



Devonshire Primary Academy Early Years Food Policy



Adopted by Governors/HT: HT
Implementation date: January 2026
Review period: Annually
Last review date: January 2026
Person responsible for policy: EYFS Lead

Statement of Intent

We recognise the vital role that nutrition plays in early childhood development. Our setting is committed to promoting healthy eating habits, supporting cultural and dietary diversity and ensuring full compliance with statutory food safety and nutrition standards.

Legal Framework

This policy is guided by the requirements of the Food Safety Act 1990, the School Food Regulations 2014, Natasha's Law (2019) and the Statutory EYFS Framework. It also reflects guidance from the Department for Education and Public Health England on nutrition and food safety.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher oversees the implementation of this policy and ensures that it is applied without discrimination.

The Preschool Manager is responsible for managing daily food operations, reviewing menus, maintaining hygiene standards and adhering to allergy protocols.

Early Years staff actively promote healthy eating, monitor children for allergies and choking risks and record any incidents.

Parents play a key role by providing accurate dietary information and supplying specialist food where required.

Food Provision

Meals provided within the setting include all major food groups, with portion sizes and menus tailored to reflect both age and cultural diversity. Only milk and water are served during meal times and staff monitor children's progression between cup sizes.

Snacks offered throughout the week are nutritionally balanced, including fruit, vegetables and savoury items.

Water is available at all times via a filtered cooling machine.

Eating Environment

We strive to create a calm, inclusive and age-appropriate dining environment. Staff sit with children during meals, encourage independence and monitoring food intake.

Celebrations

Any food brought in for celebrations must comply with this policy and undergo allergen checks. Packaged and store-bought items are preferred to ensure safety and consistency.

Allergies and Special Requirements

Strict allergy protocols, including cultural and religious dietary requirements, are in place and all Preschool staff receive training in allergen awareness and emergency response.

Separate utensils and storage are maintained for allergen-sensitive foods.

Food from Home

Parents are informed during the admissions process that snacks should not be sent in from home.

Packed lunches may be provided for some children and these are monitored by staff to ensure they meet nutritional expectations. We do not refrigerate packed lunches; parents receive guidance from staff on safe storage and allergen precautions, including advice such as cutting grapes lengthways and keeping food cool.

Eating Habits

Children are encouraged to try new foods, but we do not enforce eating or use food as a reward.

Dietary needs are always respected, and learning activities such as cooking, growing vegetables and sensory play are incorporated to promote positive attitudes toward food.

In Preschool, staff record each child's daily dinner choice and how much they eat at lunchtime. If a child has not eaten enough of their meal, they are offered additional food from the salad bar. If their intake is still low, Preschool staff will provide an alternative snack once they are back in class.

Food Safety and Hygiene

All Preschool staff are trained in food hygiene and safety and children are taught basic hygiene practices. Safe food storage and preparation are maintained at all times.

Communication

Parents are kept informed about food routines and any policy updates.

Menus are shared with parents and displayed within the setting. Children are supported in making their own choices through visual aids.

In Preschool, children's lunchtime food intake is recorded daily to support communication with parents who request updates. Parents are informed at collection if staff feel their child has not eaten enough. If a child refuses all food, parents are contacted by phone to let them know.

Collaboration with parents is encouraged to manage fussy eating.

Inclusive Provision

We accommodate all dietary needs, including allergies, cultural preferences and ethical choices, through ongoing dialogue with parents and professionals.

Allergy information and photographs are displayed for staff in classrooms to prevent cross-contamination.

Food intake is monitored and additional snacks are provided, if necessary, following the nutritional standards outlined in this policy.