This policy should be taken as part of the overall strategy of the school and implemented within the context of our vision, aims and values as a Church of England School.

Churchfield Church School and Nursery

Learn to love, Love to learn

Healthy Eating Policy

Approved by: LGB	**Date:** August 2025
Next review due by: October 2026	**Author:** Dawn Rogers

Praise Value

Empathy

Bible Reference

"Then God said, 'I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food.'"

Genesis 1:29

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework sets the standards that Early Years providers must meet to ensure that all children learn, develop well and are kept healthy and safe.
At Churchfield Nursery we will ensure that any meals, snacks and drinks provided to children in the setting will be healthy and nutritious, contributing to a balanced diet.

Why is a healthy diet important?

At Churchfield, we recognise the vital role that healthy choices, preferences, and eating habits play in early childhood. These habits are established during the formative years and have lasting implications for a child's health and development throughout life. It is therefore essential that the food and drink provided in early years settings offer appropriate levels of energy and nutrients, while actively promoting the development of healthy eating behaviours.

This policy should be taken as part of the overall strategy of the school and implemented within the context of our vision, aims and values as a Church of England School.

Supporting children's nutritional needs not only contributes to their physical growth and cognitive development but also aligns with national priorities to reduce childhood obesity, improve overall health and behaviour, and encourage good oral hygiene. By embedding these practices throughout the day, we aim to enhance learning outcomes and ensure every child receives the best possible start in life.

Our food, eating environment, activities and ethos aim to:

- Promote healthy lifestyles through healthy eating and drinking. Practitioners are encouraged to always promote healthy eating and when in contact with children they are not eating unhealthy foods or drinks to ensure that they are good role models.
- Provide consistent, informed healthy eating messages.
- Support and encourage good table manners and social eating skills.
- Provide a good role model for children by having adults sitting with children while they eat.
- Encourage children to exercise healthy choices with regards to eating and drinking
- Have supportive staff who encourage children to observe the social rituals of mealtimes including the use of 'please' and 'thank you'.
- Work with parents/carers around the provision of healthy food and drinks by making healthy eating information available such as leaflets, posters, policies, and websites.

Child's food preferences and specific dietary requirements

Upon admissions into our nursery all information about any special dietary requirements, preferences, and food allergies that the child has, and any special health requirements are discussed and recorded in line with information and record keeping. Fresh drinking water is accessible for the children to independently access throughout the day, either with their own bottles or cups provided by nursery and milk is available at breakfast and snack times.
The school kitchen will be informed and is able to provide food for vegetarians, vegans.
The nursery team will also contact parents/carers regularly to review and update our records. If a child develops a new allergy or intolerance, parents/carers should immediately discuss this with the Senco
Any child with a dietary requirement or allergens `s details will be displayed for all staff to check within each room as well as on the child`s profile on family.

Meals times:

All children will be able to access a selection of different fruits and vegetables to access different vitamins and nutrients for snacks; these products will always be prepared by staff trained in food hygiene as well as having received information provided by the Food Standards Agency on "how to prepare foods safely to avoid choking". These posters are displayed in the kitchen and food area.

Examples of foods that are also offered will include:

- Toast with dairy free butter
- Breadsticks, rice cakes
- Yoghurt with fruit

This policy should be taken as part of the overall strategy of the school and implemented within the context of our vision, aims and values as a Church of England School.

At Churchfield Nursery we can offer our families the choice of a paid hot meal option that is cooked by our chef on site or parents are able to supply their own packed lunch, (parents will receive information and guidance on a health and safe packed lunch).

At Churchfield Nursery we are a water and milk only setting. Children will always have access to water and milk across the session. For children that have a medical or SEND need, arrangements will be made to meet their needs.

The importance of healthy eating and drinking is consistently promoted and embedded within our practice at Churchfield Nursery. All practitioners are mindful of their role in supporting and encouraging positive habits around nutrition and hydration and are committed to modelling these behaviours throughout the day—whether through balanced meals, cooking activities, or imaginative role play. While healthy eating is often a key focus, research highlights that the role of hydration and the impact of fluid intake can sometimes be overlooked. We therefore place equal emphasis on ensuring children are regularly offered drinks and supported to understand the value of staying well-hydrated as research suggests that children do not always recognise the signs of thirst and know how to understand and manage their thirst reactions.

