EYFS Food and Nutrition Policy

Context

The EYFS Statutory Framework includes a safeguarding and welfare requirement for providers to follow the published nutrition guidance for children who are in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The EYFS safeguarding and welfare requirements are given legal force by Regulations1 made under section 39(1)(b) of the Childcare Act 2006.

The guidance supports us in meeting the EYFS Statutory Framework requirement 'Where children are provided with meals, snacks and drinks, these must be healthy, balanced and nutritious'.

Lunch and Tea Provision

Lunch and tea are provided by a catering company 'Thomas Franks' via the Queen Anne's School (QAS) preparation kitchen. The meals are packed into a 'hot box' for us and wheeled over by the kitchen porter to our 'servery kitchen' where our Lunchtime Supervisor puts the food into our electric warming oven. The temperature of the food is checked at source by the QAS chef and then again just before being served to our children.

Children may 'opt out' of lunch and bring a healthy packed lunch instead.

The School Provides Daily

1. Breakfast at Before School Care (if requested)
2. A piece of fruit snack before After School Clubs
3. Daily milk is offered to the EYFS children
4. Tea on Fridays
5. Tea for Holiday Clubs
6. Friday Tuck Shop

Our Approach

Our EYFS Food and Nutrition Policy is developed in partnership with our parents and carers, our staff, and Queen Anne's School Head Chef. It also links to our **School Healthy Eating Policy** linked to the Government The Eatwell Guide shows what a healthy and balanced diet looks like in one day or over a whole week.

Nutrition - A healthy plate

A healthy, balanced diet is based on the 4 main food groups (fruit and vegetables; potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbohydrates; dairy or dairy alternatives; and beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins). These provide essential nutrients to help children grow and develop.

We encourage children to eat a balanced diet containing a wide variety of foods. We plan meals and 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.

Our children eat together in the dining room, in two session (EYFS and KS1 in the first sitting and KS2 in the second session). Our teachers are encouraged to eat with the children and there is always a Nursery Nurse with the Nursery Children. This encourages children to try foods that they might not try at home. For example, children who won't touch broccoli at home might try some if they see their peers eating it.

Children aged 3 to 5 years have different nutritional requirements to older children and adults and so we provide them with a healthy balanced diet with a range of foods. These provide essential nutrients to help children grow and develop.

A healthy, balanced diet is based on the 4 main food groups:

1. Fruit and Vegetables
2. Starchy carbohydrates; potatoes, bread, rice, pasta
3. Dairy or dairy alternatives
4. Proteins: beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins.

Fruit and vegetables

These include: fresh, frozen, tinned or dried fruit and vegetables; pulses such as lentils and beans. We:

1. Provide at least 1 portion of vegetables and/or fruit as part at each main meal (breakfast, lunch, dinner) and as part of some snacks (not including dried fruit).
2. Provide a variety of vegetables or fruit across the day and each week.
3. Limit baked beans to once a week.
4. Avoid dried fruit as a snack. It should only be provided as part of a meal.
5. Choose fruit tinned in juice.
6. **Choose no added salt and sugar options or those tinned in water.**

Starchy Carbohydrates

These include: bread; potatoes, sweet potatoes, and other starchy root vegetables; pasta and noodles; rice and other grains; breakfast cereals. We:

1. Provide a portion of starchy food as part of each main meal (breakfast, lunch and tea) each day.
2. Provide at least 3 different types of starchy food and a variety of wholegrain and white starchy foods across breakfasts, lunch and tea each week.
3. Provide wholegrain starchy foods for at least 1 breakfast, lunch and tea each week.
4. We limit sugar and salt content in breakfast cereals and choose those with the lowest sugar and salt content which are labelled as 'low' (green).
1. Limit the salt content in bread and bread products. Choose those with a lower salt content

which are labelled as 'low' (green) or 'medium' (amber) in salt.
2. Limit starchy foods which have been fried to a maximum of once a week (e.g. chips, fried rice and fried noodles).
3. Limit tinned pasta in sauce (e.g. spaghetti hoops) and choose no added sugar options.
4. Avoid flavoured dried rice, pasta and noodle products e.g. packets and pots of instant flavoured noodles, pasta and rice.

