

Sheffield Hallam University Nursery

Food Safety Policy (including packed lunch, snack and baking)

At Sheffield Hallam University Nursery, food plays an important role in children's learning, wellbeing and enjoyment. We use a variety of foodstuffs for sensory play, bake with children as part of their learning experiences, and support families who provide food from home.

We are fully committed to maintaining the highest standards of food safety and hygiene. This includes the careful purchase, storage, preparation and serving of food, alongside strict adherence to food allergy guidance and relevant legislation.

Our aim is to ensure that all children are kept safe, healthy and happy while developing positive relationships with food.

Food Safety and Hygiene Standards

- The nursery is registered as a food provider with the Local Authority Environmental Health Department.
- Senior staff hold **Level 3 Food Hygiene** qualifications.
- All staff receive in-house training and complete annual refresher training in food safety and allergy awareness.

These measures ensure that food is handled safely and consistently across the setting.

Reporting of Food Poisoning

Food poisoning can occur for several reasons, and not all cases of sickness or diarrhoea are caused by contaminated food. To protect children and staff:

- We keep a log of all cases of sickness and diarrhoea during any outbreak.
- If a child or adult is diagnosed by a GP or hospital doctor with food poisoning, and it is suspected that the source may be within the nursery, the manager will contact the Environmental Health Department and fully cooperate with any investigation.

- Any confirmed cases of food poisoning affecting two or more children will be reported to Ofsted as soon as possible, and always within 14 days.
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Healthy Eating Statement

A balanced diet is essential for good health and development. We aim to support children's wellbeing by promoting healthy eating habits and positive attitudes towards food.

In line with the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework 2025**, we ensure that:

- Children's good health is actively promoted.
- Meals, snacks and drinks are healthy, balanced and nutritious.
- Foods high in sugar, salt, fat and artificial additives are avoided.
- Information about children's dietary needs, allergies and health requirements is gathered, recorded and acted upon.
- Allergy action plans are developed in partnership with parents and healthcare professionals.
- Fresh drinking water is always available.
- Safe eating practices are promoted, with at least one **Paediatric First Aid (PFA)** trained staff member present during mealtimes.
- A designated person checks meal safety for each child.
- Choking risks are minimised where food is prepared by the nursery.
- Children are closely supervised while eating and provided with appropriate seating.

(Please also refer to our **Healthy Eating Policy**.)

Provision of Food Within the Nursery

When food is prepared on site:

- Staff use colour-coded chopping boards to prevent cross-contamination.
 - Any cuts or wounds are covered with waterproof blue dressings.
 - Disposable blue aprons and gloves are worn during food preparation.
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Snacks

Parents are asked to provide:

Reviewed by: Esther Jones

Date: January 2026

- A **mid-morning** and **mid-afternoon** snack
- Snacks should be individually packed in a **named container or bag**, separate from the lunchbox (e.g. zip-lock bag or small container)

Suitable snack ideas include:

- Veggie sticks with hummus or dip
 - Crackers with cheese or butter
 - Hard-boiled eggs
 - Pitta bread or wraps with fillings
 - Breadsticks with dips
 - Cheese strings or Babybel
 - Yogurts
 - Fresh fruit
 - Rice cakes or oatcakes
 - Teacakes, cereal, bagels
 - Avocado, malt loaf, pancakes
 - A cool area or fridge is provided for snack storage.
 - Milk and water are offered at snack time, and children are encouraged to drink even if they do not wish to eat.
 - Oat or soya milk is provided for children with a cow's milk allergy.
 - Individual routines and age-appropriate foods are followed, including weaning needs.
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Packed Lunches

- Parents are required to provide a packed lunch.
- Lunches must be packed in a clean, named lunchbox.
- We do not cook, warm or reheat food, including homemade meals. Picnic-style lunches are recommended.
- Cooked rice cannot be accepted due to the risk of *Bacillus cereus*.
- Packed lunches cannot be refrigerated and are stored on a trolley outside each classroom.
- We strongly recommend using ice packs suitable for young children.

Families are encouraged to follow NHS guidance on healthy packed lunches:

www.nhs.uk/change4life/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes

Choking Prevention and Safer Eating

To reduce choking risks:

- Foods must be cut into small, manageable pieces.
- Whole grapes, cherry tomatoes and similar foods must be cut lengthwise and into quarters.
- Seeds, pits and skins should be removed.
- Hard foods should be softened where possible.
- We operate a **strict no-nut policy**, including nut spreads.

We do not accept:

- Marshmallows
- Popcorn
- Chewing gum
- Hard sweets

Children are supported to sit calmly, chew thoroughly and eat safely under close supervision.

Quick reference guide to cutting food to prevent choking hazards



Mealtimes and Allergy Safety

- A qualified paediatric first aider is present at all mealtimes.
- Allergy and dietary information is recorded, shared and followed carefully.
- Staff are trained to recognise allergic reactions and follow individual action plans.

(Please refer to our **Allergy Policy**.)

Milk Provision

- Milk is delivered twice a week, refrigerated immediately and stock is rotated.
 - Fridge temperatures are checked daily and kept between **0–5°C**.
 - All children receive **1/3 pint (190ml)** of free milk per day.
 - Oat or soya milk is provided for children with cow's milk allergy.
 - Other non-dairy milks must be supplied by parents and handed directly to staff (almond milk cannot be accepted).
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Food Hygiene and Children's Learning

Children are encouraged to:

- Wash their hands before and after food activities
- Wear aprons when preparing food
- Learn simple hygiene routines through practical experiences

Staff receive regular food hygiene training, and:

- Food preparation and washing-up areas are kept separate
 - All surfaces are clean, non-porous and sanitised
 - Waste food is disposed of daily
 - Cleaning products are stored safely out of children's reach
 - Children never have unsupervised access to kitchen areas
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Cooking Activities With Children

When children take part in baking or cooking activities, they are:

- Closely supervised at all times
 - Supported to understand hygiene and safety rules
 - Kept away from hot surfaces and equipment
 - Never allowed unsupervised access to electrical appliances
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Cleaning, Storage and Monitoring

- Fridges and freezers are cleaned regularly and checked weekly.
 - Food preparation surfaces and utensils are cleaned thoroughly after each use.
 - Food is stored in airtight containers, labelled with opening dates and discard dates.
 - Fridge temperatures are recorded daily and logged.
 - Stock levels are kept low to ensure good rotation and freshness.
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Staff Drinks

- Hot drinks may only be taken into rooms in **screw-top thermos mugs** and must be kept out of children's reach.
- Staff must not walk around with hot drinks.
- Water is encouraged; squash must be in coloured bottles and not visible to children to promote positive role modelling and oral health.

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
20/04/2024	C.E.Carroll	January 2026
21/07/2025 updated	C.E.Carroll	January 2027