

The Federation of Kintore Way Nursery School & Children's Centre & The Grove Nursery School

Food and Healthy Eating Policy

Aims

To ensure that all aspects of food and nutrition in the The Federation promote health and wellbeing of pupils, staff and visitors. We aim for children to learn life long skills in healthy eating as part of a healthy lifestyle and to ensure parents are involved wherever possible. We believe that it is important for children and families to understand the impact of nutrition on health, concentration, energy levels and positive self-image. We are aware that Southwark has high obesity levels for both children aged 5 and 12 and the aim of this policy is to work towards reducing obesity.

Relevant Legislation and Statutory Guidance

This policy is informed by the following key legislation and guidance (UK-based):

Food Safety & Hygiene

- **Food Safety Act 1990** – sets requirements to ensure food is safe to eat and not misleading.
- **Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 (or equivalent national regulations in Scotland/Wales/Northern Ireland)** – outlines standards for hygienic preparation, handling, and storage of food.
- **General Food Law Regulation (EC) 178/2002** – principles on food safety and traceability.
- **Regulation (EC) 852/2004 on the Hygiene of Foodstuffs** – requirements for food hygiene procedures and staff training (HACCP principles).

Early Years & Childcare Standards

- **Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)** – requires providers to supply healthy, balanced meals; ensure fresh drinking water is always available; manage allergies safely; and promote positive mealtime practices.
- **Children and Families Act 2014** – includes duties related to supporting pupils with medical conditions, including dietary needs.

Health & Nutrition

- **School Food Standards (where applicable to nursery-aged children in maintained settings)** – guidance on healthy menu planning.
- **Allergen Information Requirements under the EU Food Information for Consumers Regulation (EU FIC) 1169/2011**, implemented in the UK through the **Food Information Regulations 2014** – requires clear identification of the 14 major allergens in food provided.

Objectives

- Reduce obesity and promote well-being for children under 5.
- To work towards meeting the Southwark Free Healthy Nursery Meals guidelines and Desserts Policy, School Food Standards and Eat Better, Start Better guidelines
- To create an environment where eating food and mealtimes are a pleasurable experience.
- To encourage children to independently make healthy choices.
- To provide rich and meaningful experiences for children to develop their knowledge and understanding of food and where it comes from.
- For all staff to support children's development and attitudes by being positive role models.
- To work in partnership with staff, children and families to improve their physical health by raising their awareness of the effects food and drinks can have on their bodies and the need for a balanced diet.
- To ensure all snacks and food provided will be nutritious, healthy, balanced and tasty which takes into account other faiths and cultures and medical requirements

- Ensure snacks and food are provided, and takes into account other faiths and cultures, medical requirements and potential allergic reactions.
- Develop knowledge and understanding of food hygiene and safety issues.
- To actively promote, encourage and support breastfeeding.
- Ensure children have continuous access to water throughout the day.

Food Provided by the Federation

All meals are cooked on the premises, and seasonal fresh produce delivered and used daily. We ensure a range of foods provided for the children meets the School Food Standards for Early Years and individual needs whether this is a medical need or stage of development. Pork and nuts are not part of our menu planning and parents/carers can express their choice of a vegetarian option at point of admission. All our menus are in line with the national school foods , Southwark Free Nursery Meals Guidelines and the 'Eat Better, Start Better' standards.

The Role of the Adult

- Staff eating with the children have a responsibility to model appropriate behaviour as set out in procedures for lunch time.
- Staff role model good standards of hygiene
- Staff serve portions of food which maintain a balanced/healthy diet and promote a positive attitude towards the benefit of eating fruit and vegetables.
- Staff will refrain from eating and drinking inappropriate foods or drinks e.g. fizzy drinks, cakes, sweets, etc. in the presence of the children either at the The Federation or on trips/outings.
- Cooking and food preparation is part of the curriculum, staff preparing for a cooking or food activity use ingredients which are healthy and nutritious.

Learning and Development

There are planned opportunities for children to learn and understand about the source of their food through plot to plate activities such as; growing their own food, shopping trips, farm visits role play scenarios, living eggs and forest school sessions.

Regular cooking activities take place involving children and parents. The muddy kitchen encourages children's imaginative play and language development.

Children are taught about good hygiene practices including hand washing before and after handling or eating food, going to the toilet or playing outside.

Children's language development is supported at meal times through the use of Makaton sign language and visual prompts.

Snack times use a snack choice board or a chat board and supporting visuals and Objects of Reference.

Meal times are used as an opportunity to support children's use of cutlery and meal time etiquette, taking into account cultural needs.

