Safer Eating Policy

September 2026

Review September 2027

At Tanworth-in-Arden CofE Primary School & Nursery, our vision is that every child is known, valued and loved as a unique individual created in the image of God.

Guided by our Christian vision and values, we are committed to providing a nurturing, inclusive and safe environment where all children can flourish academically, socially, emotionally and spiritually.

We believe that sharing meals and snacks provides more than nourishment. Mealtimes are opportunities for children to develop independence, confidence, communication skills and positive relationships. Through a culture of care, compassion and respect, we ensure every child is supported to eat safely and confidently whilst developing healthy attitudes towards food and wellbeing.

Safeguarding is a golden thread running through all aspects of life at Tanworth. Safe eating practices form an important part of our safeguarding responsibilities. Through effective supervision, staff training, risk assessment and strong partnership working with families, we work to minimise risks associated with choking, allergies, food intolerance and medical conditions so that every child can flourish safely.

This policy reflects our commitment to ensuring children are known, valued, loved and protected throughout every aspect of nursery life.

At Tanworth-in-Arden CofE Primary School & Nursery, we are committed to promoting the health, safety and wellbeing of every child through safe and inclusive eating practices.

Our Nursery and EYFS provision serves children aged 2 to 5 years and we recognise that mealtimes are an important part of children's learning, wellbeing and development.

We believe that eating together provides opportunities to develop independence, communication skills, social interaction and healthy lifelong habits. Through our nurturing and inclusive environment, children are supported to enjoy food safely whilst developing confidence, resilience and independence.

This policy sets out how Tanworth ensures that all food and drink provided or consumed within our Nursery and EYFS provision is safe, nutritious and suitable for individual needs, in accordance with the EYFS Statutory Framework and current safer eating guidance.

As all meals are prepared and cooked on site by Caterlink, the school's contracted catering provider, this policy should be read in conjunction with Caterlink's food safety, allergy management and safer eating procedures. The school works closely with Caterlink to ensure that all dietary, allergy and food safety requirements are fully met.

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2. Aims

We aim to:

- Protect children from risks such as choking, allergic reactions and foodborne illness.
- Promote healthy eating and positive attitudes towards food.
- Meet individual dietary, medical, cultural and religious needs.
- Ensure all staff understand and implement safer eating practices consistently.
- Create calm, enjoyable and inclusive mealtimes.
- Work in partnership with families to support children's health and wellbeing.
- Ensure all children are appropriately supervised whilst eating.
- Support children to become increasingly independent and confident during mealtimes.
- Promote inclusion so that every child can access mealtimes safely and successfully.

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3. Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Board

The Governing Board will:

- Ensure suitable safeguarding, welfare and health and safety arrangements are in place.
- Monitor the effectiveness of school policies.
- Review this policy within the agreed review cycle.
- Receive assurance regarding food safety and welfare arrangements through safeguarding and Headteacher reports.

Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- Ensure implementation of this policy.
- Oversee staff training.
- Monitor compliance and incidents.
- Ensure appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place.

EYFS Lead and Nursery Manager

The EYFS Lead and Nursery Manager will:

- Oversee day-to-day implementation of safer eating arrangements.
- Ensure dietary information is accurate and regularly updated.
- Monitor records of allergies, incidents and near misses.
- Support staff training and development.
- Review any concerns relating to safer eating practices.

Nursery and EYFS Staff

At Tanworth, all Nursery and EYFS staff share responsibility for safer eating practices.

Each child's Key Person is responsible for:

- Understanding individual dietary requirements.
- Implementing allergy and healthcare plans.
- Ensuring children are supervised effectively during meals and snacks.
- Promoting positive eating experiences.
- Reporting concerns immediately.

All staff will:

- Follow safer eating procedures.
- Be aware of children's dietary, allergy and medical needs.
- Supervise children carefully during meals and snacks.
- Maintain appropriate food hygiene standards.
- Follow safeguarding procedures where concerns arise.

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4. Admission and Dietary Information

Before admission, parents and carers will be asked to provide information regarding:

- Allergies.
- Intolerances.
- Medical conditions.
- Dietary requirements.
- Cultural or religious food preferences.
- Previous choking incidents.
- Eating difficulties or sensory needs.

Where appropriate:

- Individual Healthcare Plans will be developed.
- Allergy Action Plans will be completed.
- Advice from health professionals will be sought.

This information will be shared with relevant staff and reviewed regularly.

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5. Mealtime Procedures

Supervision

- Children will always remain within sight and hearing of staff whilst eating.
- At least one member of staff with current Paediatric First Aid training will be available during meal and snack
- Staff will sit with children and actively supervise eating.
- Staff will monitor for signs of choking or allergic reactions.
- Children will not walk, run or play whilst eating.
- Food sharing between children will not be permitted.

Eating Environment

We will provide:

- Calm and organised eating spaces.
- Appropriate seating for children's size and stage of development.
- Minimal distractions during meals.
- Positive social experiences around food.

Children will be encouraged to:

- Sit appropriately whilst eating.
- Chew food thoroughly.
- Eat at a pace suitable for them.
- Develop independence during mealtimes.

