



03. Food Safety and Nutrition Policy 2025-26

Alongside associated procedures this policy was adopted by Little Fishes on 09/02/23 and reviewed on 1/2/24 & 7/2/24 & 3/9/25.

The following policies also contain associated information:

01. Health and Safety Policy (specifically sections 01.03 Health and Safety procedures in the kitchen and Appendix 2: Kitchen cleaning procedures)

04. Health policy: (specifically 04.04:Procedures for allergies and food intolerances)

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03. Food Safety and Nutrition Policy

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Aims

It is the policy of Little Fishes, that we meet all statutory requirements for food safety and fulfil the criteria for meeting the relevant Early Years Foundation Stage Safeguarding and Welfare requirements.

Little Fishes is a suitable, clean, safe place for children to be cared for, where they can grow and learn.

Little Fishes regards snack times and lunch times as an important part of the setting's day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults, which helps children learn about healthy eating. At snack times we aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs and preferences, accounting for allergies too.

In our setting we provide and/or serve food for children on the following basis:

- Snacks (Provide and serve)
- Packed lunches (Serve child's own packed lunch)

We maintain the highest possible food hygiene standards with regards to purchase, storage, preparation and serving of food. We are a registered food provider with the local authority Environmental Health Department.

Objectives

- To recognise that we have a corporate responsibility and duty of care for those who work in and receive a service from our provision, 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.
- To implement and follow: Procedure 01.3 Health and safety procedures in the kitchen includes the kitchen cleaning procedure for general hygiene and safety in food preparation areas.
- To provide nutritionally sound snacks and encourage parents/carers to provide healthy packed lunches, which promote health and reduce the risk of obesity and heart disease that may begin in childhood.
- To follow the main advice on dietary guidelines to promote health and the legal requirements for identifying food allergens when **planning snack menus** based on the four food groups:
 - milk and dairy products
 - cereals and grains
 - fresh fruit and vegetables.

- protein

- We ensure that children are supervised at mealtimes and that children are within sight and hearing of a member of staff. Staff, where possible, sit facing children whilst they eat so they can:
 - make sure children are eating in a way to prevent choking
 - prevent food sharing
 - be aware of any unexpected allergic reactions
- Staff are alert to the possibility of choking in young children and understand processes to reduce the risk of this occurring.. All staff serving food understand how to use the Life Vac anti choking device.
- To have all staff undertake allergen training, within their food hygiene certificate and managers and food hygiene lead undertake specific allergen training
- To obtain from parents any information about their children's special dietary needs preferences, food allergies and intolerances that the child has, and any special health requirements with staff before the child is admitted to the setting, when they register/ enrol their children and on an on-going basis with their key person.
- This information must be shared by the managers with all staff involved in the preparing and handling of food and all staff who are involved in the care of the child.
- Information regarding children with allergies is displayed near areas children are eating.
- At each mealtime and snack time managers and staff must be clear about who is responsible for checking that the food being provided meets all the requirements for each child.
- Parents and managers discuss and complete an individual 04.4a LF Ongoing Medical Condition or Allergy Risk Assessment Form, for managing any known allergies or intolerances as part of the registration process. This information must be kept up to date by the managers and shared with all the staff. The child's on-going needs are discussed by their key person. The risk assessment sheets are kept in the medical/allergies section of the register.
- 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 (weaning) in young children.
- Foods provided by the setting for children are written on the daily information board to inform parents.
- Foods containing any allergenic ingredients are identified on the allergens checklist on the parents information board. Care is taken to ensure that children with food allergies do not have contact with food products that they are allergic to.
- When a child experiences a choking incident that requires intervention, practioners should record details of where and how the child choked 06.01b Safeguarding Expression of Concern Form on and parents and/or carers made aware.
- Managers review the records 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.
- We take into account every child's individual development needs and work in partnership with parents/carers to help children with regards to weaning, if applicable.