Healthy Snacks

Routines do not override children's natural development to socialise and play. Children are encouraged to have a drink or something to eat when they feel thirsty or hungry rather than at a specific time chosen by an adult. Children need long periods of uninterrupted play therefore children's play is not stopped for a snack time.

A range of finger foods are provided to encourage children to make healthy choices and introduce children to a variety of new tastes.

Snacks are healthy, and are a small nibble of food between meals all fresh fruit is cut into child size portions e.g. apples, bananas, grapes, mango, melon, pineapples, strawberries, plums, peaches, pears, etc.

- All fresh fruit and vegetables are cut into child sized portions
- Vegetables can include; celery, cucumber/cherry tomatoes, carrots, baby sweet corn, peppers, broccoli, cauliflower, etc.
- Bread based snack can be provided such as; Pita bread, rice cakes, crumpets, toast.
- Suitable toppings for toast, crumpets etc: Olive oil based spread
- Milk /water will be provided daily
- In the classroom a self-service snack table is available to the children for an hour in the morning and afternoon.

Food and Drinks Brought From Home

Children are not permitted to bring food from home on a daily basis due to the risk it poses to children with allergies. Parents/carers are encouraged to provide a healthy snack when collecting their child or attending the Nursery. Due to allergies, we ask parents not to give children snacks until they leave the school premises

Parents/carers are strongly discouraged from giving their child confectionary (sweets, cakes, crisps and fizzy drinks) while on our premises.

Special Dietary Requirements

Milk substitutes should only be given to children under the guidance of a medical professional.

Allergies and Special Dietary Requirements

Prior to children starting nursery information relating to allergies and dietary requirements are gathered during the home visit. This information is shared with the kitchen and records for each child are displayed for the kitchen staff to be aware before serving lunch. All allergies and medical dietary needs are recorded and used to inform staff of any dietary requirements or allergies. (Please see **appendix 1**) Staff will follow **individual health care plans** for children with significant allergies (in line with *Children and Families Act 2014*). Strict procedures will be followed to avoid cross-contamination. The nursery will comply with **allergen labelling laws**, ensuring parents are informed of allergens in any meals prepared or served. This information is on the menus and displayed on the website

Special Occasions

Taking into account the high child obesity levels and dental decay of the children in Southwark, and the need to reduce the sugar intake of children under 5, each school offers alternative ways of celebrating birthdays rather than the sharing of birthday cakes.

Training

Staff involved in the preparation of food attend regular food hygiene training.

Safeguarding

Staff remain vigilant for any children who appear hungry, are overeating or have a poor diet. Concerns are raised following the procedures set out in our child-protection and safeguarding policy.

Health and Safety

Children are supervised when they are eating or cooking.

Heat resistant gloves are worn when children are cooking and using the frying pan or oven.

Children are taught to not to touch any unfamiliar plants, flowers or leaves unless advised by an adult.

All edible plants are grown in a specific area in the garden.

Children use sharp knives under adult supervision.

Choking Hazards Food Safety Advice

Make sure food is **suitably prepared and served** for babies and children under 5 years old.

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.

Ensure that babies and young children are **alert and seated safely upright** in a highchair or appropriately sized low chair whilst eating.

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.

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.

Special Educational Needs

We recognise the uniqueness of all children and understand that some children find mealtimes and eating challenging and have particular tastes. We ensure our practice is inclusive and work in partnership with parents and outside agencies to support children in improving their diet if necessary. Although we do not use food as a reward there may be times when this is the only motivator for a child and it can be used on a short term basis.

Exceptions to Health Eating Policy

The Federation aims to follow all guidelines relating to healthy eating. There are times when exceptions are made for example;

Cooking activities

Science investigations

Special Festivals and Celebrations

Responding to a very hot day (ice lollies) or a very cold day (hot chocolate)

Food and drink as part of social and cultural activities or events are exempt from meeting the regulations. However, we would aim in organising these events to still consider, encourage and promote healthier options in keeping with the ethos of a health promoting school

Links to Other Policies

Safeguarding and Child Protection

Health and Safety

Teaching and Learning

Positive Behaviour Management

Risk Assessment and Challenge

Code of Conduct

Race Equality

The Federation of Kintore Way Nursery School & Children's Centre & the Grove Nursery School

Policy Name
Food and Health Eating Policy

Adopted and signed on behalf of The Federation of Kintore Way Nursery School & Children's Centre & the Grove Nursery School by the Governing Body at the meeting on

