3. Food Safety and Nutrition Policy

Aim

Pirton Pre School will ensure the upmost health and safety of all our users by providing a suitable, clean, and safe place for children, staff and visitors to eat and drink. We meet all statutory requirements for food safety and nutrition and fulfil the criteria for meeting the relevant Early Years Foundation Stage safeguarding and welfare requirements 2026. We share our procedures and offer guidance and support to our families prior to them starting at the setting, and throughout their time with us.

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.
- All staff undertake Food Hygiene & Allergy Awareness training before being permitted to prepare or serve food.
- Suitable seating is provided for children when eating. Consideration is given to the age and ability of each child.
- We provide nutritionally balanced snacks in accordance with the government's nutrition guidance, released in April 2025, which promote health and reduce the risk of obesity and heart disease that may begin in childhood.
- We prepare foods in accordance with the Children Accident Prevent Trust choking guidance and the Safer Eating requirements of the EYFS.
- We also encourage parents to provide a balanced packed lunch for their child and provide them with the Children Accident Prevent Trust choking guidance which can be found here https://capt.org.uk/choking-prevention/ and which states that, where possible, foods should be prepared in strips rather than chunks e.g. carrots, cheese, cucumber and sausages. Small, round foods such as grapes, cherry tomatoes and blueberries should be cut in half lengthways.
- Our snack menu contains fruits, vegetables and a starchy carbohydrate. Our menu is reviewed regularly in order to provide a variety of new experiences.
- We do not give popcorn as a snack and we do not give children marshmallows or jelly cubes from a packet, either to eat or as part of messy play activities, as they can get stuck in the throat. We also ask for these not to be included in the children's lunchboxes.

- 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
  - fresh fruit and vegetables.

- Following dietary guidelines to promote health also means taking account of guidelines to reduce risk of disease caused by unhealthy eating.
- We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage's requirement to promote good oral heath by having conversations about 'healthy' eating, oral health routines and by providing brushing packs for every cohort to promote good oral health at home. We also avoid all dried fruit at snack times due to the high level of sugar, however, when eaten as part of a meal, i.e. lunch, these are allowed.
- We have resources to support and teach young children about oral health, including giant teeth puppets and giant toothbrushes.
- Parents share information about their children's particular dietary needs at the point of registration. If necessary, a care plan is then drawn up between the parents and the Manager. This information is shared with all staff who are involved in the care of the child and is reviewed at least twice a year.
- The traffic light colour-coded system is in place to ensure that children with food allergies do not have contact with food products that they are allergic to.
- Supervision of children – whilst children are eating, there is always a minimum of one paediatric first aider with the children when eating. Children are always within sight and hearing of at least one member of staff. The leading member of staff will sit within the eating area, facing the children as much as possible. This will allow for swift intervention should a child choke and to prevent food sharing. It also allows for mealtimes to be a sociable, relaxed learning opportunity.

- Whilst we do not advocate the distribution of sweet treats for birthdays, we appreciate parents and children like to include their peers in such celebrations. Parents are urged to consider providing non-edible 'treats' such as stickers or bubbles. Where this is not possible, we advise that only sweets (such as Haribo) are offered rather than chocolate-based treats or homemade cakes. We do not allow lollipops, as recommended by the Child Accident Prevent Trust.