03.01 Procedure: Food preparation, storage and purchase

General

- The managers and food safety lead refer to Eat Better, Start Better (Action for Children 2017) which contains guidance on menu planning, food safety, managing food allergies and reading food labels
- The **managers**, together with the Food Safety Lead are responsible for overseeing the work of all staff to ensure hygiene and allergy procedures are complied with.
- The managers and food lead have completed the CPD module: <http://allergytraining.food.gov.uk/>.
- The manager has responsibility for conducting risk assessments based on the method set out in Safer Food Better Business. The basis of this is risk assessment is applied to purchase, storage, preparation and serving of food to prevent growth of bacteria and food contamination.
- **The managers ensure the safety checks are completed and the Daily Food Safety folder is kept updated.**
- All staff involved in food handling and preparation, have up to date, Level 2 certificated training on food safety and complete a Health and Safety course which includes training on handling allergens.
- Staff carry out and record daily opening/closing checks, daily cleaning, and records of deep cleaning to ensure standards are consistently met.
- There is a procedure 04.04 & 03.04 for managing children's allergies and food intolerances.
- There is a nut-free Policy at Little Fishes. No nuts or nut products are used in the setting. Parents are informed of this policy and reminded regularly via the welcome pack at induction, email and newsletters to avoid bringing in nut products.
- All children have access to fresh drinking water.

Reporting of food poisoning

- Food poisoning can occur for a number of reasons; not all cases of sickness or diarrhoea are a result of food poisoning and not all cases of sickness or diarrhoea are reportable.
- Where children and/or adults have been diagnosed by a GP or hospital doctor to be suffering from food poisoning and where it seems possible that the source of the outbreak is within the setting, the setting manager will contact the Environmental Health Department and the Health Protection Agency, to report the outbreak and will comply with any investigation.
- The setting manager is responsible for informing the vicar and trustees and then reports to Ofsted 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.

Menu Planning and nutrition

Snacks

- We supply nutritious food for all snacks, aiming for the lowest amount of salt, sugar and fat, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- A menu is prepared half termly to encourage healthy eating, a balanced diet, trying new foodstuffs and seasonal fruit and veg.

Packed lunches

- Where children have packed lunches, staff promote healthy eating, ensuring that parents/carers are given advice and information about what is appropriate content for a child's lunch box.

Purchasing and storing food

Snacks

- Food is purchased from reputable suppliers.
- Snack foods, included that stored in the fridge, are stored at the correct temperatures (see below) and checked that they are in-date and not subject to contamination by pests, rodents or mould.
- *Pre-packed food* (any food or ingredient that is made by one business and sold by another) is checked for allergen ingredients and this information is communicated to parents alongside snack information via the daily information board. For example, breadsticks bought at a supermarket or a packet of pancakes or the ingredients for a recipe prepared on site.
- 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.
- Staff check packets to make sure food items purchased 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 or airtight bags.
- Items are not stored on the floor; floors are kept clear so they can be easily swept.
- Soft fruit and easily perishable food and vegetables are kept in the fridge at between 1 to 5 Celsius.
- Frozen food is not used. In the summer ice lollies may be purchased but these will be stored as instructions.
- Fridge thermometers should be in place. Recommended temperatures for fridge is 3 degrees Celsius, temperatures must be checked and recorded daily to ensure correct temperatures are being maintained.
- Fridge must be cleaned weekly
- Freezers are defrosted termly or according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Loose fruit and vegetables stored in the fridge are washed thoroughly before refrigeration, to reduce risk of pests and E.coli contamination.
- Health and safety risk assessments are in place to reduce the risk of accidents and dangerous occurrences.
- Knives are stored safely in a child locked drawer and handled safely
- Any new snacks are checked for allergens and this is recorded on the 03.01b Allergen chart.

Staff's own food or drink

- This should be kept in separate designated area of the fridge (currently the top shelf).

Packed lunches

- Packed lunches provided by parents/carers are stored in a cool, place; food is served to children within 4 hours of preparation at home. Parents/carers are also advised to take measures to ensure children's lunch box contents remain cool i.e. ice packs, as the setting may not have facilities for refrigerated storage.