11th December 2025

Name of Governing Body Representative

Robert Weir

Signature of Governing Body Representative



Signature of Headteacher



Date signed: 11th December 2025

Date to be reviewed: Spring 2028

Procedure for Serving Lunch to Children with Allergens or Dietary Requirements

1. Preparation Before Mealtime

a. Gather Information

Ensure all staff serving lunch have an **up-to-date list** of all children with:

- Food allergies (including type and severity)
- Intolerances
- Religious or cultural dietary requirements
- Vegetarian or vegan diets
- Medical diets (e.g., coeliac disease)

b. Identify Children Clearly (Confidentially)

Use a discreet system:

- Coloured dots on badges
- **Red dot for Allergy**
- **Blue dot for Dietary requirements**
- **Green dot for medical conditions**
- Menus displayed in the hall (or classroom where meals are served) Confirm staff know **who** the children are and **what they must avoid**.

c. Kitchen & Food Preparation Controls

Separate equipment for allergen-free meals to be used (knives, boards, utensils).

Avoid cross-contamination by:

- Washing hands before handling special meals.
- Storing allergen-free meals **above** other food

d. Set Up the Environment

- Chocking poster on display
- Menus displayed in the hall (wherever lunch is being served)
- Care plans in folder on shelf, Emergency Piriton in box labelled (date when bottle opened recorded on bottle)
- Medication for children with allergies or dietary requirements kept in box and available, labelled and dated
- Tables are cleaned with appropriate cleaner using paper towels or a clean green cloth

2. During Meal Service

- Children are supervised going to the toilet and washing their hands- hands are checked that children have used soap and are clean.
- Children set out a knife, fork and spoon matching their place mat
- Once all the children are sitting down the mats are passed to adult or put in a box, children remain seated
- Food is placed on the table and the adult tells the children what they are having
- Children with allergen-free or special diet meals are to be served first
- Adult serves a small serving first. Encourage children to have at least one vegetable dish.
- Child is encouraged to reply “Yes Please” or “No thank you”
- Adult eats the food with the children, modelling the appropriate use of knife and fork- e.g. “can you cut your fish finger like this?”

- Adults to support children who may need food cutting into smaller pieces
- Adults to be aware of how children eat at home (some children eat rice with their hands) including cultural practices and their physical development
- Adults to be aware of the children who may need support in cutting foods into small bite size pieces
- Adults support children in holding conversations with each other and taking their turn to talk when their mouth is full. Adults to explain about choking if they eat with their mouth full
- Children are encouraged to serve second helpings themselves (Adults to be aware of portion control)
- When most children have finished the adult begins to ask children to scrape their plates into a container on the table
- Children wash their hands and faces and return to the classroom
- Kitchen to set up the tables. Children should be seated facing adults to ensure they can be seen at all times. Children with allergies should be seated where staff can monitor closely.
- Observe children during eating for:
 - Swapping food
 - Signs of an allergic reaction

Ensure staff stay attentive and avoid distractions

FOOD SHOULD NEVER BE USED AS A REWARD OR PUNISHMENT. DO NOT ASK CHILDREN TO CLEAR PLATES OR SAY THEY CANNOT HAVE PUDDING IF THEY HAVEN'T FINISHED MAIN COURSE

Always Practice good hand washing throughout lunch times

Kitchen to set up Place allergen-free meals in a separate area until they are handed out.

b. Serve the Meals Safely

- Double check:
 - Child's name
 - Food label
 - Allergy list
 - Confirm plates, cutlery, and surfaces are clean before use.

3. After Mealtime

a. Safe Clean-Up

- Clean and sanitise all surfaces.
- Wash dishes with separate sponges or dishwashing routines if required for allergen control.
- Floors swept , tables cleaned.

b. Record Keeping

- Note any issues such as:
 - Missed meals
 - Children refusing food
 - Any reaction or near miss
- Report to Executive Head teacher or if unavailable to designated safeguarding lead

4. In Case of an Allergic Reaction

Recognise Symptoms

- Hives, rashes, swelling of face/lips
- Coughing, wheezing, difficulty breathing

- Vomiting or stomach pain
- Sudden lethargy or behaviour change

Emergency Procedure

1. **Stay calm and alert another staff member.**
2. Follow the child's **individual health plan**.
3. Administer prescribed medication immediately:
 - Antihistamines
 - **Adrenaline auto-injector (EpiPen)** if indicated
4. Call emergency services (e.g., **999/911**).
5. Contact parents/guardians.
6. Complete an incident report.

5. Staff Training Requirements

- All staff serving lunch to have Paediatric First Aid training