Dairy and Plain, Fortified Plant-Based Alternatives

These include: milk; cheese; yoghurt and fromage frais. We:

1. Provide 3 portions of milk and unsweetened dairy foods each day (which includes those provided at home).
2. Provide non-dairy alternatives that are unsweetened and calcium fortified (e.g. oat milk or soya milk).
3. Provide lower-fat dairy options after this age.
4. Avoid sweetened yoghurts and fromage frais (including non-dairy alternatives) and choose plain unsweetened options.

Proteins

These include: beans, pulses and nuts; meat and poultry; fish and shellfish; eggs; meat alternatives. We:

1. Provide a portion of protein as part of lunch and tea each day.
2. Provide a variety of protein sources as part of lunch and tea across the week.
3. Provide at least 1 lunch and 1 tea for children each week which uses beans, lentils, pulses or a meat alternative as the protein source.
4. Provide vegetarian and vegan children with a variety of protein sources such as beans, pulses, and meat alternatives each week as part of lunch and tea.
5. Provide oily fish (such as salmon, sardines or mackerel) at least once every 3 weeks.
6. Limit the provision of processed meat products (e.g. sausages, breaded chicken, meatballs), processed fish products (e.g. fish fingers, fish cakes), and products made from meat alternatives (e.g. vegetarian sausages), to once a week for each of the 3 types as these products can be high in saturated fat and salt.

For all foods: We\;

1. Avoid foods high in saturated fat, salt, and/or sugars like cakes, sweet and savoury pastries, biscuits, crisps, chocolate, and other confectionary.
2. Avoid artificial sweeteners as they may encourage children to prefer very sweet foods

Drinks: We:

1. Provide children with access to water throughout the day. They also bring water bottles from home.
2. Provide only fresh tap water and plain milk to drink.

3. Avoid sugary drinks (including fruit juices, squash and smoothies).

Portion size for children aged 1 to 5 years

Portion size must be appropriate to the age of the child. For example, our older children in the second sitting will have a larger portioned plate than the EYFS and KS1 children. There are no official guidelines on exactly how much food children need. Portions should be appropriate for a child's body size and appetite. We will monitor a child's appetite and adjust portion sizes to make sure they get enough energy and nutrients.

Lunchtime staff must avoid:

1. making children finish everything on their plate or eat more than they want to
1. offering rewards to children for finishing everything on their plate (e.g. stickers or dessert).

DfE's help for early years providers website has a guide to portion sizes.

School Food Standards and EYFS Nutrition Guidelines

We follow both The School Food Standards (SFS) and the EYFS Nutrition Guidelines which apply to food and drink provided to pupils on school premises up to 6pm, including, for example, breakfast clubs, tuck shops, mid-morning break, and after school clubs.
The Early Years Guidelines state that Early Years settings must follow the SFS but must also take into account the EYFS nutrition guidance. Our two policies work in tandem.

Summary for children aged to 5 years:

1. make sure children eat a balanced diet covering the 4 main food groups
2. avoid foods and drinks high in salt, sugar and saturated fat
3. milk and water are the only drinks you should offer
4. children should eat a variety of fruit and vegetables to access different vitamins and nutrients.

Menu Planning

The menus are planned and written by the Queen Anne's School chef. However, we meet with him/her regularly to discuss our needs and menus are changed to suit our needs. This is often because primary aged children and those in the EYFS do not have the same sophisticated tastes as an 18 year old. For example, when asparagus risotto is on the menu, we have a more appropriate meal substituted to the age of our children. Our weekly menus are planned for a 3 week rotation, to ensure children are eating a wide variety of food.

