

Food Safety, Nutrition and Allergens Policy



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Policy Code: FS-HS-019

Policy Statement

At **Forest & Play**, we believe that mealtimes and snack times should be enjoyable, social experiences that support children's health, wellbeing and independence. We are committed to providing nutritious food, promoting healthy eating habits and ensuring that food is prepared, stored and served safely.

We recognise the importance of managing allergies, dietary requirements and food safety risks, particularly within an outdoor learning environment.

This policy should be read alongside the Administration of Medication Policy, Health and Safety Policy and Accident, Incident and First Aid Policy.

Food Provided by Forest & Play

Forest & Play provides:

- A healthy breakfast to include hot and cold options.
- Afternoon snacks and hot drinks out on our adventures.
- A light tea.
- Fresh drinking water throughout the day.

Menus will:

- Be planned in advance.
- Promote healthy, balanced eating.
- Include fruit and vegetables regularly.
- Consider children's dietary, cultural and religious requirements where possible.
- Limit foods high in sugar, salt and saturated fat.

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Packed Lunches from Home

Parents/carers are responsible for providing a packed lunch for their child each day.

Packed lunches should:

- Support healthy eating.
- Be suitable for the child's age and appetite.
- Be provided in a clearly named lunch box or container.

To help protect children with allergies:

- Forest & Play operates a nut-aware environment.
- Nuts and products containing nuts must not be included in packed lunches.
- Hot meals can be sent in, in a vacuum flask container e.g. pasta, curry, stews
- Glass containers are not permitted.
- The welcome pack has guidance and information of what to include in your child's lunchbox

Where food brought from home presents an immediate allergy, health or safety risk, practitioners may remove the item and discuss the matter with parents/carers.

Allergies and Dietary Requirements

Forest & Play takes allergies and dietary requirements extremely seriously.

Before a child starts, information will be obtained regarding:

- Allergies.
- Food intolerances.
- Medical conditions.
- Dietary preferences.
- Religious or cultural dietary requirements.

Where required:

- Individual Allergy Management Plans and Healthcare Plans will be put in place.
- Risk assessments will be completed and reviewed regularly.

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- Forest & Play operates a colour-coded food safety system using red, blue and green plates and place mats to help practitioners identify children with allergies, intolerances and specific dietary requirements. This system acts as an additional visual safeguard and does not replace individual healthcare plans, allergy management plans or staff checks. All children have an individual place mat displaying their name and photograph to support accurate identification.
- Information relating to allergies, intolerances and dietary requirements will be shared with all relevant practitioners.
- Emergency medication will be readily available in accordance with the child's healthcare plan.

Practitioners will take all reasonable steps to prevent cross-contamination and ensure children receive appropriate food and drinks.

Children will be supervised at all times whilst eating and staff will remain vigilant for signs of allergic reactions or anaphylaxis.

Children will be supported to not share their lunches with other children

Mealtimes and Snack Times

Forest & Play promotes positive mealtime experiences.

Practitioners will:

- Always sit with the children.
- Promote good manners and social interaction.
- Encourage independence and self-help skills.
- Support children to make healthy choices.
- Allow children to eat at their own pace.
- Never force children to eat food they do not wish to eat.

Children will always be supervised whilst eating and drinking to minimise the risk of choking.

All staff hold a current Paediatric First Aid qualification.

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Hydration

Fresh drinking water will be available and accessible throughout every session.

Children will be encouraged to drink regularly, particularly:

- During warm weather.
- Following physical activity.

Practitioners will monitor children's wellbeing and encourage additional hydration where required.

Campfire Cooking and Food Activities

Campfire cooking and food preparation activities form part of Forest School experiences.

Where these activities take place:

- Appropriate risk assessments will be completed.
- Children will be supervised at all times.
- Allergies and dietary requirements will be considered.
- Food hygiene procedures will be followed.
- Handwashing or suitable hand-cleaning facilities will be available before handling or eating food.

Children will be taught how to participate safely in food preparation activities appropriate to their age and stage of development.

Celebrations and Special Occasions

Forest & Play may occasionally celebrate special occasions with food-based treats. These will be given at mealtimes to help prevent tooth decay and not spoil the child's appetite

Celebrations and Special Occasions

Any food provided for celebrations must:

- Be nut free.
- Meet the dietary and allergy requirements of all children attending.

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- Comply with current food safety guidance.

Parents/carers may provide cakes or other treats to celebrate special occasions; however, these will not be consumed at Forest & Play and will be sent home with children at the end of the session.

Where appropriate, celebrations may focus on non-food alternatives such as games, stories, singing, nature activities, badges or certificates.

Food Safety and Hygiene

Forest & Play will ensure that:

- All staff who prepare and handle food are competent to do so and receive training in food hygiene which is updated every three years
- All staff are trained in preparing foods safely to avoid the risk of choking, following the Foods Standards Agency guidelines
- All staff are aware of the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis
- All staff are aware of the differences between allergies and intolerances, including that they need to maintain vigilance as children can develop allergies at any time
- Food preparation areas and equipment are maintained in a clean condition.
- Food temperatures are monitored where required.
- Hand hygiene procedures are followed before preparing, serving or eating food.
- Appropriate cleaning and infection control procedures are followed.

Practitioners will remain vigilant to the risks of choking and ensure food is prepared in an age-appropriate manner.

Allergic Reactions

Any suspected allergic reaction will be treated seriously and responded to immediately.

Practitioners will:

- Follow the child's Individual Healthcare Plan and Allergy Management Plan where applicable.

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- Administer emergency medication in accordance with the child's healthcare plan and training.
- Contact emergency services immediately if a severe allergic reaction or anaphylaxis is suspected.
- Inform parents/carers as soon as possible.
- Closely monitor the child until medical assistance arrives.

All practitioners will be made aware of children with allergies and the procedures to follow in an emergency. Emergency medication will be readily accessible throughout sessions in accordance with the child's healthcare plan.

Any suspected food poisoning incident will be managed in accordance with the setting's Accident, Incident and First Aid Policy, and advice will be sought from relevant health agencies where appropriate.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if legislation, guidance or operational practice changes.

Adopted by: Tracey Doidge

Review Date: June 2027

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
15 th June 2026	Tracey Doidge	15 th June 2027