



Marshbrook First School and Marshmallows Nursery Early Years Nutrition Policy

This policy sets out the approach to nutrition and healthy eating for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage at Marshbrook First School in line with national guidance and statutory requirements. It aims to promote healthy growth, development, and well-being through high-quality nutrition and education on healthy eating.

Legal Framework & Guidance References:

- *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage* (DfE, 2024)
- *School Food Standards* (DfE, updated 2024)
- *Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (EIF)* (Ofsted, 2023)
- *Healthy Eating in the Early Years - A Toolkit* (PHE, 2019)

Aims of the Policy

Promote Healthy Growth and Development

To ensure all children in the EYFS receive nutritious food and drink that supports physical growth, brain development, and lifelong healthy habits.

Establish a Positive Food Culture

To encourage healthy eating behaviours and promote a calm, sociable mealtime environment where food is valued and enjoyed.

Meet Statutory Requirements

To comply with the EYFS statutory framework requirements for food and drink provision (§3.45-3.47).

Support Families

To work in partnership with families to promote understanding and consistency between home and setting in nutritional practices.

Roles and Responsibilities

Senior Leadership

- Ensure the nutrition policy is implemented and reviewed regularly
- Allocate resources including training and facilities
- Ensure compliance with DfE requirements and health & safety legislation

EYFS Practitioners

- Model healthy eating habits and language
- Supervise and support children during mealtimes sitting with children where possible
- Monitor children's food intake and needs, record the amount eaten for two year olds

Parents/Carers

- Support the setting's approach by providing healthy packed lunches or following guidance
- Inform the setting of dietary requirements or allergies

Catering Staff

- Follow national School Food Standards
- Ensure food hygiene standards are maintained

Food Provision in the Early Years

Meals and Snacks Offered

- Meals and snacks provided must be healthy, balanced and age-appropriate
- Snacks include fresh fruit/vegetables, dairy, and whole grains

- Water and milk are the only drinks offered routinely

School Food Standards

While the statutory *School Food Standards* do not formally apply to non-maintained nursery provision, we voluntarily adhere to their principles to ensure a high nutritional quality of meals.

Dietary Requirements

Allergies and Intolerances

- All allergies and intolerances must be declared before the child starts
- Staff undergo allergy awareness training annually
- Procedures for preventing cross-contamination are in place
- Care plans are devised for children with allergies

Special Diets

- Children's individual requirements are recorded on a visible requirements form in the food area, all staff are made aware
 - Children's allergens are recorded on a health care plan, all information is shared with the kitchen staff
 - Families and medical professionals are consulted as necessary
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Food Safety and Hygiene

Storage and Preparation

- Food is stored correctly with attention to expiration and temperature
- Preparation follows national food safety standards (e.g. Safer Food, Better Business)

Staff Training

- All staff involved in food handling have Level 2 Food Hygiene & Safety training
 - Refresher training is kept up to date
 - All staff to be paediatric first aided
 - All staff to have completed allergy awareness training where appropriate
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Mealtime Environment

Social and Learning Experience

- Mealtimes are viewed as key learning opportunities - fostering communication, turn-taking and independence
- Rolling snack times are used to support social interactions and enable children to choose when they are ready to eat within a set window of time

Encouraging Healthy Choices

- Children are encouraged but not forced to try new foods
 - Positive reinforcement is used rather than rewards for eating
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Promoting Healthy Eating and Nutrition Education

Curriculum Integration

- Healthy eating is taught through EYFS areas of learning, particularly *Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)* and *Understanding the World*
- Activities may include growing food, cooking, and learning where food comes from

Special Events

- Celebrations and events include healthy food options
- Cultural food experiences are included in an inclusive, respectful manner
- Tomatoes, grapes, blueberries, and sausage will be halved by length.

Packed Lunches

Packed Lunch Guidance

- Parents are given clear guidance about what to include/exclude based on national healthy eating advice - poster and information given with new starter forms and in notice boards
 - A small chocolate bar or cake is permitted as part of a packed lunch when accompanied by other nutritious options
 - Fizzy drinks and sweets are not permitted
 - Staff monitor packed lunches and provide feedback sensitively
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Monitoring and Evaluation

Regular Review

- The policy is reviewed annually or when changes to legislation occur
- Changes are made following consultation with staff and health professionals if required

Ofsted Requirements

- Ofsted will consider how early years settings promote children's health and manage mealtimes as part of *personal development*
 - Evidence of this policy in action contributes to effectiveness judgements under the Education Inspection Framework
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Policy Date: September 2025

Review Date: September 2026

Policy Owner: N. Bishop - Nursery Manager

This policy reflects our commitment to providing a nourishing, supportive and inclusive mealtime environment that lays the foundation for long-term health and wellbeing.