

Lunchbox policy and food brought from home

This policy guidance has been developed by Solihull Early Years Team to support you to write a policy or to review your current policy. This is not a statutory policy.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework sets the standards that early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn, develop well and are kept healthy and safe.....

Families may wish to provide food from home and some children may need to bring their own meals and snacks for medical or cultural reasons. Having a food and nutrition policy in place and communicating this to parents and/or carers can help them to understand your regulatory obligation to provide healthy, balanced and nutritious food to children and encourage healthier food choices for packed lunches. It is important to ensure that food provided from home aligns with the healthy options offered by the setting, so that children receive consistent messages about nutrition.

Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition guidance April 2025

What is the **aim** of your policy?

- Who is it for? Staff in setting will need to apply this policy and you may make it available to parents
- How does it support children's access to health food?
- How will it help you comply with food hygiene and safety regulations?
- Will you aim to support children's independence and self-care?
- Will you include a section of guidance to protect children and staff with allergies and dietary needs within the setting?
- Are there other policies which contain the above information and which will be a complementary policy to this one?

Storage

How will you guide families in relation to what they need to provide? Lunchbox style, independent access, labelling, safe storage you are able to provide?



Healthy lunch boxes – or times when food is brought from home

Will your policy include guidance for staff about what is acceptable to include? How will you guide staff to respond if guidance is not followed? How will you feed back to parents if lunch box content is not appropriate?

What is your policy on milk and weaning and solid food for young children?

Preparation

Will you prepare food sent from home? Can you reheat food? Will you provide drinks? How will you guide parents?

Allergens and dietary requirements -

Please consider allergies - In children, the foods that most commonly cause an allergic reaction are:

- milk
- eggs
- peanuts
- tree nuts
- fish
- shellfish

How will you train staff? How will you communicate with parents to ensure allergens are effectively managed?

Staff Role -supervision and food culture

What training will staff access to ensure they know and act upon safety -choking hazards and safe presentation of food?



What is the setting's lunch culture?

Where do the children and staff sit to eat lunch?

How do you ensure children experience a positive lunchtime and eating experience?

How will children sit for safety and how will the rules of lunch times support safety and enjoyment?

How will you encourage but not force children to eat their food?

Other food brought in from outside the setting

Are there any other times that external food is brought into settings by others? When might these be – for example party bags and birthday treats.....what is your policy for staff in relation to this?