Varied and Balanced Diet Across the Week

Menus should include a variety of different foods, tastes, textures and colours. This will make sure children get the benefits from different nutrients in each food. It's good for children's sensory systems to experience flavours from around the world. This can also build appreciation for food from different cultures at an early age. We try to follow cultural

traditions where appropriate. For example, noodles for the Chinese New Year or International Pizza Day in February.

Menu Review

We regularly review and reflect on the nutritional value of our menus to make sure they provide a varied amount of nutrients each day and across the week, and that we are avoiding foods that are high in saturated fat, salt and sugar like cakes, puddings, sweet and savoury pastries, biscuits, crisps, chocolate and other confectionery.

Introducing New Menus

Queen Anne's kitchen change their menus at least termly to reflect the changing seasons.

Publication of Menus

We share menus with parents and carers including appropriate food allergen information.
This can help parents and carers balance the food they provide at home with the meals and snacks served in your setting. Including allergen information in the menus which shows if any of the meals contain any known or common allergens as an ingredient can help parents and carers to identify any issues and reduce anxiety.

We also seek feedback from parents and carers on menus (especially regarding cultural preferences or dietary requirements) can help ensure the meals provided meet the individual needs of each child.

Meeting the Needs of All Children

We cater for the cultural and dietary needs of the children. Children with special dietary requirements may need specific foods excluded or included. Where a food is excluded from a child's diet we consider substitutions and replacement ingredients.

When creating menus, we consider substitutions and replacement ingredients for children with special dietary requirements. These may be linked to food allergies, intolerances or coeliac disease, religious and cultural beliefs, and vegetarianism or veganism. DfE's help for early years providers website has an easy substitution table.

We create a safe and inclusive environment for all children to eat and children with special dietary requirements should be included in mealtimes with other children. Only where a risk assessment concludes that a significant risk remains despite adequate training and supervision of meals and snacks times, would a child need to eat their meal separately to other children.

We have ongoing discussions with parents and/or carers about their child's dietary needs. Parents and/or carers may assist by sharing guidance from healthcare professionals, and we would seek professional advice for menu planning if needed.

The NHS has further information on the vegetarian and vegan diets.

The Most Common Dietary Requirements in Early Years are:

1. Food allergies: Allergies to foods can cause serious reactions, including death.
2. Food intolerances: Food intolerances often cause stomach pain and discomfort.
3. Vegetarianism: A vegetarian won't eat meat of any kind, including fish. They also won't eat by-products of animal slaughter, such as gelatine.
4. Veganism or eating a plant-based diet such as vegetables, grains, legumes, nuts, seeds and fruits and foods made from plants. Vegans don't eat foods derived wholly or partially from animals (such as meat, fish, eggs and honey).
5. Pescetarianism: A pescetarian avoids meat but eats fish and seafood. They may also consume dairy and eggs.
6. Religious preferences: Some religions or faiths have strict dietary requirements. We respect all religious and cultural beliefs. Religious dietary requirements include (but are not limited to): We do not keep kosher but can and do provide.
    7. only eating halal foods
    8. avoiding pork or beef
    9. eating specific foods only on certain days.

The Mealtime Environment and Social Aspects of Mealtimes

We try to make our dining room a place where sharing food and stories is part of our school day. Our children are not expected to eat in silence but may be reminded not to raise their voices by the duty teacher. Year 6 children help set and clear tables and deliver plated food in the second sitting.

