

ROSEMARY LANE NURSERY SCHOOL



PACKED LUNCH POLICY

1. Introduction and Purpose

This policy outlines the guidelines for packed lunches brought to Rosemary Lane Nursery School. It aims to ensure that all children have access to nutritious and safe lunches, whilst promoting healthy eating habits and managing potential risks associated with food allergies and intolerances. This policy is in line with the School Food Regulations 2014, the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), and Wraparound Childcare Guidance for Schools.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all children who bring a packed lunch to Rosemary Lane Nursery School, as well as all staff members responsible for supervising lunchtime and managing children's dietary needs.

3. Policy Statement

Rosemary Lane Nursery School is committed to:

- Promoting healthy eating habits among children.
- Ensuring the safety and well-being of all children, including those with allergies, intolerances, and dietary requirements.
- Providing a supportive and inclusive lunchtime environment.
- Adhering to all relevant legislation and guidance.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Headteacher:**
 - Overall responsibility for the implementation and review of this policy.
 - Ensuring adequate resources are allocated to support the policy.
- **Deputy Headteacher:**
 - Assisting the Headteacher in implementing and monitoring the policy.
 - Liaising with parents and staff regarding specific dietary needs.
- **Lunchtime Support Staff:**
 - Supervising children during lunchtime.
 - Ensuring children eat their packed lunches safely and appropriately.

- Identifying and addressing any concerns regarding children's eating habits or dietary needs.
- Being aware of children with allergies, intolerances, and dietary requirements and following appropriate procedures.
- Training for lunchtime staff - Lunchtime support staff will receive regular training on food safety, allergy awareness, and child feeding practices to ensure consistent and informed supervision.
- **Parents/Carers:**
 - Providing a healthy and nutritious packed lunch for their child, adhering to the guidelines outlined in this policy.
 - Informing the school of any allergies, intolerances, or dietary requirements their child may have.
 - Ensuring lunch bags are clearly labelled with the child's name.
 - Including a freezer pack where necessary to maintain food safety.
- **Key Person:**
 - Communicating with parents about children's eating habits and any concerns.
 - Supporting children with their lunch and encouraging healthy eating.

5. Packed Lunch Guidelines

To promote healthy eating and ensure the safety of all children, the following guidelines apply to packed lunches:

Nutritional Content:

- Packed lunches should include a variety of foods from the main food groups:
 - Starchy foods (e.g., bread, pasta, rice, potatoes).
 - Protein (e.g., meat, fish, eggs, beans, lentils, cheese).
 - Fruits and vegetables.
 - Dairy or dairy alternatives (e.g., yoghurt, cheese, milk alternatives).
- Crisps and other salty snacks should be offered in moderation.
- Homemade cakes and biscuits are permitted but should be offered as a treat, not as a main component of the lunch.
- Sugary snacks, such as sweets, chocolate bars, and fizzy drinks are a treat and should be saved for home and limited in quantity.

Portion Sizes:

- Portion sizes should be tailored to each child's age, developmental stage, and individual appetite. Staff will support children in eating sufficient amounts without pressure, respecting their hunger cues.

Allergies, Intolerances, and Dietary Requirements:

- Parents must inform the school of any allergies, intolerances, or dietary requirements their child may have.
- Children with allergies, intolerances, and food observances will have coloured labels attached to their lunch bags to alert staff.
- Staff will be trained to recognise and respond to allergic reactions.
- Parents are responsible for providing safe alternatives for their child.

Food Preparation (Age-Specific Considerations to Prevent Choking):

General Guidance: Round foods like grapes and cherry tomatoes are significant choking hazards and must be prepared appropriately.

- **2-year-olds:**

- Food should be cut into small, manageable pieces.
- Grapes and cherry tomatoes must be quartered.
- Fruit and vegetables should be cut into thin slices or grated.
- Cheese should be grated.
- Sandwiches should be cut into small squares or strips.

- **3-year-olds:**

- Food can be slightly larger than for 2-year-olds, but still easy to chew and swallow.
- Grapes and cherry tomatoes must be quartered.
- Fruit and vegetables should be cut into thin slices.
- Sandwiches should be cut into smaller pieces.

- **4-year-olds:**

- Children can generally manage most food sizes, but care should still be taken to avoid choking hazards.
- Grapes and cherry tomatoes must be quartered or halved.
- Remind children to chew their food thoroughly.

Drinks:

- Milk and water will be provided as a drink. Parents do not need to provide drinks.

Utensils:

- Cutlery will be provided by the school. Parents do not need to provide cutlery.

Labelling:

- All lunch bags must be clearly labelled with the child's name on the outside and all containers should be initialled or named.

Food Safety:

- Parents should use a freezer pack to keep perishable items cold and safe to eat.

6. Lunchtime Procedures

Storage:

- While packed lunches will be stored in ambient conditions, parents are strongly encouraged to include freezer packs and use insulated lunch bags to maintain food safety. The school will review storage arrangements regularly to ensure suitability.

Supervision:

- Staff will supervise children during lunchtime to ensure they are eating safely and appropriately.

- Staff will encourage children to eat a variety of foods and to try new things.

Hygiene:

- Children will wash their hands before eating their lunch.
- Tables and surfaces will be cleaned before and after lunchtime.

Allergies and Medical Conditions:

- Staff will be aware of children with allergies and medical conditions.
- Staff will follow individual healthcare plans where appropriate.
- Emergency medication (e.g., EpiPen) will be readily available and staff will be trained in its use.

Safe Seating:

- **Developmentally appropriate seating :** Willow room children will be seated in appropriate mealtime chairs that provide adequate support and allow their feet to be flat on the floor or supported by a footrest. This ensures proper posture and reduces the risk of choking. Staff will ensure children are correctly positioned in their chairs before serving food.

Waste Disposal:

- Children will be encouraged to dispose of their waste responsibly. Any unfinished foods (excluding yoghurts) will be bagged and sent home, to help parents in understanding how much their child has eaten.
- Recycling facilities will be provided where possible. We aim to reduce single-use plastics in lunch packaging and will work with parents to promote environmentally friendly lunch packing.

7. Communication with Parents

- This policy will be made available to all parents/carers upon enrolment and on the school website.
- Parents will be informed of any changes to the policy.
- Key person staff will communicate with parents regarding any concerns about their child's eating habits or dietary needs and will aim to provide regular positive feedback to parents about their child's eating preferences, fostering a collaborative approach to healthy eating.

8. Monitoring and Review

- This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher, in consultation with staff and parents.

The review will consider:

- The effectiveness of the policy in promoting healthy eating and ensuring the safety of all children.
- Any changes in legislation or guidance.
- Feedback from staff, parents, and children.

9. Links to Other Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Allergy Policy
- SEND Policy

- Emotional regulation policy and guidance to support with promoting positive behaviour and relationships policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

10. Relevant Legislation and Guidance

- School Food Regulations 2014
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
- Wraparound Childcare Guidance for Schools
- Food Standards Agency guidance on food safety and hygiene

This policy supports compliance with the EYFS welfare requirements and the School Food Regulations 2014, contributing to a safe, healthy, and inclusive environment as inspected by OFSTED.

11. Conclusion

This Packed Lunch Policy is designed to support the health, well-being, and development of all children at Rosemary Lane Nursery School. By working together, staff, parents, and carers can ensure that lunchtime is a positive and enjoyable experience for everyone.

Date reviewed: September 2026

Next review date: Autumn term 2027

Head Teacher: Mrs Jill Jones

Signed: 

Date: September 2026

Chair of LTA committee: Mr Rob Adcock-Forster

Signed: R Adcock-Forster