



Food and Nutrition Policy

Reviewed – March 2026

Next Review – March 2027

Introduction

At Lubbins Park Primary Academy, we are committed to supporting children's health, development, and well-being through the provision of nutritious, balanced, and age-appropriate food. We follow the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and the updated 2025 Nutrition Guidance for Early Years Providers to ensure the food and drink we provide meets the highest standards.

Providing healthy, balanced and nutritious food ensures that all children:

- Get the right amount of nutrients and energy they need while they are growing rapidly, which is especially important for children who might not have access to healthy food at home. This can help prevent children from becoming overweight or obese.
- Develop positive eating habits early on. Children's early experiences with food can shape future eating habits. This can impact children's long-term health including maintaining a healthy weight, and good oral health.

The early years are a crucial time to reduce health inequalities and set the foundations for a lifetime of good health.

Our Values

Lubbins Park Primary Academy EYFS

Aims:

- Promote lifelong healthy eating habits from an early age.
- Provide meals and snacks that meet children's nutritional, cultural, and dietary needs.
- Comply with statutory guidance on food and drink for children under five.
- Partner with families to support and respect children's individual food requirements.
- Encourage a positive, inclusive, and sociable dining experience.

We provide:



- Healthy, balanced snacks and meals based on the four food groups: fruit and vegetables, starchy foods, proteins, and dairy.
- Age-appropriate portion sizes.
- Water freely available throughout the day, and milk at designated snack times.

We avoid:

- Foods high in sugar, salt, or saturated fats.
- Artificial sweeteners and sugary drinks.

When preparing food, we note that it is important to avoid round shapes as these are a choking hazard. We will follow the advice stated in the table below:

Vegetable and fruits	Advice
Pips or stones in fruit	Always check beforehand and remove hard pips or stones from fruit.
Small fruits	Cut small round fruits like grapes, cherries, berries, strawberries and cherry tomatoes, into small pieces: cut lengthways and then again cut them in halves (quarters).
Large fruits and firm fruits	Cut large fruits like melon and firm fruits like apple into slices instead of small chunks. For very young children, consider grating or mashing firm fruits, or softening them up by steaming or simmering.
Vegetables	Cut vegetables like carrots, cucumber and celery into narrow batons. For very young children consider grating or mashing firm vegetables and legumes like butter beans, chickpeas and tofu, or softening them up by steaming or simmering.
Skin on fruit and vegetables	Consider removing the skin from fruit and vegetables, especially for very young children. Peeled fruit and vegetables can be swallowed more easily.
Cooking fruit and vegetables	Consider softening firm fruit and vegetables (such as carrots, broccoli, yam and apples) by steaming or simmering until soft. Serve cut into slices or narrow batons.
Meat and fish	Advice
Sausages and hot dogs	Cut sausages and hot dogs into short strips. Cut them in half and then lengthways or as thinly as possible. Peeling the skin off the sausages helps them to be swallowed more easily.
Meat or fish	Remove bones from meat or fish. Cut meat into strips as thinly as possible. Remove skin and fat from meat and fish, it will help the food pass smoothly down the throat.
Cheese	Advice
Grate or cut cheese	Grate or cut cheese into short strips. Cut lumps of cheese as narrow as possible.
Nuts and seeds	Advice
Chop or flake whole nuts	Chop or flake whole nuts, peanuts and seeds. Whole nuts should not be given to children under five years old.
Bread	Advice
White bread and other breads	White bread can form a ball shape with a dough-like texture at the back of a child's throat, if not chewed properly. Brown bread or toasted white bread are good alternatives. Cut bread, chapatis, naan bread and other breads into narrow strips.
Snacks and other foods	Advice
Popcorn	Do not give babies and young children popcorn.
Chewing gum and marshmallows	Do not give babies and young children chewing gum or marshmallows.
Peanut butter	Do not give babies and young children peanut butter on its own, only use as a spread.
Jelly cubes	Do not give babies and young children raw jelly cubes.
Boiled sweets and ice cubes	Do not give babies and young children boiled, hard, gooey, sticky or cough sweets, or ice cubes.
Raisins and other dried fruits	Do not give babies under the age of 1 whole raisins or dried fruits. Cut them into small pieces.



Paediatric first aid

A qualified paediatric first aider will be present at all times in the room during all snack and meal times.

Supervision when eating

An adult will always supervise children closely when they are eating. Staff will sit facing children while they eat to monitor for choking hazards, prevent food sharing and quickly identify any allergic reactions.

Special Dietary Needs and Allergies

- We maintain a current list of children's allergies, intolerances, and cultural dietary needs.
- Allergen information is displayed and followed in food preparation areas.
- All staff receive training in allergy management and emergency response.
- We work closely with parents and healthcare professionals to develop individual care plans as needed.
- We are a nut free school. Children are not permitted to have items that contain nuts in their lunches or for snacks provided by home.

Learning and Mealtime Environment

- Mealtimes are a key learning opportunity and are used to teach children about healthy food, hygiene, and manners.
- Children are encouraged to try new foods and take part in preparing simple snacks.
- We support children to serve themselves where appropriate, promoting independence.
- Positive role modelling and discussions about food and health are encouraged.
- Mealtimes are social, inclusive, and calm.
- Children sit together with staff who encourage positive eating behaviours.
- Independence is promoted by encouraging children to serve themselves where age-appropriate.



Guidance for children aged 1 to 5 years

A healthy plate

We encourage children to eat a balanced diet containing a wide variety of foods. We plan snacks that include a variety of food and drinks from the 4 main food groups every day. The more children try new foods, the wider the range of nutrients they will get from their meals. We will have children eat together in our setting. This encourages them to try foods that they might not try at home. For example, children who won't touch broccoli at home might happily try some if they see their peers eating it.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

- Menus are shared regularly with families and feedback is welcomed.
- We provide information on healthy lunchbox choices (for children bringing food from home).
- Families are consulted about dietary needs, food preferences, and cultural or religious requirements.
- We signpost parents to external guidance and support where appropriate.

Sustainability

- We aim to reduce food waste and promote recycling in food-related activities.
- Our menus favour seasonal, locally sourced, and sustainably produced ingredients where possible.

Cooking with Children

- Cooking and food preparation activities are part of our curriculum.
- These activities promote fine motor skills, maths, science, and cultural learning.
- Health and safety guidelines are followed at all times.

Celebrations and Special Occasions

- We celebrate in healthy and inclusive ways.
- Families are encouraged to share culturally significant foods that meet our nutrition



and allergy guidelines.

Cultural and Dietary Preferences

- We respect and accommodate dietary needs related to religion, culture, and ethical beliefs.
- Parents are consulted to ensure inclusive meal planning.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

- This policy is reviewed annually or in response to updated statutory guidance.
- Menus and food practices are reviewed regularly and adapted based on feedback and nutritional standards.
- Compliance is monitored by the leadership team through regular audits.
- All staff are kept informed of any updates to guidance or training requirements.

Key References

- Statutory Framework for the EYFS (2024, effective September 2024)
- Nutrition Guidance for Early Years Providers (DfE, 2025)
- Example Menus for Early Years Settings (Public Health England, 2025)
- Food Standards Agency: Safer Food Better Business
- Eat Better, Start Better (Public Health England / Action for Children)
- Start for Life - NHS