

Hanley St Luke's Church of England Academy

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EYFS POLICY

Date adopted	Historic
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Subject lead	Sarah Clay
Governor/Committee (where applicable)	Lisa Hall

Our Vision:

Jesus said: 'I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.'

Promoting *life-long learning*
Developing *life-giving relationships*
Exploring *life-enhancing faith*
Inspiring *life-enriching aspiration*
Opportunities for life

Safer Eating, Food Safety and Allergy Policy – EYFS

Hanley St Luke's Church of England Primary Academy

1. Policy Statement

At Hanley St Luke's Church of England Primary Academy, we are committed to ensuring that all children in our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) receive food and drinks in a safe, hygienic and supportive environment.

We recognise that young children may be at increased risk of choking and that some children may have food allergies, intolerances or other dietary requirements. We therefore take all reasonable steps to reduce the risk of choking, allergic reactions, food poisoning and cross-contamination.

This policy reflects the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework for group and school-based providers, together with current Department for Education and Food Standards Agency guidance relating to food safety, nutrition, allergies and safer eating.

The safety and wellbeing of children is our highest priority. All staff involved in the preparation, serving or supervision of food must understand and follow the procedures outlined in this policy.

2. Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- promote safe, healthy and positive eating experiences for all children;
- reduce the risk of choking during meals and snack times;
- ensure that children are appropriately seated and supervised while eating and drinking;
- ensure that food is prepared and served in an age- and developmentally appropriate way;
- ensure that all known allergies, intolerances and dietary requirements are identified, recorded and followed;
- minimise the risk of allergic reactions and cross-contamination;
- ensure that staff understand their responsibilities for safer eating;
- ensure that appropriate hygiene and food-safety procedures are followed;
- ensure that children have access to suitable drinking water;
- promote healthy, balanced and nutritious food choices;
- ensure that staff know how to respond appropriately to choking and allergic reactions;
- work closely with parents/carers to ensure that children's individual dietary needs are understood and met.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 Leadership and Management

The school leadership team will:

- ensure that this policy is implemented consistently across the EYFS;
- ensure that staff understand their responsibilities regarding safer eating;
- ensure that appropriate risk assessments are completed and reviewed;
- ensure that suitable arrangements are in place for children with allergies, intolerances and other dietary requirements;

ensure that at least one member of staff holding a current Paediatric First Aid (PFA) certificate is present in the room whenever children are eating;
ensure that appropriate staff training is provided;
ensure that catering arrangements comply with relevant food safety requirements;
monitor the implementation of this policy and review it at least annually or sooner where guidance or circumstances change.

3.2 EYFS Staff

All staff working with children will:

follow the procedures outlined in this policy;
familiarise themselves with children's individual allergies, intolerances and dietary requirements;
check that food being offered is suitable for each child;
ensure that food is prepared and presented appropriately to reduce choking risks;
actively supervise children throughout meals and snack times;
ensure children remain seated while eating and drinking;
encourage children to eat slowly and chew their food carefully;
follow food hygiene procedures;
prevent children from sharing or swapping food;
recognise the signs of choking and allergic reactions;
know where emergency medication and relevant healthcare plans are kept;
follow emergency procedures when required.

4. Paediatric First Aid and Supervision

A member of staff holding a current full Paediatric First Aid (PFA) certificate must be present in the room whenever children are eating.

This applies during:

breakfast, where provided;
morning snack;
lunch;
afternoon snack;
special events involving food;
cooking and food preparation activities where children are eating the food produced.

Staff responsible for supervising children during eating must remain attentive and must not undertake other duties that prevent effective supervision.

Staff will ensure that children are appropriately positioned, seated upright and able to eat safely.

Children will not be allowed to eat while:

walking or running;

lying down;
playing;
using climbing equipment;
moving around the classroom or outdoor area.

5. Individual Dietary Requirements, Allergies and Intolerances

Parents/carers must provide information about their child's dietary requirements, allergies and intolerances before the child starts at the setting.

The school will maintain clear and up-to-date information about individual children's dietary needs.

This information will be:

recorded appropriately;
communicated to relevant staff;
accessible to staff responsible for food preparation and supervision;
reviewed regularly;
updated immediately when parents/carers provide new information.

Where appropriate, an individual healthcare or allergy action plan will be put in place.

Staff must never make assumptions about whether a food is safe for a child with an allergy.

Before food is given to a child with a known allergy or dietary requirement, staff must check that it is suitable.

Where a child has prescribed emergency medication, such as an adrenaline auto-injector, staff will know:

where the medication is stored;
who is trained to administer it;
the symptoms that may indicate an allergic reaction;
the appropriate emergency procedure.

6. Responsible Adult Check

At every meal and snack time, a designated member of staff will be responsible for checking that:

the food being provided is suitable for each child;
known allergies and dietary requirements have been considered;
food has been prepared appropriately;
food is an appropriate size, shape and texture for young children;
choking hazards have been appropriately modified or removed;
children are seated safely before eating.

This check must take place before food is served.

7. Safer Food Preparation and Choking Prevention

Young children are at increased risk of choking. Food must therefore be prepared with consideration given to its size, shape, texture and hardness.

Staff will follow current Food Standards Agency guidance when preparing food for young children.

Examples include:

grapes and cherry tomatoes will be cut lengthways into appropriate smaller pieces;
hard raw vegetables such as carrots will be grated, finely sliced, cooked or softened as appropriate;
hard fruit will be softened or prepared into suitable pieces;
food with bones or hard pieces will be checked carefully before serving;
popcorn will not be provided to children under five;
hard sweets and other foods presenting a significant choking risk will not be provided;
peanut butter will not be given to children on its own;
food will be cut into appropriately sized pieces rather than relying on children to break or bite large pieces themselves.

