

REAch2 – Safer Eating and Nutrition

At The Palmer Academy, we are fully committed to ensuring that every child's dietary needs are met safely, and that all mealtimes and snack times are managed with the utmost care. This guidance outlines our procedures for managing food allergies, special dietary requirements, and choking risks, in full compliance with the latest EYFS 2026 framework.

Allergies and Dietary Needs

We are a **nut-free** school. Please **do not** send any food containing nuts or nut products (including peanut butter, Nutella, cereal bars, etc.).

Let us know if your child has:

- Any food allergies or intolerances
- Medical dietary needs
- Cultural or religious dietary requirements
- Special dietary needs (e.g. vegetarian, dairy-free)

Important: Please keep us updated with any changes in your child's dietary needs. This information will be shared with staff to ensure awareness.

Food and Healthy Eating

We encourage all children to have a balanced and varied diet although we understand that for some children this may be more difficult.

Everyday, children should eat meals and snacks that include a variety of foods from the four main food groups. When eating meals provided by the nursery as well as eating snacks within each session, children will be encouraged to try new foods.

Snacks

In line with the Early Years Nutrition Guidance, in nursery and reception a snack will be provided for your child for each of the sessions they attend.

- Those children attending morning or afternoon sessions will be provided a piece of fruit or vegetable.
- Children attending all day will be provided one of each.

Packed Lunches (if applicable)

If your child brings their own lunch please consider the following:

- Include healthy, balanced options (e.g. fruit, veg, sandwich)
- Avoid choking hazards (see below)
- No sweets, fizzy drinks, or chocolate
- All food must be **cut appropriately** for your child's age

Choking Risk Foods:

Please ensure the following are prepared safely:

- **Grapes and cherry tomatoes** – always cut in half lengthwise
- **Carrot sticks** – cut into thin strips, not chunks
- **Sausages** – slice lengthwise before dicing
- **Hard fruits/veg** – soften slightly or cut small

We are happy to advise if you're unsure how to prepare something safely.

Mealtimes at School

During mealtime and at snack time:

- Children are always supervised while eating and, where possible, adults will be facing children while they eat so they can:
 - support safe eating
 - recognise and intervene if a child is choking
 - Identify signs of an allergic reaction
 - prevent food sharing
- A Paediatric First Aid (PFA) trained member of staff will be in the room while children are eating
- We encourage good table manners and handwashing
- Staff are trained in allergy awareness and safe feeding practices
- Children will be seated in low chairs during all meals and snacks
- Distractions (toys and screens) will not be used during eating

Where meals are provided by the school:

- We follow a balanced, nutritious menu aligned with dietary guidelines
- Our kitchen (if applicable) is allergy-aware and follows strict hygiene protocols

Drinks

- Children have access to water throughout the day.
- Children should have a water bottle, clearly labelled with fresh water each day. In the event that they attend nursery without a water bottle a re-usable cup will be provided for the day.
- Please do not send in fizzy drinks, energy drinks, milkshakes or juice/squash in their water bottle. Children will be offered water throughout each session alongside cows milk during snack time.

Celebrations and Special Events

- Consider class book rather than individual sweets and cakes.

