



Food and Nutrition Policy

At **Wings Nursery** we believe that mealtimes should be happy, social occasions for children and staff alike. We promote shared, enjoyable positive interactions at these times. These interactions also encourage children to try food that they might not try at home if they see their peers eating it.

We are committed to offering children healthy, nutritious and balanced meals and snacks which meet individual needs and requirements and contain a wide variety of foods.

A healthy, balanced diet is based on the 4 main food groups (fruit and vegetables; potatoes, bread, rice, pasta, and other starchy carbohydrates; dairy or dairy alternatives; and beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins). These provide essential nutrients for children to grow and develop.

We will ensure that:

- A balanced and healthy breakfast, and two daily snacks are provided for children attending a full day at the nursery
- All allergens are displayed alongside the menus to show the contents of each meal
- We provide nutritious food at all snack and mealtimes, avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar, salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings
- The setting will only offer fresh filtered water and Milk to drink. We will only offer a low sugar squash in exceptional circumstances.
- The setting does not provide cooked meals and children staying for lunch will need to provide a packed lunch. These will be kept cold in fridges until lunchtime.
- Individual dietary requirements are respected. We gather information from parents regarding their children's dietary needs, including any special dietary requirements, preferences and food allergies that a child has and any special health requirements, before a child starts or joins the nursery. Where appropriate, we will carry out a risk assessment in the case of allergies and work alongside parents to put into place an individual dietary plan for their child
- We give careful consideration to seating to avoid cross contamination of food from child to child where there are allergies present.
- Children will always be supervised by staff when eating. Staff will sit at the table with the children and ensure that food contained in lunches has been cut and prepared appropriately in a way to prevent choking.
- Staff show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. They do not use a child's diet or allergy as a label for the child, or make a child feel singled out because of her/his diet or allergy
- Staff set a good example and eat with the children and show good table manners. Meal and snack times are organised so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate in small groups. During meals and snack times children are encouraged to use their manners and say 'please' and 'thank you' and conversation is encouraged

- Staff use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink, and feeding themselves
- Staff support children to make healthy choices and understand the need for healthy eating
- We provide foods from the diet of each of the children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones. We also encourage families to share traditional recipes to help build understanding and respect of cultural and religious beliefs.
- Cultural differences in eating habits are respected
- Children not on special diets are encouraged to eat a small piece of everything.
- Children who refuse to eat at the mealtime are offered food later in the day
- Children are given time to eat at their own pace and not rushed
- Quantities offered take account of the ages of the children being catered for in line with recommended portion sizes for young children
- We promote positive attitudes to healthy eating through play opportunities, discussions and cooking within the setting. Cooking is a great experience for young children and helps to create a positive relationship with food. Lots of children have quite limited opportunities to cook or learn about food at home.
- The setting will offer suggestions to parents struggling with ideas for lunches to help ensure that they are nutritious and balanced. It is important that food provided from home aligns with the healthy options offered by the setting so that children receive consistent messages about nutrition.
- We will sometimes celebrate special occasions such as birthdays with the occasional treat of foods such as cake, sweets or biscuits. These will be given at mealtimes to prevent tooth decay and not spoil the child's appetite. Where we have frequent birthdays and celebrations, we consider other alternatives such as celebrating through fruit platters, or non-edible alternatives such as smiles and praise, stickers and badges, choosing a favourite story, becoming a special helper, playing a party game, dancing and/or singing their favourite song. Any food that is shared within the setting will be checked for potential allergens.
- All staff who prepare and handle food are competent to do so and receive training in food hygiene which is updated every three years
- In the very unlikely event of any food poisoning affecting two or more children on the premises, whether or not this may arise from food offered at the nursery, we will inform Ofsted as soon as reasonably practical and in all cases within 14 days. We will also inform the relevant health agencies and follow any advice given.
- The setting will not reheat food that has been brought in from home.

| This policy was adopted on | Signed on behalf of the nursery | Date for review |
|-----------------------------------|--|------------------------|
| <i>August 2025</i> | <i>P Smitherman</i> | <i>September 2026</i> |