We change things around to add interest. For example:
Buddy Lunches
House Lunches
Family Lunches – sitting with siblings or inviting parents to join us
Picnics outside in the summer
Barbeques and Pizzas in the summer
Family Lunches
Jacket potatoes or tortillas with a choice bar
Soup in cups with chunky wholemeal bread in the winter
Using chopsticks

Food allergies

Food allergies can be life threatening conditions for some children and should be taken very seriously; they develop when the body's immune system reacts against food proteins which it sees as invaders. It then releases chemicals to attack. Symptoms of an allergic reaction may include:

1. coughing, wheezing, breathlessness, noisy breathing or a hoarse voice
2. a red raised rash (hives)
3. tingly or itchy feeling in the mouth

4. sneezing or an itchy, runny or blocked nose
5. stomach pain
6. feeling sick or vomiting
7. swelling of face, lips, tongue or eyes
8. difficulty swallowing
9. diarrhoea
10. feeling dizzy or lightheaded
11. pale or floppy
12. suddenly sleepy
13. collapse or unconscious

If we have a child who has a severe food allergy and has an Epi-pen, all staff will be trained in how to use it.

Anaphylaxis may be present:

14. swelling of throat, tongue or upper airways
15. difficulty swallowing
16. wheezing / noisy breathing
17. breathing difficulty
18. persistent cough
19. dizziness
20. feeling faint
21. sudden sleepiness
22. confusion
23. pale clammy skin
24. loss of consciousness

It's possible to be allergic to anything, but there are 14 common allergens. These are:

25. celery
26. cereals containing gluten (such as wheat, barley and oats and some flours)
27. crustaceans (such as prawns, crabs and lobsters)
28. eggs
29. fish
30. lupin (such as bread made using lupin seeds)
31. milk
32. molluscs (such as mussels and oysters)
33. mustard
34. peanuts
35. sesame
36. soybeans
37. sulphur dioxide and sulphites (sometimes found in dried fruits and fruit juices)
38. tree nuts (such as almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, brazil nuts, cashews, pecans, pistachios and macadamia nuts).

Parents/carers sign a form on entry to the school about food preferences and food allergies.

The NHS has further information on food allergies in babies and young children, including how to recognise symptoms and how to react.

The Food Standards Agency has free food allergy training and an allergen checklist with tips on food allergy best-practice.

Food Intolerances
Food intolerance is different to food allergy and usually occurs when the body has difficulty digesting certain foods or ingredients in food. Intolerances do not involve the immune system and are not life threatening. Food intolerances cause unpleasant symptoms such as abdominal pain or discomfort, diarrhoea, bloating, constipation, red rash, itching or eczema flares.

Some common food intolerances include:
1. lactose intolerance (lactose is the sugar found in animal milk, e.g. cow's milk, goat's milk and sheep's milk and can be found in foods or drinks containing animal milk, e.g. yoghurt)
2. gluten intolerance or sensitivity (gluten is a protein found in wheat, barley and rye). It is important to note that gluten intolerance is different to coeliac disease
3. intolerance to some food additives or chemicals.

The NHS has further information on food intolerances.

Celebrations and Special Occasions

Many families like to celebrate their child's birthday and other special events by bringing in a cake or sweets to share. We try to ensure any food brought in from home is balanced and meets our food guidelines. For example, we are a 'nut-free' school. Any food shared will be checked for potential allergens.

Packed Lunches

It is important to ensure that food provided from home aligns with the healthy options offered by the School, so that children receive consistent messages about nutrition. All foods brought from home should be checked for potential allergens so that the risk of cross contamination is reduced.

Choking Hazard

When preparing food, it is important to avoid round shapes as these are a choking hazard. We cut small fruits lengthways and then halve again (quarters). All food served to children must be prepared in a way to prevent choking. For example, we ask parents to half soft fruit and vegetables. These include:

1. Grapes
2. Raspberries
3. Strawberries

4. Cherry tomatoes.

The Food Standards Agency has a poster about choking hazards.

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We advise our parents and carers to:

• Clearly label their child's name on the lunch bag.
• Pack foods that can safely be kept at room temperature or use cold packs or Thermos Flasks to keep food at the correct temperature.

We also remind them at the start of each school year, about our nutritional guidance and what we allow and don't allow in snack and lunch boxes.

Cooking with children (Food Technology)

Cooking is a great experience for young children and helps to create a positive relationship with food. See our DT/Food Technology Curriculum.