Staff will consider individual children's developmental needs when preparing food.

8. Safe Eating Practices

Children must be seated comfortably and upright while eating.

Staff will:

supervise children throughout the whole eating period;
encourage children to take their time;
encourage children to chew food thoroughly;
discourage children from putting large amounts of food into their mouths;
encourage children to drink appropriately;
model positive and calm eating behaviours;
provide sufficient time for children to eat without rushing.

Children will not be forced to eat food.

Staff will encourage children to develop independence, including using appropriate cutlery, cups and serving utensils where developmentally appropriate.

9. No Sharing of Food

Children must not share or swap food.

Children must not take food from another child's:

lunchbox;
plate;
snack;
cup or bottle.

This is particularly important for protecting children with food allergies and dietary requirements.

Staff will actively supervise children to prevent food sharing.

10. Healthy Eating and Nutrition

The school recognises the importance of establishing healthy eating habits during the early years.

Food and drinks provided by the setting will be:

healthy;
balanced;
nutritious;
appropriate for young children;
suitable for children's individual dietary requirements.

Children will have access to fresh drinking water throughout the day.

Staff will promote positive attitudes towards food and encourage children to try a range of healthy foods without pressure.

Food will not be used as a reward or punishment.

Where appropriate, children will be supported to develop an understanding of healthy choices, including fruit, vegetables, hydration and the importance of a balanced diet.

11. Food Hygiene and Cross-Contamination

All staff involved in preparing or serving food must follow appropriate food hygiene procedures.

Staff will:

wash their hands thoroughly before handling food;
ensure children wash their hands before eating;
clean and sanitise food preparation surfaces;
use clean utensils and equipment;
store food appropriately;
check use-by dates;
follow appropriate temperature-control procedures where required;

dispose of food safely;
prevent cross-contamination between different foods.

Where a child has an allergy, appropriate precautions will be taken to prevent allergen contamination.

Separate equipment and utensils will be used where necessary.

Food containing allergens must be kept separate from food intended for children who have an allergy to that food.

12. Packed Lunches

Where children bring packed lunches from home, parents/carers will be provided with information about healthy and safe packed lunches.

Parents/carers must inform the school immediately of any changes to their child's:

allergies;
intolerances;
dietary requirements;
medical needs relating to food.

Staff will ensure that children do not share or swap food from their packed lunches.

Particular care will be taken to protect children with known food allergies.

13. Cooking and Food Activities

Cooking and food-related activities provide valuable learning experiences within the EYFS.

Before undertaking cooking or food preparation activities, staff will:

check children's allergies and dietary requirements;
assess potential choking risks;
ensure appropriate hygiene procedures are followed;
supervise children closely;
ensure ingredients are suitable;
adapt activities where necessary;
ensure food is prepared and presented safely.

Children will wash their hands before participating in food preparation activities.

14. Allergic Reactions

Staff must be familiar with the signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction.

Possible symptoms may include:

swelling of the lips, mouth or face;
itching or hives;
difficulty breathing;
coughing or wheezing;
vomiting;
dizziness or collapse;
changes in consciousness.

If an allergic reaction is suspected, staff will act immediately in accordance with the child's individual healthcare/allergy action plan.

Emergency medication will be administered by appropriately trained staff where required.

Emergency services will be contacted where necessary.

Parents/carers will be informed as soon as reasonably possible.

All allergic reactions will be recorded and reviewed in accordance with the school's incident procedures.

15. Choking Incidents

If a child begins to choke, staff will respond immediately in accordance with their Paediatric First Aid training.

Staff will:

assess the situation;
follow appropriate first-aid procedures;
call emergency services where required;
ensure the child receives appropriate medical attention;
inform parents/carers as soon as possible;
complete the appropriate accident/incident documentation;
review the circumstances of the incident and consider whether any changes to practice are required.

All staff supervising children during eating must know how to respond to a choking incident.

16. Communication with Parents and Carers

The school will work closely with families to ensure that children's dietary needs are understood and safely managed.

Parents/carers will be asked to provide accurate and up-to-date information about:

- allergies;
- food intolerances;
- dietary requirements;
- cultural or religious dietary requirements;
- medical conditions affecting eating or drinking.

Parents/carers must inform the school immediately if their child's dietary requirements change.

The school will communicate relevant information to staff and, where appropriate, catering staff.

Menus and information about food provision will be shared with families where appropriate.

17. Staff Training

Staff responsible for children during eating and food activities will receive appropriate information and training relating to:

- food hygiene;
- safer eating;
- choking prevention;
- allergy awareness;
- recognising allergic reactions;
- emergency procedures;
- individual children's dietary requirements.

Staff with responsibility for food preparation will receive appropriate food hygiene training.

Paediatric First Aid training will be maintained in accordance with EYFS requirements.

18. Risk Assessment

The school will maintain appropriate risk assessments relating to:

- meal and snack times;
- food preparation;
- cooking activities;
- allergies and dietary requirements;
- choking hazards;
- food hygiene;
- packed lunches;
- special events involving food.

Risk assessments will be reviewed regularly and following any incident, near miss, change in circumstances or relevant change in guidance.

19. Monitoring and Review

The implementation of this policy will be monitored by the EYFS leadership team and school leadership.

The policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner if:

- legislation changes;
- EYFS statutory requirements change;
- DfE or Food Standards Agency guidance is updated;
- a serious incident occurs;
- a child's individual needs change;
- school procedures change.

The school will use incidents, near misses, parent feedback and staff feedback to identify opportunities to improve safer-eating practice.

20. Policy Review Information

Policy: Safer Eating, Food Safety and Allergy Policy – EYFS
Setting: Hanley St Luke's Church of England Primary Academy
Applies to: Nursery and Reception / EYFS
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