Preparation of food

A kitchen risk assessment covers the use of the kitchen.

For food preparation surfaces and utensils

- All food preparation surfaces are clean and non-porous.
- Food preparation areas are cleaned before and after use.
- To keep kitchen surfaces free from grime, dirt and bacteria, a four-step cleaning procedure should be followed: Pre-clean, Sanitise, Rinse, Air dry.
- All utensils, crockery etc. are clean and stored appropriately.
- There are clearly marked separate facilities for hand washing and for washing up.
- Cleaning materials and other dangerous materials are stored out of children's reach.
- Children do not have access to the kitchen.

Maintaining personal hygiene whilst handling food

- Food handlers wash hands thoroughly with hot water and soap, prior to food preparation, drying them with paper towels.
- Little Fishes has a supply of single use /disposable gloves and cloth aprons solely for food handling purposes. The person responsible for preparing food uses a new apron and a new pair of gloves (if required to cover any cuts or abrasions) prior to handling any food. Once utilised, these items are disposed of appropriately.
- Cloth aprons are changed/ washed daily, or more frequently if required.
- Good hand hygiene is observed throughout the setting.

Food preparation for specific dietary needs/preferences

- **Staff understand and prepare food in a way to prevent choking following the advise on [Help for early years providers : Food safety](#)**
- We take care not to provide food containing nut or nut products and are especially vigilant where we have a child who has a known allergy to nuts.
- Food handlers must check the content of food/packets to ensure they know which allergens are in the food.
- Food allergens must be identified on the menus and displayed for parents on the menu board.
- Food prepared for children with dietary needs and preferences is clearly labelled and every effort is made to prevent cross-contamination.

- Raw eggs are not to be given in any form, such as mousse or mayonnaise. If given to children, eggs are fully cooked.
- Food prepared and cooked for different religious dietary needs and preferences, such as Halal or Kosher meat would be cooked in separate pans and served separately.
- Food cooked for vegetarians must ensure it does not come into contact with meat or fish or products.
- 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.
- Fresh drinking water is available throughout the day, each child has own water bottle. Staff ensure children know how to access their water at any time during the day.

Food handling and preparation

- Separate boards and knives are used for chopping food, usually colour coded.
- All loose vegetables and fruit are washed and prepared freshly each day.
- Food left out is covered, for example when cooling down.
- Waste food is disposed of daily in the appropriate bin.
- Broken glass is safely wrapped and disposed of in the bin.
- Food is prepared in lines with guidance to prevent choking e.g. grapes are cut in half.

Serving Snacks (Also see 09.07 Prime times; Snack times)

- There is a named person each day who is responsible for checking that the snacks being provided meets all the requirements for each child.
- Children are taught the importance of hand washing and simple hygiene rules. They wash their hands immediately prior to snack time. During an outbreak they will sanitise their hands once finished, before resuming play.
- Staff ensure children are supervised, in sight and hearing of staff, at all times during snack times. Staff preferably sit facing the children.
- Children sit in low chairs, or in a controlled designated area and eat in a way that reduces choking risk.
- Snack food is served on clean plates using tongs to handle the food items, helping to prevent cross-contamination.
- Food served to children with identified allergies is checked by the key person (or supervising adult) to ensure that the food (and its ingredients) does not contain any of the allergens for that child.
- Staff risk assess to eliminate cross contamination of known allergens
- Children with allergies/food preferences are not made to feel 'singled out' by the methods used to manage their allergy/food preference.
- Food is taken from the kitchen to the main room, through the kitchen hatch, where it is served.
- Tables are cleaned before and after use, with a suitable non-bleach product.

- Members of staff wash and dry their hands prior to serving any food, cover any cuts with a blue plaster/glove and continue to wear apron (See maintaining personal hygiene above).
- 03.01a A record of snacks and food served along with any allergens is written in the food safety file and displayed to parents on the daily whiteboard.

