



**ST JOSEPH'S**  
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

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# Healthy Lunchbox Policy

**Setting Name:** St Joseph's Catholic Preschool & Nursery

**Effective From:** September 2025

**Review Date:** September 2026

## Purpose

To promote the health, safety, and wellbeing of all children in our care by ensuring that food brought from home aligns with the EYFS statutory requirements, supports nutritional development, and minimises choking risks.

## Policy Principles

- In accordance with the EYFS statutory framework, all meals, snacks, and drinks provided or brought into the setting must be healthy, balanced, and nutritious.
- From September 2025, providers must have regard to the EYFS nutrition guidance, which outlines best practices for food provision.
- All food must be prepared and packed safely to reduce the risk of choking.

## Lunch Box Guidelines

### Recommended Contents

- 1 portion of fruit (e.g. banana, apple slices, berries – cut appropriately)
- 1 portion of vegetables (e.g. cucumber batons, cooked carrot sticks)
- A source of protein (e.g. cooked chicken strips, egg, hummus, beans)
- A starchy food (e.g. wholemeal bread, pitta, pasta, rice)
- A dairy item (e.g. cheese strips, yoghurt – unsweetened)
- A healthy drink (e.g. water or milk)

### Items Not Permitted

- Whole grapes, cherry tomatoes, or other round fruits (unless quartered lengthwise)
- Nuts or nut products (due to allergy risks)
- Popcorn, marshmallows, jelly cubes, hard sweets, chewing gum
- Processed meats with skins (e.g. sausages, hot dogs) unless cut into thin strips and skin removed
- Sugary drinks, fizzy drinks, chocolate bars, sweets
- White bread in doughy chunks (can form choking hazards)

## Food Safety and Choking Prevention

- All food must be cut appropriately:
  - - Round fruits: cut lengthwise and into quarters
  - - Hard fruits/vegetables: steamed, grated, or cut into thin batons
  - - Meat/fish: bones removed, cut into thin strips
- Whole nuts and seeds are prohibited for children under 5.

- Children must be seated safely and supervised during eating.
- A paediatric first aid trained staff member will always be present during mealtimes.

### **Allergy and Dietary Needs**

- Parents must inform staff of any allergies, intolerances, or dietary requirements.
- Allergy action plans will be developed in collaboration with parents and healthcare professionals.

### **Storage and Hygiene**

- Lunch boxes must be:
  - - Clearly labelled with the child's name
  - - Packed in a secure, insulated container
  - - Contains ice / cool pack

### **Working with Families**

- Follow the Eatwell Guide when preparing lunches
- Avoid high-sugar, high-fat, and highly processed foods
- Engage with staff if unsure about suitable lunch items

### **Review and Monitoring**

This policy will be reviewed annually or in response to updates in statutory guidance. Staff will monitor lunch boxes and communicate with parents as needed to ensure compliance.