



St Bede's Childcare Ltd

Food and Nutrition Policy

EYFS Legal Requirement:

Where children are provided with meals, snacks and drinks, these must be healthy, balanced and nutritious. Providers must obtain information about dietary needs and ensure fresh drinking water is always available. (EYFS 2024, 3.55)

Policy Statement

St Bede's Childcare is committed to providing a **healthy, balanced, and nutritious diet** for all children. We promote healthy eating habits from an early age in line with:

- **Eat Better, Start Better (Public Health England)**
- **NHS healthy eating guidance**
- **EYFS statutory requirements**

We work in partnership with parents/carers to meet each child's individual dietary needs and to promote lifelong healthy lifestyles.

Aims

We aim to:

- Provide nutritious, balanced meals and snacks
- Promote healthy eating and positive attitudes to food
- Meet all dietary, cultural, and medical needs
- Support children's learning and development through food experiences
- Ensure food safety and hygiene at all times

Healthy Eating Principles

We will:

- Provide a **varied diet** including:
 - Fruit and vegetables daily
 - Starchy carbohydrates
 - Protein sources
 - Dairy or alternatives
- Limit:
 - Foods high in **sugar, salt, and saturated fat**
 - Processed foods



- Ensure:
 - Meals are appropriate for children's **age and stage**
 - Portion sizes are suitable for young children

Drinks

- Fresh drinking water will be **available at all times**
- Milk will be provided:
 - **Full-fat milk for children under 2**
 - Semi-skimmed milk may be offered from age 2+ where appropriate
- Sugary drinks (including juice and fizzy drinks) are **not provided**

Meals and Snacks

- Children will be provided with:
 - Breakfast, lunch, and tea (where applicable)
 - Healthy snacks including fruit and vegetables
- Snacks will:
 - Support children's energy needs
 - Not replace balanced meals
- Mealtimes will:
 - Be calm, social, and positive
 - Encourage independence and good manners

Allergies and Dietary Needs

- Information about:
 - Allergies
 - Dietary requirements
 - Preferences

will be obtained before a child starts

- We will:
 - Work with parents/carers to meet all needs
 - Accept both **medically diagnosed and parent-reported allergies**
 - Complete **risk assessments and care plans** where required



- All staff will be aware of children's dietary needs
- Food preparation systems will ensure children are **not exposed to allergens**

Special Diets

We will support:

- Cultural and religious dietary requirements
- Vegetarian and vegan diets
- Medical dietary needs

Menus will be adapted to ensure all children receive a balanced diet.

Infant Feeding

- We support both **breastfeeding and formula feeding**
- Breast milk will be:
 - Labelled
 - Stored safely in line with guidance
- Formula will be:
 - Prepared fresh following NHS guidance
 - Discarded after one hour if unused
- Babies' feeding routines will follow parental guidance and individual needs

Weaning

- Weaning will be based on:
 - The child's developmental stage
 - Parental guidance
- Children will be supported to:
 - Explore textures
 - Develop feeding skills

Food Safety and Hygiene

- All staff handling food will have **appropriate food hygiene training**
- Food will be:
 - Prepared and stored safely



- Checked for allergies and choking risks
- Children will be supervised at all times when eating
- Staff will follow infection control procedures

Choking Prevention

- Food will be prepared in a safe, age-appropriate way
- High-risk foods will be avoided or modified
- Staff will:
 - Supervise children closely
 - Sit facing children during meals
- Any choking incidents will be:
 - Recorded
 - Reviewed to identify risks

Food Play

- Food will only be used in play where it **enhances learning**
- Activities will:
 - Be supervised
 - Take account of allergies and safety
 - Avoid unnecessary food waste

Birthday Celebrations

- Food brought from home must:
 - Be clearly labelled with ingredients
 - Meet allergy requirements
- High-sugar foods will be **limited**
- Alternative celebrations will be encouraged

Oral Health

We will:

- Promote good oral health practices
- Limit sugary foods and drinks



- Support children in understanding healthy choices

Learning Through Food

Children will:

- Participate in food preparation and cooking activities
- Learn about healthy eating
- Explore different foods and cultures

Working with Parents/Carers

We will:

- Share menus with parents
- Provide daily feedback on children's eating
- Work in partnership to support healthy eating

Staff Responsibilities

Staff will:

- Promote healthy eating
- Act as positive role models
- Avoid consuming unhealthy foods in front of children
- Follow all food safety and hygiene procedures

Monitoring and Review

- Menus and food provision will be regularly reviewed
- Feedback from parents will be considered
- This policy will be reviewed annually