

SAFER EATING & ALLERGY POLICY – September 2025

1. Purpose

To ensure the safety of all children during mealtimes, specifically regarding the prevention of choking and the management of life-threatening allergic reactions (Anaphylaxis).

2. Statutory Supervision & PFA Presence

In accordance with the EYFS 2025 framework:

- **The Sight & Hearing Rule:** Children must always be within sight and hearing of staff while eating. Staff must not be engaged in administrative tasks, cleaning (beyond the immediate table), or phone calls.
- **Mandatory PFA Presence:** At least one staff member with a current Full Paediatric First Aid (PFA) certificate must be physically present in the room where children are eating.
- **Staff Ratios:** Ratios must be strictly maintained during mealtimes. Staff "breaks" must be scheduled so they do not compromise mealtime safety.

3. Allergy Management & Identification

- **Allergy Action Plans:** Every child with a known allergy must have an Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP), including a photo of the child, these are stored in the care plan folders in the setting and eating areas.
- **The "Double-Check" System:** The Catering Manager arranges for a "Special Diet" box. The Well-being practitioner in the nursery must verify the plate against the child's IHP before it is placed in front of the child.
- **Nuts:** While we strive for a nut-free environment, we are acutely aware that many products are manufactured or packaged in facilities that also package nuts and therefore, although minimal there is always a chance of cross contamination. We acknowledge the prevalence of precautionary labelling; consequently, items marked '**may contain nuts**' are used in the Nursery. The Nursery remains committed to implementing all practicable risk-minimisation strategies to maintain a safe environment for all children.

4. Choking Prevention & Food Preparation

To minimise risk, food is prepared in a developmentally appropriate way:

- **High-Risk Foods:** Grapes, cherry tomatoes, and blueberries must be cut lengthways (halved or quartered).
- **Safer Seating:** Children must remain seated while eating. Walking or running with food is strictly prohibited.

5. Emergency Protocol (Choking & Anaphylaxis)

In the event of a choking incident or allergic reaction:

1. **Immediate Action:** A PFA-trained staff member takes the lead.
2. **Alerting Management:** A second staff member alerts the Manager or Deputy immediately.
3. **Emergency Services:** If the airway is not cleared within seconds or if an Adrenaline Auto-Injector (AAI) is administered, **999** must be called.
4. **Reporting:** Any incident where a child chokes (even if cleared) or has an allergic reaction is recorded in the Accident/Incident Log and reported to the parents/carers on the same day.

5. Staff Training

- All staff complete Full Paediatric First Aid (PFA) every 3 years.
- Staff are trained in the specific use of a child's Adrenaline Auto-Injector (AAI) (e.g. EpiPen) if a child in their care requires one.