Children that access a packed lunch from home:

Parents/carers can provide meals for their children to eat at Churchfield Nursery. In the interest of safety and children's health, there are a few items that should not be included in lunchboxes:

- fizzy drinks and pre-mixed drinks with high sugar content
- foods with a very high salt content
- chocolate, sweets and foods with a high sugar content
- pre-cooked foods that when not cooled and/or stored correctly may pose a potential poisoning risk (e.g. rice, cooked meat)
- foods that may present a choking risk (such a whole nuts, uncut grapes, popcorn, etc)*
- foods that may trigger a known allergy (such as nuts), if informed about such as issue

We encourage parents and carers to provide children with packed lunches that complement our healthy food ethos. We ask that, to achieve this, parents use the principles of the ‘Eatwell plate picture below’. This will ensure children having packed meals have a healthy balanced meal. We also direct parents to the “Change 4 Life” website that includes ideas for healthy packed lunches.

Any foods or drinks left will be sent home with the child. If a child does not have enough food left in their lunchbox to constitute a full meal, in we will provide a suitable substitute, contact parents to discuss if they need support

If a child regularly brings meals from home that are high in fat/sugar/salt and do not have enough nutritional value, this will be discussed with parents/carers. If they are struggling to provide a balanced diet due to selective eating or for medical reasons, then practitioners will recommend they access support via their health visitor or GP.

This policy should be taken as part of the overall strategy of the school and implemented within the context of our vision, aims and values as a Church of England School.

Lunch Box Guide

Sending your child into school with a packed lunch is a great way to ensure they're eating a balanced and healthy diet that will keep their energy levels up and ready for learning. You can plan your child's lunch (or encourage them to help plan their own) using some of the guidance below.

1 x wholegrains

- Bread
- Crackers
- Bred sticks
- Rice
- Pasta
- Wraps
- Pitta
- Potatoes
- Quiche
- Rice cake
- Bagel

Dairy/Protein

- Yogurt
- Cheese
- Fish
- Meat
- Eggs
- Chicken
- Salami
- Fromage frais
- Cream cheese
- Milk
- Custard

1-2 portions of Fruit & Veg

- Fresh
- Frozen (defrosted)
- Tinned
- Dry (chopped if large)

Ensure pips / stones are removed

Remember!

- No nuts
- Products containing nuts e.g. chocolate spread, peanut butter
- Avoid food high in fat, sugar and salt.
- No popcorn or marshmallows

Law

To reduce the risk of chocking, the EYFS state the following for children under 5:

- No Popcorn
- No marshmallows
- All round and cylindrical foods should be cut into quarters lengthways. This includes, grapes, cherries, berries, sausages

(please see picture on the left)

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.

This policy should be taken as part of the overall strategy of the school and implemented within the context of our vision, aims and values as a Church of England School.

Children that access a hot meal provided by the school kitchen:

Parents will be able to select a varied and nutritious meal for their children via the school portal system.
The school kitchen prepares all hot meals in accordance with food safety legislation.
The school kitchen will provide menus of different foods, textures, tastes and colours across the week. This will make sure children get the benefits from different nutrients in each food covering the four main food groups.
A healthy balanced diet is based on fruit and vegetables, starchy carbohydrates, Dairy and plain fortified plant-based alternatives, proteins. These provide essential nutrients for children to grow and develop.
Children`s dietary, intolerances, religious preferences and coeliac disease will also be considered.
Children will be served the correct portion size depending on their age.
The menu is on a three-week rotation.

