

Safer Eating Policy

September 2025



Purpose and Aims

At Delph Side Primary School, having a Food and Safe Eating Policy is essential because we provide meals and snacks on-site and support children who bring food from home. The aims of this policy are to:

- Ensure safe food provision for all children, whether meals/snacks are provided by the school or brought from home.
- Minimise risks related to allergies and choking through clear procedures and staff awareness.
- Support consistent food safety practices between home and school by communicating expectations with parents and carers.
- Ensure safe supervision during meal and snack times
- Create an inclusive eating environment where all children feel safe and supported, regardless of dietary needs.
- Meet safeguarding and welfare requirements as outlined in the EYFS framework, ensuring legal compliance and best practice.
- Encourage safe food handling and hygiene among staff and children

By fostering a safe eating environment, we protect children's wellbeing and meet safeguarding and welfare requirements, including those outlined in the EYFS framework.

Gathering of Medical Information

- Before any child starts at Delph Side, parents/carers must complete a medical needs form which includes information regarding food allergies, intolerances and whether the child has a history of choking on food.
- The school office team are responsible for reviewing the information on this form. If parents report that their child has an allergy, intolerance or is a choking risk, parents will need to fill in additional paperwork and have a conversation with our Medical Needs leader. This information is then logged onto SIMS, CPOMS (tagged under Medical Needs) and recorded on Cypad.
- Following this, the child's class teacher and the kitchen staff will be informed **before the child is able to start**.
- Parents/carers will be asked to confirm whether or not they agree to their child's photograph and medical information being displayed in the kitchen and classroom. If they give consent, this will happen immediately.
- Parents/carers will be informed that it is their responsibility to complete a new medical needs form if any of their child's details were to change.

Food Preparation

It is essential that all food is prepared in a way that minimises choking. The following information has been shared with all EYFS staff, and kitchen staff. For our youngest children, it is the responsibility of the staff who are supervising to ensure that any food which is served to a child is cut up to a size that's right for the child's size, age and stage of weaning.

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EYFS

In line with the 2025 EYFS Statutory Framework, at Delph Side we acknowledge that choking is one of most common causes of accidental death in under 5's. EYFS staff will comply with the following requirements in order to reduce the risk of choking, and ensure that adults are able to take the right action if it was to happen.

- Children will always be in sight **and** hearing whilst eating – adults will be facing the children.
- A qualified first aider will be present when children are eating (all paediatric first aid courses include what to do if a child is choking and staff will receive more frequent reminders about what to do if a child is choking.)
- We will ensure any special diets, food preferences, allergies, intolerances, or health needs of the child are known and shared with the staff who prepare and handle food.
- Staff will work closely with parents when weaning and moving at the child's individual pace.
- We will prepare food in way that reduces the risk of choking.
- Ensure appropriate seating and minimising distractions whilst eating.
- A record of any choking incidents and checking if there are any patterns to these.
- Always letting parents know of any incidents.

Whole School

- All children will be seated inside whilst eating (unless a special whole school/class event which is appropriately staffed). During morning snack, children will sit in classrooms and be supervised by classroom staff. During lunchtime, children will sit in the hall and be supervised by the teachers/teaching assistants on duty.
- There will be a member of staff who holds a Paediatric First Aid certificate on duty in the hall during every meal time.
- Children **must not** take food out on to the playground, or eat in any area of the school where they are not being supervised by an adult.
- In the dining hall, coloured lanyards will be worn by the following children: **choking risk – yellow, allergy – red, intolerance – blue.**
- All packed lunches will be checked by a member of staff before consumption. If a packed lunch contains items identified as a choking hazard, staff will either modify the food (chop into safer portions in line with safety guidance), or remove the food. When an unsafe item is removed, a slip will be placed into the lunchbox to inform parents of the action taken. Parents will be informed that after 3 incidents of unsafe food being sent into school, items will be removed or returned home.
- Staff will ensure that all eating environments are kept calm and distraction free in order to support safe eating.
- All incidents of choking or near misses will be recorded and reviewed regularly to identify patterns and improve safety
- As a school we WILL avoid:
 - making children finish everything on their plate or eat more than they want to
 - offering rewards to children for finishing everything on their plate (e.g. stickers or dessert).

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Special Occasions and Celebrations

To ensure the safety and wellbeing of all pupils, the following guidelines apply to food-related activities during special occasions such as birthdays, discos, school parties, fetes, and other celebratory events:

Birthday Celebrations

Families may send in cakes for birthdays, but we ask that these be soft-textured (e.g., sponge cakes) to reduce choking risk. Sweets or hard confectionery should not be distributed during school hours. If provided, they must be sealed in a bag and given to children at the end of the day to take home. We encourage non-food alternatives such as stickers, pencils, or small toys as celebratory treats.

School Parties and Discos

All food served at school-organised parties must comply with the school's safer eating rules. If a tuck shop is available, items must be sealed (in a named bag) and only distributed at the end of the event for children to take home. Staff will supervise food distribution to ensure safety and adherence to dietary restrictions.

School Fetes and Community Events

When parents/carers are present at events such as fetes, they are responsible for supervising their child's food choices and consumption. Stallholders are encouraged to clearly label ingredients and allergens.



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.