

03 Food safety and nutrition policy

Alongside associated procedures in 03.1-03.5 Food safety and nutrition, this policy was adopted by Little Fawns Preschool on 8th September 2025.

Aim

Our setting is a suitable, clean, and safe place for children to be cared for, where they can grow and learn. We meet all statutory requirements for food safety and fulfil the criteria for meeting the relevant Early Years Foundation Stage Safeguarding and Welfare requirements

Objectives

- We recognise that we have a corporate responsibility and duty of care for those who work in and receive a service from our provision, but individual employees and service users also have responsibility for ensuring their own safety as well as that of others. Risk assessment is the key means through which this is achieved.
- Procedure 03.1 Food Preparation, Storage and Purchase is followed for general hygiene and safety in food preparation areas.
- We provide nutritionally sound snacks and breakfast which promote health and reduce the risk of obesity and heart disease that may begin in childhood - [Healthy Balanced Diet for Children](#).
- We follow the [Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance 2025](#)
- We follow the main advice on dietary guidelines and the legal requirements for identifying food allergens when planning menus. All foods are based on the four food groups, referring to the [Eatwell Guide](#):
 - meat, fish, and protein alternatives
 - milk and dairy products
 - cereals and grains
 - fresh fruit and vegetables.
- Following dietary guidelines to promote a healthy diet also means taking account of guidelines to reduce risk of disease caused by unhealthy eating. We will follow guidelines from [Early Years Stage Nutrition Guidance 2025](#) when choosing which foods and drinks are provided and allowed in the setting.
- Parents are supported in providing a healthy balanced diet for their child through regular conversations with their child's key worker, clear expectations for foods allowed in packed lunches and sharing information and guidance from other organisations supporting healthy eating.
- Parents share information about their children's particular dietary needs with staff when they enrol their children and on an on-going basis with their key person. This information is shared with all staff who are involved in the care of the child.

- Foods provided by the setting for children have any allergenic ingredients identified.
- Care is taken to ensure that children with food allergies do not have contact with food products that they are allergic to.
- Risk assessments are conducted for each individual child who has a food allergy or specific dietary requirement.
- 3.0a How We Support Mealtimes at Little Fawns, shows how we will support children at mealtimes with making healthy choices and promoting a positive attitude at mealtimes.
- Staff will work closely with families of children with medical, dietary needs or SEND ensuring their needs are being met appropriately, this may mean placing less emphasis on the amount or types of food they eat.

Legal references

Regulation (EC) 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the hygiene of foodstuffs.

Food Information Regulations 2014

The Childcare Act 2006

Further guidance

[Safer Food Better Business for Caterers](#) (Food Standards Agency)

[Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance 2025](#)

03 Food safety and nutrition procedures

03.1 Food preparation, storage and purchase

General

- All staff have up to date certificated training on food safety. Any staff who do not have this training are not allowed to do any food handling or preparation.
- All staff are paediatric first aid trained.
- The setting manager is responsible for ensuring that the requirements in Safer Food Better Business are implemented where required.
- All staff responsible for preparing food have undertaken the Food Allergy Online Training CPD module available at <http://allergytraining.food.gov.uk/>.
- The setting manager is responsible for overseeing the work of all food handlers to ensure hygiene and allergy procedures are complied with.
- Staff carry out and record 03.1a Daily Opening/Closing Checks, 03.1b Record of Deep Cleaning. This is monitored and managed by the Health & Safety Officer.
- The cook and setting manager maintain a Food Allergy and Dietary Needs folder with:
 - a list of all children with known food allergies or dietary needs updated at least once a term (the personal/medical details about the allergy or dietary needs remain in the child's file along with a copy of the risk assessment). This is clearly displayed for all staff and the risk assessment shared with all staff.
 - a record of food menus along with any allergens using
 - a copy of the FSA booklet 'Allergen information for loose foods' available at www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/loosefoodsleaflet.pdf
 - a copy of the Food Allergy Online Training CPD certificate for each member of staff that has undertaken the training
- The setting manager is responsible for informing the owners/trustees/directors who then reports to Ofsted any food poisoning affecting two or more children looked after on the premises. Notification must be made as soon as possible and within 14 days of the incident.

Purchasing and storing food

- Food is purchased from reputable suppliers.
- We refer to the traffic light [food labelling system](#) when purchasing foods for snack and breakfast, ensuring that we only purchase food that is green or amber -
- Pre-packed food (any food or ingredient that is made by one business and sold by another such as a retailer or caterer) is checked for allergen ingredients and this information is communicated to parents

alongside menu information. For example, a meat pie bought at a supermarket or a tin of baked beans or the ingredients for a recipe prepared on site.

