

3. Food safety and nutrition policy

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Food safety and nutrition overview

The aim of this policy is to ensure that Lechlade Little Learners is suitable, clean and a safe place for children to be cared for where they can grow and learn. We meet all statutory requirements for food safety and fulfil the criteria for meeting the relevant Early Years Foundation Stage safeguarding and welfare requirements.

Objectives

- We recognise that we have a corporate responsibility and duty of care for those who work in and receive a service from Lechlade Little Learners, but individual employees and service users also have responsibility for ensuring their own safety as well as that of others. Risk assessment is the key means through which this is achieved.
- Procedure 01.3 Kitchen is followed for general hygiene and safety in food preparation areas.
- We provide nutritionally sound meals and snacks which promote health and reduce the risk of obesity and heart disease that may begin in childhood.
- We ensure that children are supervised at mealtimes and that children are within sight and hearing of a member of staff at all times **and where possible staff are sat facing children when eating to ensure they are eating in a way that prevents choking and so they can prevent food sharing and be aware of any unexpected allergic reactions.**
- We follow the main advice on dietary guidelines and the legal requirements for identifying food allergens when planning menus based on the four food groups:
 - meat, fish, and protein alternatives
 - milk and dairy products
 - cereals and grains
 - fresh fruit and vegetables.
- Following dietary guidelines to promote health also means taking account of guidelines to reduce risk of disease caused by unhealthy eating.
- Parents/ carers share information about their children's particular dietary needs and allergies with staff when they enrol their children and on an on-going basis with their key person. This information is shared with all staff who are involved in the care of the child.
- **Lechlade Little Learners ensures that all staff are aware of the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis and the differences between allergies and intolerances which may develop at any time.**
- Foods provided by the setting for children have any allergenic ingredients identified on the menus.
- Care is taken to ensure that children with food allergies and intolerances do not have contact with food products that they are allergic to.
- We notify Ofsted of any food poisoning affecting two or more children in our care as soon as possible and at least within 14 days.
- Risk assessments are conducted for each individual child who has a food allergy or specific dietary requirement.

- If a child chokes at mealtime and intervention is given. We record details of the incident and ensure that parents/carers are informed.

Legal references

Regulation (EC) 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the hygiene of foodstuffs.

Food Information Regulations 2014

The Childcare Act 2006

Further guidance

[Safer Food Better Business for Caterers](#) (Food Standards Agency)

[Paediatric Allergy Action Plans - BSACI](#)

[Food allergy - NHS](#)

[Anaphylaxis - NHS](#)

[Weaning - Start for Life - NHS](#)

[Help for early years providers : Food safety](#)

[Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance \(2025\)](#)

[Allergy action plan](#)

Health and safety policies and procedures

1. Food preparation, storage and purchase

General

- All staff have up to date certificated training on food safety.
- The setting manager is responsible for ensuring that the requirements in Safer Food Better Business are implemented.
- All staff responsible for preparing food have undertaken the Food Allergy Online Training CPD module.
- The setting manager is responsible for overseeing the work of all food handlers to ensure hygiene and allergy procedures are complied with.
- The setting manager has responsibility for conducting risk assessment based on the 'Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point' method set out in Safer Food Better Business.
- All dietary requirement information is located in the snack cupboard and shown on the children's place markers.
- Staff carry out and record daily opening/ closing checks, four weekly reviews and dated records of deep cleaning.
- The setting manager is responsible for informing the trustees/ directors who then reports to Ofsted of any food poisoning affecting two or more children looked after on the premises. Notification must be made as soon as possible and within 14 days of the incident.

Purchasing and storing food

- Food is purchased from reputable suppliers.
- Pre-packed food (any food or ingredient that is made by one business and sold by another such as a retailer or caterer) is checked for allergen ingredients and this information is communicated to parents alongside menu information.
- If food that is not pre-packed (described as 'loose food'), such as sandwiches bought from a bakery is served, then allergen information will have been provided by the retailer, this information must then be shared in the same way with parents.

- Parents/ carers are requested not to bring food that contains nuts. Staff check packets to make sure they do not contain nuts or nut products.
- Bulk buy is avoided where food may go out of date before use.
- All opened dried food stuffs are stored in airtight containers.
- Dried packaged food is not decanted from packaging into large bins or containers as this prevents monitoring of sell by/ use by dates and allergen information.
- Food is regularly checked for sell by/ use by dates and any expired items are discarded.
- Bottles and jars are cleaned before returning to the cupboards.
- 'Squeezy' plastic bottles are not used for sauces.
- Items are not stored on the floor; floors are kept clear so they can be easily swept.
- Perishable foods such as dairy produce, meat and fish are to be used the next/ same day. Soft fruit and easily perishable vegetables are kept in the fridge at 1- 5 Celsius.
- Packaged frozen food should be used by, the use by dates.
- A fridge thermometer should be in place. The recommended temperature for the fridge is 3 degrees Celsius. Temperatures must be recorded daily to ensure correct temperatures are being maintained.
- Fruit and vegetables stored in the fridge are washed thoroughly before refrigeration to reduce risk of pests and E. coli contamination.
- Items in fridges must be regularly checked to ensure they are not past use by dates.

