS guidance:
 [NHS – Anaphylaxis Information](#)
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Choking Prevention

- All staff are **Paediatric First Aid trained** and know how to respond to choking.
 - Staff receive **annual refreshers** on choking risks and prevention.
 - Any incidents are **recorded and shared with parents** and reviewed to improve safety.
 - Guidance followed:
 [Food Standards Agency – Early Years Choking Hazards Poster](#)
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Healthy Packed Lunches

Parents are asked to follow our **healthy, balanced, and nutritious food policy**.
Examples of appropriate foods are provided in the **Welcome Pack** and on our website.

-  **Suggestions for packed lunches include:**

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- **Main item (carbohydrate-based):** sandwich, wrap, pasta salad, rice salad, crackers with hummus or other low-fat dips
- **Vegetables:** cherry tomatoes, cucumber, carrot, pepper, celery sticks
- **Fruit:** whole fruit (apple, banana, satsuma), fruit salad, or tinned fruit in juice (not syrup)
- **Extras:** small pot of crisps (with or without dips), yoghurt, cheese portion

✗ The following are not permitted:

- Fizzy drinks
 - Whole nuts
 - Chocolate, sweets, or high-sugar snacks (e.g., Winders, Bears)
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Food Safety

- Parents should ensure **perishable foods are kept cool**.
 - Packed lunches should be placed in **insulated bags with ice packs**.
 - If ice packs are not available, the '**4-hour rule**' can be applied (food may be kept unrefrigerated for up to 4 hours).
 - All packed lunches must be **clearly labelled** with the child's name.
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Snack Provision at Nursery

- Nursery staff provide a variety of snacks, prepared by staff with **Food Hygiene training** (updated every 3 years).
 - Examples: toast, cereal, fruit, vegetables, rice cakes, breadsticks, crackers
 - Drinks: water and cow's milk.
 - Snack and lunch times are organised as social occasions, with children and staff sitting together.
 - Fresh drinking water is available at all times. Children are shown how to access it and supported if needed.
 - Staff follow the **Food Standards Agency's food safety guidance** when preparing snacks.
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Mealtime Environment

- Children eat in **designated areas** with minimal distractions.
- Each table has a staff member present to:

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- Model positive mealtime behaviour
- Support social interaction
- Monitor for allergies or choking risks

Cooking and Special Occasions

- Children will occasionally take part in **cooking and tasting activities** linked to themes, festivals, or special occasions (e.g., Pancake Day, multi-cultural festivals, sensory tasting).
- Cooking activities will include both **healthy foods and occasional treats**. Items made will be **sent home for parents to decide** whether their child may eat them.
- This information is carefully considered in all food and drink provision.

Birthdays & Celebrations

- Parents may bring in food items for birthdays/celebrations, but must **check with staff first** to ensure all dietary needs are met.
- Alternatives to food treats (e.g., stickers, bubbles) are **encouraged and welcomed**.

Parental Partnership

- We work in partnership with parents to **promote healthy eating habits**.
- Parents are encouraged to share cultural preferences, new foods, or dietary practices.
- Together, we aim to educate children about food, nutrition, and where food comes from, fostering **lifelong healthy habits**.

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains up to date with EYFS requirements and national guidance.

Signed on behalf of the pre-school.....

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "M. Ouel", is written over the signature line.

Position within group.....CHAIRPERSON

Latest Review date.....10TH November 2025