Serving Packed lunches (Also see 09.08 Prime Times: Lunch Times)

- Children are supervised, in sight and hearing of staff, **and where possible sit facing the children at all times**, during lunch times
- **The member of staff sitting with the children is responsible for checking the food provided meets the requirements of the child.** Food served to children with identified allergies is checked **by the supervising adult** to ensure that the meal (and its ingredients) does not contain any of the allergens for that child.
- Staff check packed lunches to ensure food (particularly grapes, tomatoes, large blueberries and cocktail sausages) has been prepared in line with our advice to parents to reduce choking. Notes are sent home to remind parents of this.
- **Children sit in low chairs and eat in a way that reduces choking risk.**
- Parents are informed to not provide food that contains nuts. Staff check packets to make sure they do not contain nuts or nut products.
- Tables are cleaned before and after use, with a suitable non-bleach product.
- 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 on the allergy poster or allergy information in the register
 - other methods, assessed against the needs and ability of the child, as agreed by the setting manager

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, available at:

www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/guidancenotes/hygguid/ecoliguide#.U7FCVGIOWdl

03.02 Procedure: Food for play and cooking activities

Some parents 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 who are vegetarian, should not be given any food to play with that contains animal products (Gelatine). Parents' views should be sought on this. In some cases, it is not appropriate to use food for play at all, particularly in times of austerity.

- Food for play may include dough, corn flour, jelly, pasta, rice, food colourings/flavourings.
- Food for play is risk assessed against the 14 allergens referred 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.
- The use of raw vegetables for printing is only used under strict supervision.
- 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.
- Cornflower and cooked pasta are discarded after an activity; high risk of bacteria forming.
- Utensils used for play food are washed thoroughly after use.
- Food play activities are suspended during outbreaks of illness.

Children's cooking activities

- There is a risk assessment to cover children's cooking activities.
- Children are supervised at all times during cooking activities.
- Children taking part in cooking activities do not have access to the kitchen.
- Children taking part in cooking activities do not have access to electrical equipment such as blenders etc.
- 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; a plastic tablecloth is used.
- Children should wear aprons that are used just for cooking.
- 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 if unattended.
- Cooked food to go home is to be wrapped or put in a paper food bag and refrigerated (if necessary) until home time.
- Cooking activities are suspended during outbreaks of illness.
- Where flour is used and then the food is cooked, staff must ensure that the activity is risk assessed, and children do not eat the uncooked flour or the mixture.

Playdough and raw (uncooked flour and cornflour)

- All flour including cornflour is raw until the point it is heated or cooked. Raw flour poses a risk of E. coli to young children and current advice is that it should not be used for play, or for uncooked playdough recipes.

- Uncooked flour **should not** be used for activities where children are exploring through touch or taste, or there is a likelihood they will put their fingers in their mouths.
- Only playdough or cornflour that has been cooked or made with precooked flour should be used.
- If a child or member of staff is allergic to any of the ingredients they must be replaced, and a safe alternative used.
- Staff have up to date and clearly displayed information regarding childrens allergies and intolerances.
- If a younger child or a child with sensory seeking behaviours are likely to put the playdough/ cornflour in their mouth, a safe alternative is provided.
- Children are always supervised when playing with playdough or cornflour.
- Children and staff wash their hands before and after the activity.

03.03 Procedure: Managing allergies and food intolerance (Duplicate Copy from 04.04)

- All staff at Little Fishes must be aware of the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis and the difference between allergies and food intolerances
- No nuts or nut products are used within the setting. Parents/carers are made aware, so that no nut or nut products are accidentally brought in, regular reminders are sent out. Any foods containing food allergens are identified on children's menus. And snack allergen record.
- To ensure the safety and well-being of all children with allergies or food intolerances, the following procedures and resources are in place:

Child Documentation and recording information

- Before a child begins at the setting, parents are asked to disclose any known allergies or food intolerances on the registration form.
- On going discussions must take place with parents/carers and where appropriate health professionals to develop allergy action plans for managing any known allergies and food intolerances. This information must be kept up to date on a child's registration form and shared with all staff.
- All children with food allergies or dietary needs are added to the *04.02b Medical Summary Form*, which is:
 - Updated as necessary.
 - Kept in the register.
 - Shared with all staff
- A visual list of children and staff allergies and intolerances is displayed:
 - On the information board in the main room.
 - In the register.
 - In the lunch administration box.
- The managers maintain a Food Safety folder
 - containing child information on Food Allergies and Dietary Needs
 - a list of all children with known food allergies, intolerances or dietary needs