- If food that is not pre-packed (described as 'loose food'), such as sandwiches bought from a bakery is served, then allergen information will have been provided by the retailer, this information must then be shared in the same way with parents.
- Parents are requested not to bring food that contains nuts. Staff check packets to make sure they do not contain nuts or nut products.
- Bulk buy is avoided where food may go out of date before use.
- All opened dried food stuffs are stored in airtight containers.
- Dried packaged food is not decanted from packaging into large bins or containers as this prevents monitoring of sell by/use by dates and allergen information.
- Food is regularly checked for sell by/use by dates and any expired items are discarded.
- Bottles and jars are cleaned before returning to the cupboards.
- Items are not stored on the floor; floors are kept clear so they can be easily swept.
- Perishable foods such as dairy produce, meat and fish are to be used the next/same day. Soft fruit and easily perishable vegetables are kept in the fridge at 1- 5 Celsius.
- Packaged frozen food should be used by use by dates.
- Food left over should not be frozen unless it has been prepared for freezing, such as home-made bread or stews. Hot food should be left to cool for up to 1.5 hours and then quickly frozen.
- Freezer containers should be labelled, dated and used within 1-3 months.
- Fridge and freezer thermometers should be in place. Recommended temperatures for fridge 37 degrees Fahrenheit (3 degrees Celsius), and freezers 0 degrees Fahrenheit (-18 degrees Celsius). Temperatures must be checked and recorded daily to ensure correct temperatures are being maintained.
- Freezers are defrosted every 3 months or according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Meat/fish is stored on lower shelves and in drip-free dishes.
- Fruit and vegetables stored in the fridge are washed thoroughly before refrigeration to reduce risk of pests and E.coli contamination.
- Staff's own food or drink should be kept in separate designated area of the fridge; where possible, a fridge should be kept in the staff room to avoid mix ups.
- Items in fridges must be regularly checked to ensure they are not past use by dates.

Preparation of food

- Food handlers must check the content of food/packets to ensure they do not contain allergens.

- Food allergens must be identified.
- Food handlers wash hands and cover any cuts or abrasions before handling food.
- Separate boards and knives are used for chopping food, usually colour coded.
- All vegetables and fruit are washed before preparing.
- All food is prepared safely to avoid choking. The 3.01c Prepare Food Safely poster is displayed in the food preparation areas.
- Food left out is covered, for example when cooling down.
- Food is cooked in time for serving and is not prepared in advance of serving times.
- Hot cupboards or ovens are not used to keep food warm.
- Potatoes and vegetables are peeled when needed, not in advance and left in water.
- Food prepared and cooked for different religious dietary needs and preferences, such as Halal or Kosher meat is cooked in separate pans and served separately.
- Food cooked for vegetarians does not come into contact with meat or fish or products.
- Food cooked and prepared for children with specific dietary needs is cooked in separate pans and served separately.
- A separate toaster is kept and used for children with a wheat or gluten allergy.
- Food prepared for children with dietary needs and preferences is clearly labelled and every effort is made to prevent cross-contamination.
- Raw eggs are not to be given in any form, such as mousse or mayonnaise.
- When given to children, eggs are fully cooked.

Serving Food

- Food is served for children in separate covered containers for each table.
- Staff risk assess the likelihood of children with dietary restrictions accessing the food of other children and must take appropriate action to prevent this from happening, for example:
 - check the list of children's dietary requirements displayed in the food preparation area
 - coloured plates
 - place mats
 - other methods as agreed by the setting manager
- Children with allergies/food preferences are not made to feel 'singled out' by the methods used to manage their allergy/food preference.

- Food served to children with identified allergies is checked by the key person to ensure that the food does not contain any of the allergens for that child.
- Staff members sit with children at mealtimes or where possible always within sight and hearing of them.
- Tables are cleaned before and after, with soapy water or a suitable non-bleach product.
- Members of staff serving food wash their hands and cover any cuts with a blue plaster.

