

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

The EYFS is the statutory framework in England. The latest version is here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

The EYFS 2025

The requirements of the EYFS 2025 (statutory from 1st September 2025) will state, in a new section named 'food and drink facilities':

- **Paediatric first aid:** whilst children are eating there should always be a member of staff in the room with a valid paediatric first aid certificate.
 - **Dietary needs:** before a child is admitted to the setting the Childminder must obtain information about any special dietary requirements, preferences, food allergies and intolerances that the child has, and any special health requirements. This information must be shared by the childminder with all staff involved in the preparing and handling of food. At each mealtime and snack time childminders must be clear about who is responsible for checking that the food being provided meets all the requirements for each child.
 - **Allergies:** childminders must have ongoing discussions with parents and/or carers and, where appropriate, health professionals to develop allergy action plans for managing any known allergies and intolerances. This information must be kept up to date by the childminder and shared with all staff. Childminders may find it helpful to refer to the BSACI allergy action [plan](https://www.bsaci.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/BSACIAllergyActionPlan2018NoAAI2981-2.pdf) – <https://www.bsaci.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/BSACIAllergyActionPlan2018NoAAI2981-2.pdf>
- Childminders must ensure that all staff are aware of the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis, the differences between allergies and intolerances and that children can develop allergies at any time, especially during the introduction of solid foods which is sometimes called complementary feeding or weaning. Childminders may find it useful to refer to the NHS advice on food allergies – <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/food-allergy/> and treatment of anaphylaxis -

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/anaphylaxis/>

- **Weaning:** childminders must have ongoing discussions with parents and/or carers about the stage their child is at in regard to introducing solid foods, including to understand the textures the child is familiar with. Assumptions must not be made based on age. Childminders must prepare food in a suitable way for each child's individual developmental needs, working with parents and/or carers to help children move on to the next stage at a pace right for the child. The NHS has some advice childminders may find useful to refer to – <https://www.nhs.uk/start-for-life/baby/weaning/>

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- **Choking:** childminders must prepare food in a way to prevent choking. This guidance on food safety for young children – <https://help-for-early-years-providers.education.gov.uk/safeguarding-and-welfare/food-safety> includes advice on food and drink to avoid, how to reduce the risk of choking and links to other useful resources for early years settings.
- Babies and young children should be seated safely in a highchair or appropriately sized low chair while eating. Where possible there should be a designated eating space where distractions are minimised.
- Children must always be within sight and hearing of a member of staff whilst eating. Choking can be completely silent therefore it is important for childminders to be alert to when a child may be starting to choke. Where possible, childminders should sit facing children whilst they eat so they can make sure children are eating in a way to prevent choking and so they can prevent food sharing and be aware of any unexpected allergic reactions.
- When a child experiences a choking incident that requires intervention, providers should record details of where and how the child choked and parents and/or carers made aware. The records should be reviewed periodically to identify if there are trends or common features of incidents that could be addressed to reduce the risk of choking. Appropriate action should be taken to address any identified concerns.

The Childcare Register: the Childcare Register does not include information relating to safer eating.

Guidance to support practice

Childcare.co.uk provides members with the following guidance:

- An EYFS 2025 action plan information guide.

- Paediatric first aid training discount with Tigerlily - <https://www.childcare.co.uk/firstaid>
- All about me parent information form.
- Allergy action plans.
- Weaning plans.
- Incident record forms.
- Health and safety information guides including allergies, choking and weaning.
- Risk assessment guidance.
- Webinars to cover the latest EYFS requirements.

Documents and webinars can be searched for using the resource library link –

<https://www.childcare.co.uk/childminderpaperwork> ☐



the easy way to find local childcare

Safer eating policy

Written by: A. Abeyesekera

Date: 19/2/25

The statutory framework for children under the age of 5 years in England is the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). I must also comply with the Childcare Register requirements for children over the age of 5.

Paediatric first aid: the childminder or assistant, with a valid paediatric first aid certificate will be in the room, sitting with children, when they are eating. Paediatric first aid training is updated every 3 years.

Dietary requirements: I ask parents to provide me with information about their child's dietary requirements including preferences, food allergies and intolerances and any special health requirements. This will be recorded as part of the 'All about me' information before the child starts in the setting and I will keep the information updated regularly. At each meal and snack time I will take responsibility for ensuring each child has the correct food and drink and sit with them to ensure they do not share or swap.

If relevant, this information will be shared with any assistants involved in the preparing and handling of food

Allergies: paediatric first aid training includes allergy information and how to treat anaphylaxis. If a child has an allergic reaction and I do not have an auto injector, I will follow my emergency procedures and ring

999 for an ambulance – and say ‘anaphylaxis’ to the 999 operators.
I have read the NHS food intolerance, allergies and anaphylaxis advice.
If a child has a known allergy, I will help parents to complete an Allergy
Action Plan and keep the information updated. I will ensure children are
always within sight and hearing while eating and sit facing the children,
to prevent food sharing and be aware of any unexpected allergic
reactions. If I have to leave the table or children get up, I will remove
food.
If necessary, I will record incidents of allergic reactions and share with parents.

Weaning: I will work closely with parents during the weaning process.
I will help parents to complete a ‘Weaning action plan’ and provide
them with useful websites, for example, the safer food page from the
DfE ‘Help for early years providers’ website, ‘Portion sizes for toddlers’
from the Infant and Toddler Forum and NHS guidance on weaning.
Food provided for weaning babies will take account of the stage the
child is at and I will work with parents to understand the textures they
are eating at home.

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Choking: I will risk assess and take steps to minimise the risk of
choking – this means, for example, cutting up circular food, using a
choking tube (or similar) to check sizes of resources, not offering risky
food and knowing how to support children if they are gagging or
choking on food.

Children are provided with a highchair or appropriately sized low chair
when they are eating. I aim to ensure the area where children eat are
free from distractions. I keep children separate from each other when
they are eating to prevent food sharing, which can lead to allergic
reactions.

Record keeping: as relevant, will record incidents of choking and share the records with parents. I will
review choking incident records regularly to identify trends that can be addressed to reduce the risk of
choking.

If you have any questions, please ask. Thank you.

Signed:

Review date:

19/2/26

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Updates

01.2025 – policy written to comply with the revised EYFS 2025.