- updated at least once a term (the personal/medical details about the allergy or dietary needs remain in the child's file along with a copy of the risk assessment).
- This is displayed for all staff and the risk assessment shared.
- record of food menus and snacks served along with any allergens
- a copy of the FSA booklet 'Allergen information for pre-packed and loose foods' available at <https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/allergen-information-for-pre-packed-and-loose-foods>
- a copy of the Food Allergy Online Training CPD certificate for the cook and each member of staff that has undertaken the training
- If a child has a **mild allergy or food intolerance**, the *04.4a Little Fishes Ongoing Medical Condition or Allergy Risk Assessment Form* is completed. This includes:
 - The identified allergen (e.g. nuts, eggs, bee stings, cats).
 - The level of risk based on potential contact with the allergen.
 - Control and prevention measures.
 - Measures for ongoing review.
- If a child has a **severe allergy or food intolerance**, the *04.2c Health Care Plan Form* must be completed. This includes:
 - Details of the reaction (e.g. anaphylaxis, rash, swelling, breathing issues).
 - Management strategies for allergic reactions.
 - Medication required (e.g. Epipen) and administration method.
 - Parents are required to demonstrate to staff how to administer any medication in case of an allergic reaction.
- A copy of the active risk assessment or health care plan is also kept in the register and shared with all staff.
- Archived to the child's individual development file when no longer active.
- All children with food allergies or dietary needs are added to the *04.02b Medical Summary Form*, which is:
 - Updated as necessary.
 - Kept in the register.
 - Shared with all staff
- These records are maintained in accordance with policy *07 GDPR and Record Keeping Policy*.

Communication and recording of food provided

- Snacks served are:
 - Recorded in the *food safety file (03.01a)*.
 - Displayed to parents on the daily whiteboard with allergen information.
 - An *allergen chart (03.01b)* showing allergens present in snack foods is displayed on the parent noticeboard.

Training and Guidance

- The manager, deputy, and food lead practitioner complete the Food Allergy Online Training CPD module, available at allergytraining.food.gov.uk or Allergy awareness in Y Level 2 training with EYA.

- A copy of each staff member's training certificate is stored in their staff certification file.
- All staff handling food are required to read the FSA booklet "Allergen information for loose foods", at induction, available at:
[food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/loosefoodsleaflet.pdf](https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/loosefoodsleaflet.pdf).
- A copy is also stored in the Food Safety File.
- Staff are encouraged to refer to:
- NHS guidance on food allergies: www.nhs.uk/conditions/food-allergy
- NHS guidance on anaphylaxis: www.nhs.uk/conditions/anaphylaxis
- BSACI allergy action plan

03.04 Food at celebrations

On rare occasions, food may be served as part of special celebrations, such as Christmas or a leavers' party. When selecting food for these events, staff will prioritise offering healthy options first and will ensure that any treats provided are those with the lowest possible levels of salt, sugar, fat, and additives.

Fizzy drinks and artificially coloured sweets will not be served.

All standard procedures related to food—including purchasing, preparation, serving, allergy awareness, and choking risk management—will continue to be strictly followed.

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

- Eat Better, Start Better (Action for Children 207)
www.foundationyears.org.uk/eat-better-start-better/
- Safe Food Better Business
www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/safer-food-better-business-sfbb
- Safer Food Better Business for Caterers (Food Standards Agency)
<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/safer-food-better-business-for-caterers>
- Allergen information for loose foods (Food Standards Agency 2017)
www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/loosefoodsleaflet.pdf
- Campylobacter (Food Standards Agency)
www.food.gov.uk/news-updates/campaigns/campylobacter/fsw-2014
- [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](#)

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Name of Manager: Amber Delves
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