E.coli prevention

Staff who are preparing and handling food, especially food that is not pre-prepared for consumption e.g. fruit and vegetables grown on the premises, must be aware of the potential spread of E.coli and must clean and store food in accordance with the E.coli 0157 guidance, available at:

www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/guidancenotes/hygguid/ecoliguide#.U7FCVGIOWdl

Further guidance

[Example Menus for Early Years Settings in England \(PHE 2017\)](#)

www.gov.uk/government/publications/example-menus-for-early-years-settings-in-england

[Safe Food Better Business www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/safer-food-better-business-sfbb](http://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/safer-food-better-business-sfbb)

Campylobacter (Food Standards Agency) www.food.gov.uk/news-updates/campaigns/campylobacter/fsw-2014

[Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance 2025](#)

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03.2 Food for play and cooking activities

Some parents and staff may have strong views about food being used for play. It is important to be sensitive to these issues. For example, children who are Muslim, Jewish, Rastafarian, or who are vegetarian, should not be given any food to play with that contains animal products (Gelatine). Parents' views should be sought on this. In some cases, it is not appropriate to use food for play at all, particularly in times of austerity.

- We follow the [Early years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidelines](#) when planning play involving food and cooking activities.
- Food for play may include dough, corn flour, pasta, rice, food colourings/flavourings.
- Jelly (including jelly cubes) is not used for play.
- Food for play is risk assessed against the [14 allergens](#) referred and is included in the written risk assessment undertaken for children with specific allergies.
- Staff are constantly alert to the potential hazards of food play, in particular choking hazards and signs of previously undetected allergies.
- Pulses are not recommended as they can be poisonous when raw or may choke.
- The use of raw vegetables for printing is discouraged.
- Dried food that is used for play should be kept away from food used for cooking.
- Foods that are cooked and used for play, such as dough, have a limited shelf life.
- Cornflour is always mixed with water before given for play.
- Cornflower and cooked pasta are discarded after an activity; high risk of bacteria forming.
- Utensils used for play food are washed thoroughly after use.

Children's cooking activities

- Before undertaking any cooking activity with children, members of staff should check for allergies and intolerances by checking children's records.
- Children are taught basic hygiene skills such as the need to wash hands thoroughly before handling food, and again after going to the toilet, blowing their nose or coughing.
- The area to be used for cooking is cleaned; a plastic tablecloth is advised.
- Children should wear aprons that are used just for cooking.
- Utensils provided are for children to use only when cooking, including chopping/rolling boards, bowls, wooden spoons, jugs, and are stored in the kitchen.
- Members of staff encourage children to handle food in a hygienic manner.

- Food ready for cooking or cooling is not left uncovered.
- Cooked food to go home is put in a suitable food bag or wrapped in suitable food wrap and refrigerated until home time.
- Food play activities are suspended during outbreaks of illness.

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03.4 Providing Food and Nutrition

Food supplied for children provides a healthy and balanced diet for healthy growth and development. Foods that contain any of 14 allergens identified by the FSA are identified on menus. The setting follows dietary guidance to promote health and reduce risk of disease caused by unhealthy eating. When providing foods for snack and breakfast, the setting manager ensures that:

- Parents and staff are able to contribute ideas for snacks and breakfast which are gathered from them when the child enrolls at the setting.
- Foods that contain any of the [14 major allergens](#) are identified and staff are made aware.
- Parents must share information about their children's particular dietary needs with staff when they enrol their children and on an on-going basis with their key person.
- Key persons regularly share information about the children's levels of appetite and enjoyment of food with parents.
- Staff refer to the [Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance 2025](#)
- The Health & Safety Officer maintains a record of children's dietary needs in a Food Allergy and Dietary Needs folder.

Packed lunches

- Where children have packed lunches, staff promote healthy eating.
- We ensure that parents are given advice and information about what is a healthy balanced diet and what is appropriate content for a child's lunch box:
 - [A Healthy Balanced Diet for Children](#)
 - [Portion Sizes](#)
 - [Eatwell Guide](#)
 - [How to Prepare Food Safely to Prevent Choking](#)
 - [Healthy Packed Lunch Ideas](#)
 - [Common Allergens](#)
- No nuts, sweets, chocolates, juices or smoothies are allowed in packed lunches.
- Parents are also advised to take measures to ensure children's lunch box contents remain cool i.e. ice packs, as the setting may not have facilities for refrigerated storage.
- If the contents of a child's packed lunch box do not meet the guidelines set out in the [Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance 2025](#), then key workers will communicate with parents to support them in making appropriate changes where necessary.

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03.5 Meeting dietary requirements

Snack and mealtimes are an important part of the day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating. We aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs and preferences.

