



Food and Drink Safety (Packed lunches)

EYFS Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Health

Where children are provided with meals, snacks, and drinks, these must be healthy, balanced and nutritious. Providers must have regard to the 'Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition guidance'. Fresh drinking water must always be available and accessible to children.

Policy statement

Goostrey Pre-School regard snack and meal times as an important part of our day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults, and helps children to learn about healthy eating. At snack and meal times, we aim to provide nutritious food, which meet each child's individual dietary needs.

Procedures

We follow these procedures to promote healthy eating and nutrition in our setting.

- We provide nutritious food for all snacks-following guidance outlined in Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance May 2025. We do not provide foods with large amounts of sugar, salt and saturated fats.
- Information is shared with parents regarding healthy eating and food choices- The Eat Well Guide, this supports parents in making informed decisions around children's packed lunches.
- Through discussion with parents and research reading, we obtain information about the dietary rules of the religious groups to which children and their parents belong, and of vegetarians and vegans, as well as about food allergies. We take account of this information in the provision of snacks and drinks.
- We show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. We do not use a child's diet or allergy as a label for the child, or make a child feel singled out because of her/his diet or allergy.
- We organise meal and snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and adults participate.
- Children wash hands before and after eating snacks and meals.
- At least one member of staff must sit with each table during meal and snack times.
- Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework (EYFS) is explicit that 'adequate supervision' while children are eating means that adults must see and hear children when eating.
- All foods are prepared to suit children's developmental stages and cut into small, manageable pieces to prevent choking. Staff receive training and information on choking prevention including how to prepare food and emergency response.
- Information is shared with parents on how to prepare food to prevent choking.
- We use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and feeding themselves.
- Children bring their own water bottles in, they are encouraged to drink regularly and have access to these at all times. They will be refilled by a member of staff when required.

- For children who drink milk, we provide semi-skimmed milk and each child is entitled to 1/3 of a pint per day.
- We encourage parents to bring in 'healthier options' if wanting to bring in food to celebrate a special occasion or child's birthday.

Allergy Awareness:

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we ask their parents about their dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies. (See the Managing Children who are Sick, Infectious or with Allergies Policy.)
- We record information about each child's dietary needs in the Registration Form and 'All About Me' and parents sign the form to signify that it is correct.
- We regularly consult with parents to ensure that our records of their children's dietary needs – including any allergies - are up-to-date. Parents sign the updated record to signify that it is correct.
- Individual Health Care Plans are created for those children with food allergies/intolerances.
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all our staff and volunteers are fully informed about them.
- We implement systems to ensure that children receive only food and drink that is consistent with their dietary needs and preferences, as well as their parents' wishes.
- In order to protect children with food allergies, we discourage children from sharing and swapping their food with one another.

Packed lunches

Children staying all day bring a packed lunch. We:

- Ensure perishable contents of packed lunch contain an ice pack to keep food cool.
- Inform parents of our policy on healthy eating.
- Encourage parents to provide a savoury item such as sandwich with healthy filling, fruit, and milk based deserts, such as yoghurt or crème fraîche.
- Discourage packed lunch contents that consist largely of crisps, processed foods, sweet drinks and sweet products such as cakes or biscuits.
- Where lunches brought in repeatedly do not adhere to our healthy eating policy, parents will be spoken to and offered support and information regarding healthy food choices.
- Ensure that adults sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.

Legal framework

- Regulation (EC) 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Hygiene of Foodstuffs.
- Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework (EYFS) 2024
- Early Years Foundation Stage-Nutrition Guidance

Further guidance

- Safer Food, Better Business (Food Standards Agency 2011)
- Nutritional Guidance for the Under Fives (Pre-school Learning Alliance 2009)

- The Early Years Essential Cookbook (Pre-school Learning Alliance 2009)
- Healthy and Active Lifestyles for the Early Years (Pre-school Learning Alliance 2012)
- Public Health England-Eat Well Guide

Monitoring and Review

- This policy will be reviewed annually or in line with updates to the EYFS and local safeguarding procedures.
- Feedback from staff, parents, and children will inform policy development.

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| This policy was adopted by Held on | Goostrey Pre School July 2025 |
| Date to be reviewed | July 2026 |
| Signed on behalf of the provider Name of signatory | Becca Gledhill |
| Role of signatory | Nursery Manager |
| Approved By | Jessica Moores |
| Role of Signatory | Chair of Trustees |

Eatwell Guide

Use the Eatwell Guide to help you get a balance of healthier and more sustainable food. It shows how much of what you eat overall should come from each food group.

Each serving (150g) contains

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------|-------|---------|------|-------------------|------|-------------|------|----------|------|
| Energy (kcal) | 3,000 | Fat (g) | 3.0g | Saturated fat (g) | 1.3g | Protein (g) | 34g | Salt (g) | 0.9g |
| 13% | 43% | 7% | 38% | 15% | LOW | LOW | HIGH | MED | |

Typical values (as sold) per 100g: 697kJ/167kcal
Choose foods lower in fat, salt and sugars



Eat less often and in small amounts

Per day 2000kcal 2500kcal = ALL FOOD + ALL DRINKS

Source: Public Health England in association with the Welsh Government, Food Standards Scotland and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland © Crown copyright 2016



Early years choking hazards food safety advice

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For babies and young children, food can be a choking hazard, especially when they do not chew their food well or they try to swallow it whole.

Choking can happen with any foods, but 'firm foods', bones and small round foods that can easily get stuck in the throat present a higher risk. Therefore, care givers should follow these five essential steps:

- 1** Make sure food is **suitably prepared and served** for babies and children under 5 years old. For suitable foods, see <https://www.nhs.uk/start4life/weaning/> Introduce babies to solid foods from around 6 months of age.
- 2** **Think about size, shape and texture of food.** Cut food into narrow batons, avoid round shapes and firm foods. Firm fruit & vegetables can be softened by cooking.
- 3** Ensure that babies and young children are **alert and seated safely upright** in a highchair or appropriately sized low chair whilst eating.
- 4** **Babies and young children should be supervised at all times** while eating. You will be able to identify the early signs of choking and prevent harm.
- 5** **Encourage babies and young children to chew food well.** Teach children how to chew and swallow food properly, and ensure they take their time during meals. This will reduce their risk of choking.

Care givers and parents should be familiar with how to respond to a choking incident in line with guidance on first aid for children:

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/>

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

Early years food choking hazards



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/>