



Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me.'

At Little Fishes we aim to share God's love with the children and nurture a sense of kindness, love and respect, enabling them to flourish in life.

6.5 Food and drink

Policy statement

We 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 meets the children's individual dietary needs.

Procedures

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

- 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 Allergy Safety Policy.)
- We record information about each child's dietary needs including allergies in the Registration Form 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.
- We consult NHS care plans for children with severe allergy in partnership with parents.
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs including all allergies 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.
- We provide nutritious food for snacks, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- We take care not to provide food containing nuts or nut products and we are especially vigilant where we have a child who has a known allergy to nuts.
- 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 food 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.
- We use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and feeding themselves.
- We ask parents to provide a named water bottle for their child. We have daily constantly available so that water bottles can be refilled when required throughout the day.
- We inform parents who provide food for their children about the storage facilities available in our setting. We ask that lunchboxes are labelled on the outside with child's name and that they provide their own cutlery.
- Children with allergies will wear a red wrist when eating, both during snack time in Little Fishes and in the school hall during lunchtime.
- We provide snack time as part of our continuous provision served morning and afternoon in our Little Fishes room, at our Cosy Café.
- Lunch is served in the school hall, with pre-school staff supervising the children at all times, to ensure and that we are meeting the safer eating requirements set out in the EYFS Framework 2025.
- We give parents who provide food for their children information about suitable containers for food.
- In order to protect children with food allergies, we do not allow children to share and swap their food with one another.

- *Lunches*

Children can bring a packed lunches if they are attending a lunchtime session, we ask parents to:

- ensure perishable contents of packed lunches contain an ice pack to keep food cool
- inform parents of our policy on healthy eating
- encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, or pot of rice or pasta, fruit, and milk based deserts, such as yoghurt or crème fraîche.
- We discourage packed lunch contents that consist largely of crisps, processed foods.

sweet drinks and sweet products such as cakes or biscuits. **We ask parents not to include sweets and chocolate and ANY chocolate product including chocolate spread.**

We reserve the right to return this food to the parent as a last resort.

Parents have the option to select a hot meal at lunchtime from the school kitchen. These are booked in advance.

We ensure that adults are with children at all times when they are eating so that children can **be seen and heard** the mealtime is a social and safe occasion.

Please see further detail regarding allergies and our procedures in our Allergy Safety Policy.

Legal framework

- Regulation (EC) 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Hygiene of Foodstuffs.

Further guidance

- Safer Food, Better Business (Food Standards Agency 2011)

This policy was adopted by Little Fishes Pre-School (name of provider)

On 16/7/26 (date)

Date to be reviewed July 2027 (date)

Signed on behalf of the provider



Name of signatory Tim Wootton-Beard

Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner) School Governor

Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications

- Nutritional Guidance for the Under Fives (Ed. 2010)
- The Early Years Essential Cookbook (2009)
- Healthy and Active Lifestyles for the Early Years (2012)