



# Smalley Pre-school Food Safety and Nutrition Policy

(Registered Charity No. 1033193)

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## Aim

Smalley Pre-school 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 EYFS 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.
- Our kitchen checklist is followed for general hygiene and safety in food preparation areas.
- We provide nutritionally sound snacks that promote health and reduce the risk of obesity and heart disease, which may begin in childhood.
- We ensure that children are supervised at snack and mealtimes and that children are within sight and hearing of a member of staff at all times. Where possible, staff are sat facing children whilst they are eating to ensure they are eating in a way that prevents choking and so they can prevent food sharing and be aware of any unexpected allergic reactions.
- We follow the main advice on dietary guidelines and the legal requirements for identifying food allergens when planning menus based on the four food groups:
  - meat, fish and protein alternatives;
  - milk and dairy products;
  - cereals and grains; and
  - fresh fruit and vegetables.
- Following dietary guidelines to promote health also means taking account of guidelines to reduce the risk of disease caused by unhealthy eating.
- Parents/carers share information about their children's particular dietary needs and allergies with staff when they enrol their children and on an ongoing basis with their key person. This information is shared with all staff who are involved in the care of the child.
- We take into account every child's individual development needs and work in partnership with parents/carers to help children to move on to the next stage with regard to weaning as per the guidance listed below.
- Smalley Pre-school ensures that all staff are aware of the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis and the differences between allergies and intolerances, which may develop at any time.

- Foods provided by the setting for children have any allergenic ingredients identified on the menus.
- Care is taken to ensure that children with food allergies and intolerances do not have contact with food products that they are allergic to.
- We notify Ofsted of any food poisoning affecting two or more children in our care as soon as possible and at least within 14 days.
- Risk assessments are conducted for each individual child who has a food allergy or specific dietary requirement.
- If a child chokes at mealtime and intervention is given, we record details of the incident and ensure that parents/carers are informed.

## Legal references

Regulation (EC) 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Hygiene of Foodstuffs

Food Information Regulations 2014

Childcare Act 2006

## Further guidance

[Safer Food, Better Business for Caterers](#) (Food Standards Agency, 2024)

[Paediatric Allergy Action Plans](#) (British Society for Allergy & Clinical Immunology, 2024)

[Food Allergy](#) (NHS, 2023)

[Anaphylaxis](#) (NHS, 2023)

[Weaning](#) (NHS Best Start in Life)

[Help For Early Years Providers: Food Safety](#) (DfE, 2025)

[Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance](#) (DfE, 2025)

[Allergy Action Plan](#) (British Society for Allergy & Clinical Immunology, 2018)

## Food safety and nutrition procedures

### Food for play and cooking activities

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

- Food for play may include dough, corn flour, pasta, rice food colourings/flavourings.
- Jelly (including jelly cubes) is not used for play.
- Food for play is risk assessed against the 14 major allergens 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 cause choking.
- The use of raw vegetables for printing is discouraged.
- 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.
- Cornflour and cooked pasta are discarded after an activity, as there is a high risk of bacteria forming.
- Utensils used for play food are washed thoroughly after use.
- Staff have up-to-date information about children's allergies or concerns about a potential allergy, and these are clearly displayed.

### **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 and after handling food, as well as 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 and jugs, and these 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.
- Food play activities are suspended during outbreaks of illness.

### **Playdough and raw (uncooked flour)**

- 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.
- Only playdough that has been cooked or made with precooked flour should be used.
- Only 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, the ingredients must be replaced and a safe alternative used.
- If a younger child is likely to put the playdough/cornflour in their mouth, a safe alternative is provided.
- If a child is likely to eat the playdough due to persistent sensory seeking behaviours the activity will be replaced with a safe alternative.

- Children are always supervised when playing with playdough or cornflour.
- Children and staff wash their hands before and after the activity.

### **Other activities with flour**

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.

Baking activities can be offered where flour is used and then the food is cooked. The activity must be risk assessed, and children must not eat the uncooked flour or the mixture.

## **Meeting dietary requirements**

Snack and mealtimes are an important part of the day at Smalley Pre-school. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating. We aim to provide nutritious food that meets the children's individual dietary needs and preferences.


- Staff discuss and record children's dietary needs, allergies and any ethnic or cultural food preferences with their parents/carers. A child's special dietary requirements are recorded on registration to the setting, and information is shared with all staff. This continues as an ongoing dialogue with all parents throughout their time at Smalley Pre-school.
- If a child has a known food allergy, the procedure for allergies and food intolerances is followed.
- Staff record information about each child's dietary needs in the individual child's registration form; parents/carers 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/carer's wishes. At each mealtime, a member of staff is responsible for checking that the food provided meets the dietary requirements for each child.
- The menus of meal and snacks are displayed on the notice board and/or website for parents/carers to view. Foods that contain any food allergens are identified.
- Staff aim to include food diets from children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones.
- Through ongoing discussion with parents/carers and research by staff, staff obtain information about the dietary rules of religious groups to which children and their parents belong, and of vegetarians and vegans, as well as food allergies. Staff take account of this information when providing food and drink.
- Staff provide a vegetarian alternative when meat and fish are offered and make every effort to ensure halal meat or kosher food is available to children who require it.
- Where it is not possible to source and provide halal meat or kosher food, a vegetarian option is available; this will be discussed and agreed with parents at the time of the child's registration.

- 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 ‘strong food preferences or aversions to food’ 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/carers to support them with children who are showing signs of ‘food preference or aversion’ and signpost 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/>.

This policy was adopted by Smalley Pre-school

On	23.12.25
Date to be reviewed	23.12.26
Signed on behalf of the provider	
Name of signatory	Joanne Rothwell
Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)	Chair of the Committee