Precautions are in place to prevent children from choking

Churchfield nursery will follow the government's guidance in Help for Early Years Providers to minimise the risk of a child choking. This includes preparing foods to be an appropriate size and shape. Children will be within sight and hearing during snack and mealtimes, with an adult facing them. There will always be a qualified paediatric first aider present whilst children are eating. All children will sit on age-appropriate chairs. If a child were to start choking, trained first aiders will perform the necessary emergency first aid, another member of staff will contact the parents/carers immediately, they will advise that the parents seek follow-up medical advice.

How to reduce the risk of choking for children aged 5 and under during food prep.

- remove any stones and pips from fruit before serving.
- cut small round foods, like grapes, strawberries, and cherry tomatoes, lengthways and into quarters.
- cut large fruits like melon, and hard fruit or vegetables like raw apple and carrot into slices instead of small chunks.
- do not offer raisins as a snack to children under 12 months – although these can be chopped up as part of a meal.
- soften hard fruit and vegetables (such as carrot and apple) and remove the skins when first given to babies from around 6 months.
- sausages should be avoided due to their high salt content, but if offered to children these should be cut into thin strips rather than chunks and remove the skins.
- remove bones from meat or fish.
- do not give whole nuts to children under five years old.
- do not give whole seeds to children under five years old.
- cut cheese into strips rather than chunks.
- do not give popcorn as a snack.

- do not give children marshmallows or jelly cubes from a packet either to eat or as part of messy play activities as they can get stuck in the throat.

At Churchfield we follow the four Cs to basic food safety known as:
Cleaning of Food Preparation Areas

Cleaning-*This means washing hands, utensils, and surfaces before and after handling food to remove germs.*
Cooking-*This means cooking food thoroughly and at the right temperature to kill harmful bacteria and pathogens.*
Chilling-*This means refrigerating or freezing food promptly and properly to prevent spoilage and growth of bacteria.*
Cross contamination-*This means keeping raw and cooked foods separate and using different utensils and cutting boards for them to avoid transferrin*

Will food be prepared hygienically?

The setting has set high standards of personal hygiene for all members of staff involved in the handling and preparation of food. All staff who are handling food have completed a Food Hygiene level 2 course and are competent to do so. Any person showing signs of ill health will not be permitted to handle food.

As a provider of meals and snacks, the Churchfield nursery is aware of their responsibilities under food hygiene legislation. This includes registration with the relevant Local Authority Environmental Health Department.

Cleaning of Food Preparation Areas

- *Every week the fridges within nursery are thoroughly cleaned before delivery of new stock (Usually Monday) and wiped down daily. Temperatures are recorded twice a day as part of our checks and all food items in the fridge are checked for freshness and expiry date. All food past their use by or best before date are correctly disposed of.*
- *All food preparation surfaces are wiped clean after use with anti-bacterial cleaner and colour coded cloths (These are either disposable or placed on a suitable hot wash to disinfect and kill all bacteria).*
- *All chopping boards are cleaned after use with warm soapy water, anti-bacterial cleaner and then thoroughly rinsed.*

- *The manager and senior leaders will ensure that appropriate controls are in place to prevent cross contamination and that these controls are documented accordingly.*
- *When preparing food, staff who hold a level 2 hygiene certificate will observe current legislation regarding food hygiene and training by:*
- *Always washing hands with anti-bacterial soap and hot water before and after handling food, using the toilet, or changing nappies.*
- *Using clean cloths ensuring the correct colours are used for the correct role. Green for kitchen and food preparation areas, Blue for hard surfaces and public areas and Red for washrooms and toilets etc.* Ensuring the use of the correct colour coded chopping boards (e.g., red for raw met etc.)
- Not being involved in food preparation if they are unwell.
- Wearing correct PPE where required
- Holding a current Food Hygiene certificate.
- Making sure all fruit and vegetables are washed before being served.
- Any cuts, spots or sores on the hands and arms must be covered completely with a waterproof dressing.
- All food handlers preparing food will wear blue food safe disposable gloves

Allergies

The nursery caters for children`s specific dietary needs that may include allergies or food intolerances, or because of religious, cultural, or ethical reasons.

