



**Sunnyside**  
Primary Academy

# **Safer Eating Policy – Early Years (Reception)**

**Document Owner**  
**Effective from**  
**Updated**  
**New Review Date**

Dale Johnson, Principal  
September 2025  
June 2026  
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## 1. Purpose of the Policy

This policy aims to ensure a safe, inclusive, and healthy eating environment for all children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and wider school, including those with allergies, medical conditions, or specific dietary needs. It outlines the procedures and expectations that support children's health, wellbeing and independence while minimising risks associated with eating and drinking in school.

This policy is based on statutory and national guidance, including:

- EYFS Statutory Framework (2023)
- Food Safety Act 1990
- Food Standards Agency guidance
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Allergy guidance: Natasha's Law

This policy applies to all EYFS and school staff, children, parents/carers, volunteers, and visitors involved in food handling, preparation, or supervision of mealtimes.

## 2. Key Principles

### Safety First

Eating practices must prioritise the prevention of choking, allergic reactions, and foodborne illnesses. All staff follow consistent routines to ensure safe eating and drinking at all times.

### Inclusion and Respect

Children's cultural, religious, medical and dietary requirements must be respected and accommodated. All children must feel safe, valued and included during snack times and mealtimes.

### Positive Mealtime Environment

Mealtimes are calm, social experiences where children are supported and encouraged to eat healthily and independently. Staff model positive attitudes towards food and promote good manners and social interaction.

## 3. Snack Provision

Reception children have access to a **rolling snack station** throughout the day, supporting self-regulation and independence.

### Available Snacks

Children may choose from a selection of fresh fruit and vegetables, including:

- Apples
- Oranges
- Tomatoes
- Pears
- Bananas
- Small sweet peppers
- Carrots

### Safety Measures

- All snack items are washed daily before being made available.
- Staff monitor the snack area to ensure it remains clean, safe and well stocked.
- Children sit while eating to reduce choking risk.
- Foods with a high choking risk are not provided.
- Allergy-safe procedures are followed at all times.

## 4. Water and Hydration

- Children bring a labelled water bottle to school each day.
- Water bottles are accessible throughout the day to encourage regular hydration.

- Staff remind children to drink frequently, especially in warm weather or after physical activity.
- Only water is permitted in bottles to promote healthy habits and protect dental health.

## **5. Lunchtime Arrangements**

Reception children eat lunch in the school hall.

### **Supervision**

- The hall is closely supervised by trained staff.
- Staff ensure children are seated safely and eating calmly.
- Adults support children with opening packaging, cutting food and using cutlery.
- Staff remain vigilant for signs of choking or difficulty eating.

### **Safe Eating Expectations**

Children are supported to:

- Sit at a table while eating.
- Take small bites and chew thoroughly.
- Avoid talking with food in their mouth.
- Eat at a steady pace.
- Ask for help when needed.

## **6. Allergies and Dietary Needs**

- All allergies and dietary requirements are recorded and shared with relevant staff.
- Allergy information is displayed discreetly in food preparation and dining areas.
- Staff ensure children with allergies only access safe foods.
- Parents must inform school immediately of any changes to dietary needs.
- All procedures comply with **Natasha's Law** and school safeguarding protocols.

## **7. Hygiene Procedures**

- Children wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet.
- Tables and surfaces are cleaned before and after food is served.
- Staff model and reinforce good hygiene habits.
- Waste is disposed of safely and promptly.

## **8. Staff Training**

- All staff working in EYFS receive training on safe eating practices, choking prevention and supervision expectations.
- Staff are familiar with first aid procedures and know how to respond in an emergency.
- Training includes allergy awareness and food safety.
- Regular refreshers ensure consistent, safe practice across the team.

## **9. Promoting Independence**

Children are encouraged to:

- Make choices at the snack station.
- Pour their own water where appropriate.
- Use cutlery with increasing confidence.
- Clear away their own plates and waste.

These routines support self-care, confidence and responsibility.

## **10. Monitoring and Review**

This policy is reviewed annually or sooner if guidance changes. Staff feedback, observations and parental input inform ongoing improvements to ensure the highest standards of safety and care.