



## Nutrition and Mealtimes Policy

Ringle Rainbow Nursery

Updated: 01/09/2025

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### 1. Introduction

At Ringle Rainbow Nursery, we are committed to providing a healthy, balanced, and nutritious diet to support children's growth, development, and well-being. We recognise the importance of mealtimes as a social and educational experience, and we work in partnership with parents and carers to meet each child's dietary needs.

### 2. Statutory Framework

This policy aligns with the requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS 2025) and relevant health and nutrition guidance.

### 3. Healthy Eating and Nutrition

- We provide balanced meals and snacks that include a variety of food groups, tailored to children's age and dietary needs.
- Children are encouraged to try new foods, but their choices are respected.
- Sugary snacks and drinks are avoided to support oral health and healthy development.
- Children have access to fresh drinking water throughout the day.

### 4. Mealtime Environment, safety and supervision

- Mealtimes are calm, social occasions where children and staff can eat together.
- Children are supported to develop independence in feeding and table manners.
- Staff model healthy eating behaviours and positive attitudes towards food.

Children's safety during mealtimes is a top priority at Ringle Rainbow Nursery. All mealtimes are fully supervised by trained staff who are aware of the children's individual dietary needs, allergies, and developmental stages. Supervision ensures that staff can promptly respond to any incidents such as choking, allergic reactions, or emotional distress.

Staff are seated with the children during meals to promote social interaction and to maintain safe eating practices. Food is cut into age-appropriate sizes, and staff support children who require assistance in feeding or portion management. Choking hazards are minimised by avoiding high-risk foods and monitoring children's eating habits.

Mealtime supervision also provides staff with an opportunity to observe children for signs of neglect, emotional difficulties, or wellbeing concerns in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025. Any concerns are reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Jack Nash, or Deputy DSLs, Charlotte Baldock or Penny Reidy.



All incidents, concerns, and records related to mealtime care are documented via BabysDays in accordance with our safeguarding and GDPR practices.

### 5. Allergies and Special Dietary Needs

- Parents/carers must inform the nursery of any allergies or special dietary requirements.
- Allergy and intolerance information is clearly communicated to staff and kitchen teams via allergy boards and visual cues. Staff double-check allergy boards before every meal service and confirm children's identities before handing out food. Emergency procedures are followed immediately in case of any adverse reaction, and relevant incidents are logged on BabysDays.
- We work in partnership with our external catering provider, Zebedees, and share children's allergy and dietary information with them to ensure safe meal provision.
- Staff follow individual care plans and action protocols for children with allergies.
- All staff receive allergy awareness and food hygiene training as part of their induction and annual updates.

### 6. Cultural and Religious Considerations

- We respect and accommodate children's cultural, religious, and ethical dietary needs.
- Parents are encouraged to share information about family customs, which are reflected in menu planning.
- Children are introduced to a variety of foods from different cultures in an inclusive and respectful way.

### 7. Oral Health Promotion

- Oral health is promoted through regular discussions, stories, songs, and age-appropriate activities.
- Parents receive information on supporting good oral hygiene at home.
- We avoid foods and drinks that contribute to tooth decay and support children in understanding healthy habits.

### 8. Partnership with Parents

- We work closely with parents and carers to understand each child's dietary preferences and needs.
- Parents are consulted when planning menus, and we share information about what children eat during their time at nursery.
- All feedback is valued and contributes to the development of our food provision.