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6. Choking Prevention

Preventing choking is a key safeguarding responsibility.

Staff will:

- Prepare food appropriately for children's age and developmental stage.
- Follow Food Standards Agency guidance regarding food preparation for young children.
- Cut foods appropriately to reduce choking risks.
- Ensure children are seated whilst eating.

- Supervise children at all times during meals and snacks.
- Encourage children to chew food thoroughly and take their time when eating.

The school will display appropriate choking hazard guidance within nursery food preparation and eating areas.

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7. Managing Allergies and Medical Needs

Tanworth takes the management of allergies extremely seriously.

The school will:

- Maintain Allergy Action Plans where required.
- Ensure all staff are aware of children with allergies.
- Clearly identify dietary requirements.
- Prevent food sharing between children.
- Minimise cross-contamination risks.
- Work closely with families and health professionals.
- Ensure emergency medication is readily accessible and staff know how to administer it.

Any allergic reaction or near miss will be:

- Recorded.
- Reported to parents.
- Reviewed by leaders.
- Used to improve future practice.

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8. Food Hygiene and Preparation

The school will:

- Maintain hygienic food preparation areas.
- Ensure food is stored safely.
- Follow food hygiene procedures.
- Ensure staff handling food are appropriately trained.
- Clean and sanitise surfaces and equipment regularly.

Children will:

- Wash hands before meals and snacks.
- Be encouraged to follow good hygiene routines.
- Learn healthy habits through daily practice.

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9. Nutrition and Healthy Eating

At Tanworth, we are committed to promoting healthy lifestyles and positive food choices.

We will:

- Provide nutritious meals and snacks that support children's growth and development.
- Offer fresh drinking water throughout the day.
- Encourage children to try a variety of foods.
- Promote healthy eating through the EYFS curriculum.
- Support children to develop independence and positive attitudes towards food.
- Ensure menus reflect current nutritional guidance for early years children.

Food will never be used as:

- A reward.
- A punishment.
- A behavioural sanction.

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10. Children with SEND and Additional Needs

Consistent with Tanworth's commitment to inclusion, we recognise that some children may require additional support to access mealtimes safely and successfully.

This may include children with:

- SEND.
- Sensory processing differences.
- Communication needs.
- Medical conditions.
- Developmental delays.

Support may include:

- Modified food textures.

- Additional supervision.
- Individual eating plans.
- Sensory support.
- One-to-one assistance where appropriate.

Where appropriate, personalised support plans, risk assessments and adapted eating arrangements will be implemented in partnership with parents, health professionals and external agencies.

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11. Food Brought from Home

Where food is brought from home, parents and carers are asked to:

- Clearly label containers.
- Inform staff of ingredients where necessary.
- Avoid foods that present a significant choking risk.
- Follow school guidance regarding allergens.

All food brought from home will be managed in line with individual allergy and dietary needs.

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12. Celebrations and Special Events

The school recognises the importance of birthdays and celebrations.

Any food shared during celebrations will:

- Be checked for allergens.
- Be appropriate for the age group.
- Follow school healthy eating expectations.

The school may encourage alternatives such as:

- Fruit platters.
- Story choices.
- Special activities.
- Non-food celebration items.

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13. Choking Incidents and Emergency Procedures

In the event of a choking incident:

- Staff will follow Paediatric First Aid procedures.
- Emergency services will be contacted where necessary.
- Parents and carers will be informed immediately.
- A detailed incident record will be completed.
- The incident will be reviewed by leaders.
- Any required changes to practice, training or risk assessments will be implemented.

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14. Safeguarding

Safer eating forms part of the school's wider safeguarding culture.

Staff understand that:

- Choking hazards present a safeguarding risk.
- Allergic reactions require prompt intervention.
- Children's medical needs must be understood and shared appropriately.
- Mealtimes must be actively supervised.
- Concerns regarding a child's wellbeing will be recorded and reported in line with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

As with all aspects of school life, safeguarding remains everyone's responsibility.

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15. Staff Training

All Nursery and EYFS staff receive appropriate induction and ongoing training relating to:

- Paediatric First Aid.
- Allergy Awareness.
- Choking Prevention.
- Food Hygiene.
- Safeguarding.
- Management of Medical Conditions.

Training records are monitored through the school's training matrix to ensure qualifications remain current and staff knowledge remains up to date.

New staff receive induction training in safer eating procedures to ensure they are able to support children safely from the start of their employment.

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16. Monitoring and Review

The implementation of this policy will be monitored through:

- Leadership monitoring.
- Safeguarding reviews.
- Allergy action plan audits.
- Incident analysis.
- Staff supervision.
- Parent feedback.
- Governor monitoring.

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if:

- EYFS requirements change.
- National guidance changes.
- The school identifies areas requiring improvement.

Equality Impact Statement

Tanworth-in-Arden CofE Primary School & Nursery is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all children, families, staff and members of the school community. This policy has been reviewed to ensure that it promotes inclusion, removes barriers and supports the diverse needs of all children.