Staff are made aware of children' s specialist requirements through individual care plans and other information provided by parents upon admission. It`s **Vital** for parents and carers to keep the setting updates on any changes in the child' s medical and health needs.
To help us manage the risks associated with food allergies or intolerance the nursery has the following in place.

- Pre-entry information from parents
- Induction information for staff
- Excellent food hygiene practises (5* rating)
- Children`s information easily accessible on Famly.
  - Allergies and dietary requirement are displayed in each food preparation/consumption area.
  - School catering team are aware of allergens on Famly & Arbor.

Staff must check all the ingredients of any meals and snacks given to a child with a food allergy. For example, if a cheese sandwich is made, staff must check the ingredients of the bread, cheese, spread and anything else put in the sandwich. Staff must never assume or guess. If there is any doubt, simply do not serve the item.
Staff must be vigilant and uphold good hygiene practices to ensure contamination is prevented during preparation. This can be done by cleaning surface between ingredients, ensuring separate utensils are used where required and the correct colour codes are used for the correct task required. E.g. white board for bread, green for fruit, brown for vegetables. Etc. Staff must ensure that knives are cleaned between use also as these can be a vehicle for

cross contamination. Staff are provided with blue gloves to use during food preparation and serving.
If mistakes are made during preparation for an allergy sufferer it is vital that the ingredient is not just removed, the item must be prepared from scratch again as allergens are always present in food and cannot be removed or destroyed by cooking.

Where there an allergy concerns arises. First aid will be carried out in accordance with the child`s needs by a qualified paediatric first aid trained member of staff. Contact should be made with the parents as soon as possible.
An EEC form must be completed by the staff member and an accident report for the child on Famly. Depending on the severity Ofsted may need to be informed, and or an investigation may be required. Staff may require retraining or a review on the process for food preparation and storage may be required to minimise risk of a reoccurrence.

Temperature control

It is paramount to ensure that all foods are stored according to safe food handling practises and at the correct temperature to prevent the growth and multiplication of food poisoning organisms, to reduce the rate of food spoilage and to ensure that food quality is maintained. Fridge temperatures are checked and recorded twice daily to ensure the correct temperature is being upheld.

Food Poisoning

If there is any incident of food poisoning affecting two or more children within the setting it is the settings Statutory Requirement to notify Ofsted as soon as possible

Food Play

We ensure any food we use for play with the children is carefully supervised. We will also use the following procedures to ensure children are kept safe:

- Choking hazards are checked and avoided.
- We will not use whole jelly cubes for play. If we do use jelly to enhance our play, then all jelly will be prepared with water as per the instructions and then used. No popcorn or marshmallows in whole state (large or small) will be used for children under 5 years of age.
- Small objects such as dried pasta and pulses will only be used for older children and under supervision.
- All allergies and intolerances will be checked, and activities will be adapted to suit all children`s needs, so no child is excluded.
- Children`s allergies will be visible to staff when placing out food play activities to ensure all needs are met.
- Any cooking activities will be checked prior to start to ensure all children are able use all the ingredients based on their individual needs.
- We will not use food in play unless it enhances the opportunities children are receiving from the activity.
- Playdough is cooked onsite by practitioners with relevant food safety training to minimise risk of contamination according to food guidance.

This policy should be taken as part of the overall strategy of the school and implemented within the context of our vision, aims and values as a Church of England School.

Celebrations

At Churchfield, we value and celebrate the special moments in our children' s lives. Traditionally many families enjoy marking occasions by bringing in treats to share with the group. While we welcome these celebrations, we are also committed to promoting healthy, balanced eating in line with our food and nutrition guidance and to ensure the safety of all children including allergies and intolerances. We also will celebrate and respect cultural food traditions, where safe and appropriate. Any food shared in the setting should be checked for potential allergens. Communication with parents and/or carers about these practices is key to ensuring they are informed and involved in supporting healthy eating habits at early years settings

To support this, we kindly suggest that parents consider bringing in the following alternatives:

- A storybook to share
- Stickers and bubbles
- A favourite song, music that they can share

Legislation and other policies connected to this policy.

Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition - GOV.UK

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2.