

Written by: *Anawku Abeyasekera* Date: *22/11/23*

The statutory framework in England is the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The latest version of the framework is here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

The requirements of the EYFS in relation to healthy eating state:

- **Food quality:** where children are provided with meals, snacks and drinks, they must be healthy, balanced and nutritious.
- **Supervision:** providers must ensure that children are adequately supervised, including whilst eating.
- **Dietary requirements:** before a child is admitted to the setting the provider must also obtain information about any special dietary requirements, preferences and food allergies that the child has, and any special health requirements. Providers must record and act on information from parents and carers about a child's dietary needs.
- **Water:** fresh drinking water must be available and accessible to children at all times.
- **Kitchen:** there must be an area which is adequately equipped to provide healthy meals, snacks and drinks for children as necessary. There must be suitable facilities for the hygienic preparation of food for children, if necessary, including suitable sterilisation equipment for babies' food.
- **Food handling:** providers must be confident that those responsible for preparing and handling food are competent to do so. In group provision, all staff involved in preparing and handling food must receive training in food hygiene.
- **Menu planning:** section 4 of 'Example menus for early years settings in England' (see footnote) includes guidance on menu planning, food safety, managing food allergies and reading food labels, which staff preparing food will find helpful in ensuring that children are kept safe. This links to a footnote which states: For example menus and guidance see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/example-menus-for-early-years-settings-in-england>.
- **Food poisoning:** registered providers must notify Ofsted or the childminder agency with which they are registered of any food poisoning affecting two or more children cared for on the premises. Notification must be made as soon as is reasonably practicable, but in any event within 14 days of the incident. A registered provider, who, without reasonable excuse, fails to comply with this requirement, commits an offence.
- **Curriculum:** the educational programme for personal, social and emotional development states: Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently.

Healthy eating policy statement

I take pride in my healthy food and drink provision. Mealtimes are an important time of the day and we all sit together to eat. Children are supervised constantly when eating.

Healthy eating procedures

Food quality: I am committed to offering children healthy, nutritious food which meets their individual dietary requirements as advised by their parents. All food is freshly prepared, using best quality ingredients where possible and presented well. Portion sizes are realistic and children are never asked to clear plates as I am aware of the risks of over-eating.

On special occasions food might be used as part of a festival, birthday or celebration and I sometimes offer children food which might not be considered healthy such as cakes for a birthday party. If parents have a concern about this they should let me know.

Supervision: children are fully supervised when eating and sit together with staff at a dining table.

Dietary requirements: as part of induction, I ask parents about their child's dietary needs. I consider likes, dislikes, allergies, intolerances, religious and cultural needs when planning menus. I keep this information regularly updated. If I am told that children need food at times other than my usual mealtimes or different from my usual menu items to accommodate medical needs, I will make arrangements to support them.

Water: fresh drinking water is provided in age-appropriate cups on a tray which is accessible for all the children; outside water is provided in a 'help yourself' dispenser and the children use open cups or sports bottles depending on preference.

Kitchen: the kitchen is suitable for food preparation and cleaning is robust. I am registered with the local authority as a food provider. I use the guidance 'Safer Food Better Business for Childminders' from the Food Standards Agency. I welcome inspection by a food safety officer or complete a questionnaire if requested. I have facilities for sterilising baby bottles and equipment.

Food handling: I update food hygiene training regularly.

Menu planning: I plan menus with parents and children. I am aware of the EU requirement to be able to inform parents, if asked, about any of the 14 most common allergens in their child's food.

Food poisoning: I am aware of the requirements under the Public Health (Infection Diseases) Regulations 1988 regarding food poisoning and the requirement to inform Ofsted, acting on advice given by the Health Protection Agency. I retain food receipts for the recommended 3 months period.

Curriculum: I teach children about healthy eating and drinking as part of the daily routine. Children help to buy, prepare and cook food and enjoy helping in the kitchen. Risk assessments help to keep children safe in the kitchen and when they are cooking.

Further healthy eating considerations

Parents supplying food: when parents provide food, it is stored appropriately and set out on a plate for the child. Parents are provided with healthy eating and choking guidance.

Animals, including any pets (where appropriate), are kept away from food preparation areas at all times; if animals access the kitchen, work surfaces and utensils will be thoroughly cleaned before food preparation.

Baby changing facilities are not near food preparation areas to prevent cross contamination.

Laundry facilities are not used at the same time as food is being prepared and dirty laundry is not stored on food preparation surfaces.

On outings: food hygiene certificates are checked if eating in a café; food is stored in cool bags if transported, for example, to eat at a picnic.

To prevent the spread of infection, following latest NHS and government guidance:

- Food, drinks, plates, cutlery and cups are not shared between children.
- When children make food, they work in their own space and are reminded not to put their fingers in their mouth when cooking.
- Hand washing routines are robust and hand contact points are regularly sterilised.

Extra precautions, guided by the UK Health Protection Agency (formerly Public Health England), are taken to keep children as safe as reasonably practicable when preparing food, eating or drinking in the setting.

Note: add training certificates, qualifications and course details to the policy if relevant.

If you have any questions, please ask.

Signed:



Review date 22/11/24

Policy updates

Updated 08.2021: wording reviewed and adapted where relevant to comply with the changes to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

Updated 08.2023 – general wording check to ensure policy is current and valid.