



4 Food safety and nutrition policy

Alongside associated procedures in [4.1-4.6 Food safety and nutrition](#), this policy was adopted by Busy Fingers Preschool on **11 January 2023**.

Aim

Our setting is a suitable, clean, and 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 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.
- Procedure [2.3 Kitchen in our Health and Safety policy](#) is followed for general hygiene and safety in food preparation areas.
- We provide nutritionally sound snacks which promote health and reduce the risk of obesity and heart disease that may begin in childhood.
- Following dietary guidelines to promote health also means taking account of guidelines to reduce risk of disease caused by unhealthy eating.
- Parents share information about their children's particular dietary needs 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. This information is considered prior to any food activity or snack.
- Care is taken to ensure that children with food allergies do not have contact with food products that they are allergic to.

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)

4.1 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 available at <http://allergytraining.food.gov.uk/>.
- 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.
- The setting manager maintain a Food Allergy and Dietary Needs list with:
 - a list of all children with known food allergies 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). This is clearly displayed for all staff.
- A copy of 'Safer Food, Better Businesses for Childminders' is held in preschool for reference on allergens.
- The setting manager is responsible for informing Ofsted if 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.
- Parents 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.
- Soft fruit and easily perishable vegetables are kept in the fridge at 1- 5 Celsius.

Food safety and nutrition policy (Busy Fingers Pre-school)

- Packaged frozen food should be used by use by dates.
- Freezer containers should be labelled, dated and used within 1-3 months.
- Fridge and freezer thermometers should be in place. Recommended temperatures for fridge 37 degrees Fahrenheit (3 degrees Celsius), and freezers 0 degrees Fahrenheit (-18 degrees Celsius). Temperatures must be checked and recorded daily to ensure correct temperatures are being maintained.
- Freezers are defrosted every 3 months or according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Fruit and vegetables stored in the fridge are washed thoroughly before refrigeration to reduce risk of pests and E.coli contamination.
- Staff's own food or drink should be kept in separate designated area of the fridge.
- 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 handlers wash hands and cover any cuts or abrasions before handling food.
- All vegetables and fruit are washed before preparing.
- Food left out is covered, for example when cooling down.
- Potatoes and vegetables are peeled when needed, not in advance and left in water.
- Food cooked and prepared for children with specific dietary needs is cooked in separate pans and served separately.
- A separate toaster is kept and used for children with a wheat or gluten allergy.
- 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.

Serving Food

- 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
 - coloured plates
 - place mats
 - other methods as agreed by the setting manager

Food safety and nutrition policy (Busy Fingers Pre-school)

- 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 key person to ensure that the meal (and its ingredients) does not contain any of the allergens for that child.
- Tables are cleaned before and after, with soapy water or a suitable non-bleach product.
- 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, available at:

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

Further guidance

[Eat Better. Start Better \(Action for Children 2017\)](#)

www.foundationyears.org.uk/eat-better-start-better/

[Example Menus for Early Years Settings in England \(PHE 2017\)](#)

www.gov.uk/government/publications/example-menus-for-early-years-settings-in-england

[Safe Food Better Business](#)

www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/safer-food-better-business-sfbb

[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

4.2 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.

Food for play may include dough, corn flour, 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 children 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 given for play.
- Cornflower and cooked pasta are discarded after an activity; high risk of bacteria forming.
- 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; a plastic tablecloth is advised.
- 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.
- Cooked food to go home is put in a paper food bag and refrigerated until home time if necessary.
- Food play activities are suspended during outbreaks of illness.

4.3 Packed lunches

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

4.4 Meeting dietary requirements

Snack and mealtimes are an important part of the day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating.

- Staff discuss and record children's dietary needs, allergies and any ethnic or cultural food preferences with their parents.
- If a child has a known food allergy, procedure **5.4 Allergies and food intolerance in our Health policy** is followed.
- Staff record information about each child's dietary needs in the individual child's registration form; parents 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 parent's wishes.
- Through on-going discussion with parents and research reading by staff, staff obtain information about the dietary rules of the religious groups to which children and their parents belong, and of vegetarians and vegans, as well as about 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.
- Fresh drinking water is available throughout the day. Staff inform children how to obtain the drinking water and that they can ask for water at any time during the day.
- Meal and snack times are organised as social occasions.

Fussy/faddy eating

- Children who are showing signs of 'fussy or faddy eating' 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 to support them with children who are showing signs of 'faddy or fussy eating' and sign post them to further advice, for example, How to Manage Simple Faddy Eating in Toddlers (Infant & Toddler Forum)
<https://infantandtoddlerforum.org/health-and-childcare-professionals/factsheets/>