Preparation of food

- Food handlers must check the content of food/ packets to ensure they do not contain allergens.
- Food allergens must be identified on the menus and displayed for parents.
- Food handlers wash hands and cover any cuts or abrasions before handling food.
- Separate boards and knives are used for chopping food, usually colour coded.
- Raw and cooked foods are prepared separately.
- Food left out is covered, for example when cooling down.
- Any children's food that is reheated in the microwaves must reach a temperature of 75 degrees celsius.
- Microwaved food is left to stand for a few minutes before serving.
- A food probe is used to check temperature of food, including where heated in a microwave; it is checked in several places to avoid hot spots.
- Food prepared for children with dietary needs and preferences is clearly labelled and every effort is made to prevent cross-contamination.

Serving Food

- There is a named person who is responsible for ensuring that the food being provided meets all the requirements for each child.
- Staff risk assess the likelihood of children with dietary restrictions accessing the food of other children and must take appropriate action to prevent this from happening, for example:
 - check the list of children's dietary requirements displayed in the food preparation area
 - Red bowls or plates used
 - Place cards
 - other methods as agreed by the setting manager
- Children with allergies/ food preferences are not made to feel 'singled out' by the methods used to manage their allergy/ food preference.

- Food served to children with identified allergies is checked by the person preparing the snack to ensure that the food does not contain any of the allergens for that child.
- Tables are cleaned before and after, with anti bacterial spray.
- Members of staff serving food wash their hands and cover any cuts with a blue plaster.

E.coli prevention

Staff who are preparing and handling food, especially food that is not pre-prepared for consumption e.g. fruit and vegetables grown on the premises, must be aware of the potential spread of E.coli and must clean and store food in accordance with the E.coli 0157 guidance.

2. Food for play and cooking activities

Some parents/ carers and staff may have strong views about food being used for play. It is important to be sensitive to these issues. For example, children who are Muslim, Jewish, Rastafarian, or vegetarian, should not be given any food to play with that contains animal products (Gelatine). Parents/ carers' views should be sought on this. In some cases, it is not appropriate to use food for play, particularly in times of austerity.

- Food for play may include dough, corn flour, pasta, rice, food colourings/ flavourings.
- Jelly cubes are not used for play.
- Food for play is risk assessed against the 14 allergens and is included in the written risk assessment undertaken for children with specific allergies.
- Staff are constantly alert to the potential hazards of food play, in particular choking hazards and signs of previously undetected allergies.
- Pulses are not recommended as they can be poisonous when raw or may choke.
- Dried food that is used for play should be kept away from food used for cooking.
- Foods that are cooked and used for play, such as dough, have a limited shelf life.
- Cornflour is always mixed with water before being given for play.
- Utensils used for play food are washed thoroughly after use.

Children's cooking activities

- Before undertaking any cooking activity with children, members of staff should check for allergies and intolerances by checking children's records.
- Children are taught basic hygiene skills such as the need to wash hands thoroughly before handling food, and again after going to the toilet, blowing their nose or coughing.
- The area to be used for cooking is cleaned before and after the activity.
- Utensils provided are for children to use only when cooking, including chopping/ rolling boards, bowls, wooden spoons, jugs, and are stored in the kitchen.
- Members of staff encourage children to handle food in a hygienic manner.
- Food ready for cooking or cooling is not left uncovered.
- Cooked food to go home is put in a paper food bag and refrigerated until home time.
- Food play activities are suspended during outbreaks of illness.

3. Meeting dietary requirements

Snack and mealtimes are an important part of our day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating. We aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs and preferences.

- Staff discuss and record children's dietary needs, allergies and any ethnic or cultural food preferences with their parents/ carers. A child's special dietary requirements are recorded on registration to the setting and information is shared with all staff. This continues as an ongoing dialogue with all parents throughout their time at preschool.
- If a child has a known food allergy, procedure 04.4 Allergies and food intolerance is followed.
- Parents record information about their child's dietary needs in the individual child's registration form; parents/ carers sign the form to signify that it is correct.
- Up-to-date information about individual children's dietary needs is displayed so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed.
- Staff ensure that children receive only food and drink that is consistent with their dietary needs and cultural or ethnic preferences, as well as their parents/ carer's wishes. At each mealtime, a member of staff is responsible for checking that the food provided meets the dietary requirements for each child.
- Through on-going discussion with parents/ carers and research by staff, staff obtain information about the dietary rules of religious groups to which children and their parents belong to, and of vegetarians and vegans, as well as food allergies. Staff take account of this information when providing food and drink.
- All staff show sensitivity in providing for children's diets, allergies and cultural or ethnic food preferences. A child's diet or allergy is never used as a label for the child, they are not made to feel 'singled out' because of their diet, allergy or cultural/ ethnic food preferences.
- All children are to bring their own water bottle filled at the start of the session. If the child finishes their drink it will be topped up with fresh drinking water.
- Meal and snack times are organised as social occasions.

Fussy/ faddy eating

- Children who are showing signs of 'strong food preferences, or aversions to food ' are not forced to eat anything they do not want to.
- Staff recognise the signs that a child has had enough and remove uneaten food without comment.
- Children are not made to stay at the table after others have left if they refuse to eat certain items of food.
- Staff work in partnership with parents/ carers to support them with children who are showing signs of 'food preference or aversion' and sign post them to further advice, for example, How to Manage Simple Faddy Eating in Toddlers (Infant & Toddler Forum)