- Staff discuss and record children's dietary needs, allergies and any ethnic or cultural food preferences with their parents.
- If a child has a known food allergy, procedure 04.4 Allergies and food intolerance is followed.
- Staff record information about each child's dietary needs in the individual child's registration form; parents sign the form to signify that it is correct.
- Up-to-date information about individual children's dietary needs is displayed so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed.
- Staff ensure that children receive only food and drink that is consistent with their dietary needs and cultural or ethnic preferences, as well as their parent's wishes.
- The menus of snack and breakfast available are shared with parents to view. Foods that contain any food allergens are identified.
- Staff aim to include food diets from children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones.
- Through on-going discussion with parents and research reading by staff, staff 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. Staff take account of this information when providing food and drink.
- Staff provide a vegetarian alternative when meat and fish are offered and make every effort to ensure Halal meat or Kosher food is available to children who require it.
- Where it is not possible to source and provide Halal meat or Kosher food, a vegetarian option is available; this will be discussed and agreed with parents at the time of the child's registration.
- All staff show sensitivity in providing for children's diets, allergies and cultural or ethnic food preferences. A child's diet or allergy is never used as a label for the child, they are not made to feel 'singled out' because of their diet, allergy or cultural/ethnic food preferences.
- Fresh drinking water is available throughout the day. Staff inform children how to obtain the drinking water and that they can ask for water at any time during the day.
- Meal and snack times are organised as social occasions.

Fussy/faddy eating

- Children who are showing signs of 'fussy or faddy eating' are not forced to eat anything they do not want to.
- Staff recognise the signs that a child has had enough and remove uneaten food without comment.
- Children are not made to stay at the table after others have left if they refuse to eat certain items of food.
- Staff work in partnership with parents to support them with children who are showing signs of 'faddy or fussy eating' and sign post them to further advice, for example, How to Manage Simple Faddy Eating in Toddlers (Infant & Toddler Forum) <https://infantandtoddlerforum.org/health-and-childcare-professionals/factsheets/>

Appendices

03.0a – How We Support Mealtimes

03.1a – Kitchen Opening & Closing Checks

03.1b – Deep Cleaning Record

03.1c – How to Prepare Food Safely to Prevent Choking



HOW WE SUPPORT MEALTIMES AT LITTLE FAWNS



- Children are supported to wash their hands before snack and lunch.
- Independence to cut and peel fruit for snack and pour own water or milk from jugs into cups.
- Children to have plates to place their food onto from their lunchboxes to avoid being overwhelmed by too much choice.
- Staff to sit with the children at mealtimes or where possible to always be in sight and hearing of them. (all staff are paediatric first aid trained and have completed food hygiene awareness).
- Children encouraged to have their sandwiches or savoury items first before moving onto anything else.
- Children with dietary or special educational needs to be supported to eat what they can with less emphasis on order or amount of food.
- No pressure to eat all their lunch but encouraged to try items before saying they do not want to carry on.
- Staff to sit with the children at mealtimes to minimise any choking risks by checking items are prepared correctly before consumption.
- No juices or smoothies only water or milk to be consumed.
- No chocolate or nuts in their lunches due to allergen risk.
- Make mealtimes a learning opportunity to talk about what we are eating and to always promote their independence.



03.1a Kitchen opening and closing checks

Little Fawns Preschool

This form is for early years settings providing snacks and/or packed lunches only. Settings providing full meals should use *Safer Food Better Business* opening and closing checks.

Enter a tick and initial if satisfactory. Enter X and initial if not satisfactory and make a note below. Add action taken and if problem is resolved, sign and date.

TO BE COMPLETED DAILY

Opening checks date:

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Personal hygiene:

- Hands washed.
- Clean apron.
- Hair tied back.

Fridge/freezer:

- Working properly.
- Temperature checked – record temps.
- Raw and cooked food separate.
- Separate containers for shared fridge.

Appliances working:

- Cooker.
- Hob
- Microwave.
- Kettle.
- Toaster
- Dishwasher.
- Washing Machine

Children's food allergies checked (see list).

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Food fresh and in-date.
Packed lunches checked and used within 4 hours of preparation.
No physical or chemical or pest contamination of stored food.

Closing checks date:

Unused food put away correctly.
Leftover food and past sell-by-date food discarded.
Crockery and utensils washed up and put away dry.
Rubbish removed/bin cleaned.
Dirty cloths removed and replaced.
Work surface clean and disinfected.
Floors clean.

Report any problem(s) here

Action taken

03.1b - Deep Cleaning Record – Kitchen

Academic Year:

Area	Frequency	Dated & Signed											
Inside of Food Related Cupboards	Monthly												
Cupboard Doors & Handles	Weekly												
Fridge & Freezer Doors	Weekly												
Inside of Fridge & Freezer	Half Termly												
Oven	Termly												
Washing Machine	Termly												

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/>