

Meal and Snack Time Policy



Approved by:	Full Governing Body	Date: June 2025
Last reviewed on:	NA	
Next review due by:	June 2026	

Purpose

This policy ensures that all meals, snacks, and drinks provided to children are healthy, balanced, and nutritious, in line with the statutory EYFS framework. It supports children's well-being, development, and safety while fostering positive eating habits. This policy covers all food times at Haven Nursery School, including breakfast, snacks, lunch and tea. This policy should be read in line with our terms and conditions.

Statutory Requirements

Nursery schools must adhere to the EYFS safeguarding and welfare requirement that states: *"Where children are provided with meals, snacks, and drinks, these must be healthy, balanced, and nutritious."*

Meal and Snack Provision

- **Balanced Meals:** All meals will include a variety of food groups, ensuring children receive essential nutrients. Currently our lunch and tea provision is outsourced to Hungry Monsters catering company. Breakfast and snack are prepared by the nursery school.

- **Healthy Snacks:** Snacks will be low in sugar, salt, and saturated fat, promoting good health. Variety will be offered. In line with current guidance, snacks will not be offered to children under 1 year old.
- **Drinks:** Fresh drinking water will be available at all times. Milk will be provided as a nutritious option. Parents are asked to provide their child/ren with a named water bottle with fresh drinking water to access throughout the day. Children must not bring juice, squash or alternatives to nursery school.

Nursery Meal Expectations

- It is expected that children have the nursery-provided meals and snacks, which are designed to be nutritious and in line with EYFS guidelines. Children will be encouraged and supported to eat these through our mealtime routines.
- If parents/carers opt not to pay for nursery meals during Government funding entitlement hours, in line with terms and conditions, they must provide food from home that aligns with the nursery school menus, including for snack. This menu is available via the school office. Any snacks provided that are not inline with the menu will not be offered. Parents are unable to opt out of meal and snack charges for any paid hours.

Dietary Requirements & Allergies

- Individual dietary needs that relate to allergies, intolerances, and religious or cultural preferences, will be accommodated. A letter from a doctor, paediatrician or dietician is required to confirm allergy and intolerance requirements.
- Staff will receive training on food allergies and safe food handling to prevent cross-contamination.
- Parents/carers must inform the nursery of any dietary restrictions upon registration and it is the responsibility of the parent/ carer to keep the nursery informed of any changes to this.
- This should be read in conjunction with our Allergy Policy.

Mealtime Supervision & Safety

- Children will be supervised at all times during meals and snacks to ensure safe eating practices.
- Staff will encourage independent eating while providing necessary support.
- Choking hazards will be minimised by serving appropriately sized food portions and preparing food inline with current statutory guidance.
- If staff are feeding children, they will always use plastic cutlery.

Mealtime arrangements

- All nursery areas have separate meal rooms where all food is consumed.
- Children are supported and encouraged to be independent in their choices and self-help skills, at an age-appropriate level.

- Set meal and snack times ensure that all children have access to appropriate meals during their time in nursery. This is inline with our terms and conditions.
- For children under the age of 2, records of food consumption will be shared via Famly, our online parent platform.

Food Hygiene & Storage

- All food will be stored, prepared, and served in accordance with food safety regulations.
- Staff will follow strict hygiene practices, including handwashing before handling food.
- Staff involved in the preparation of food will have appropriate food hygiene training.

Celebrations & Special Occasions

- Birthdays and celebrations will be celebrated in alternative ways and children are not permitted to bring cake or other food items to nursery.
- Cultural and festive meals will be incorporated into the menu where appropriate.
- There may be times whereby additional celebrations happen within the nursery school, these will be offered as part of a broad and balanced diet.

Monitoring & Review

- This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if needed, to ensure compliance with EYFS requirements and best practices.
- The headteacher and the Governing Body will be responsible for monitoring this policy.