Conclusion

It is important that all staff understand:

1. each child's special dietary requirements including which foods or ingredients need to be avoided, and which should be included
2. how to balance safety and inclusion for each child which children have allergy action plans in place, how to access these and follow the procedures described within them, including action to take in case of an emergency and correct administration of prescribed medication.
3. our responsibility in reducing risk, for example:
    1. making sure each child receives the correct food
    2. avoiding art/craft or other activities involving foods that a child is allergic to, for example, play dough or pasta (wheat/gluten), birdseed or music shakers (nuts or pulses)
    3. supervising children appropriately at mealtimes to avoid food sharing and cross contact
    4. taking care with celebrations (e.g. birthdays, festivals or holidays) where foods are brought in from home and shared by providers or parents and carers
    5. informing all parents and carers of the potential risk of foods brought from home for other children
4. encouraging children with food allergies to ask about what is in the food that is offered to them
5. warning signs or symptoms to look out for in the case of food allergies or intolerances

Policy Administration

Linked Policies

This policy also needs to be in line with other school polices and therefore should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

1. Health and Safety
2. EYFS
3. Healthy Eating
4. Food Technology

Review Schedule

This policy is subject to annual reviews by a member of the SMT unless circumstances require an earlier review.

Update and Review Log

Updated/ Reviewed By	Date	Notes
J Lawson	July 2025	Written in response to the new EYFS Guidelines

Appendix 1
Food and drink guidelines

Fruit and vegetables These include: 1. fresh, frozen, tinned or dried fruit and vegetables	1. **Provide** at least 1 portion of vegetables and/or fruit as part at each main meal (breakfast, lunch, dinner) and as part of some snacks (not including dried fruit). 2. **Provide** a variety of vegetables or fruit across the day and each week. 3. **Limit** baked beans to once a week if this is being counted as a vegetable. 4. **Avoid** dried fruit as a snack. It should only be provided as part of a meal. 5. **Avoid** fruit tinned in syrup and choose fruit tinned in juice. 6. **Avoid** added salt and sugar in tinned vegetables and pulses and choose no added salt and sugar options or those tinned in water.

	1. **Limit** the salt content in bread and bread products. Choose those with a lower salt content which are labelled as 'low' (green) or 'medium' (amber) in salt. 2. **Limit** starchy foods which have been fried to a maximum of once a week (e.g. chips, fried rice and fried noodles). 3. **Limit** tinned pasta in sauce (e.g. spaghetti hoops) and choose no added sugar options. 4. **Avoid** cereals labelled as 'high' (red) in sugar such as sugar-coated or chocolate-flavoured cereals. 5. **Avoid** flavoured dried rice, pasta and noodle products e.g. packets and pots of instant flavoured noodles, pasta and rice.
Dairy and plain, fortified plant-based alternatives These include: 1. milk 2. cheese 3. yoghurt and fromage frais.	1. **Provide** 3 portions of milk and unsweetened dairy foods each day (which includes those provided at home). 2. **Provide** non-dairy alternatives that are unsweetened and calcium fortified (e.g. oat milk or soya milk). 3. **Provide** full fat dairy foods (such as cheese and unsweetened yoghurt and fromage frais) for children under the age of 2 and gradually introduce lower-fat dairy options after this age. 4. **Avoid** sweetened yoghurts and fromage frais (including non-dairy alternatives) and choose plain unsweetened options.

Proteins These include: 1. beans, pulses and nuts 2. meat and poultry 3. fish and shellfish 4. eggs 5. meat alternatives. 5. pulses such as lentils and beans.	
Starchy Carbohydrates These include: 1. bread 2. potatoes, sweet potatoes, and other starchy root vegetables 3. pasta and noodles 4. rice and other grains 5. breakfast cereals.	1. **Provide** a portion of starchy food as part of each main meal (breakfast, lunch and tea) each day. 2. **Provide** plain starchy food such as plain savoury crackers, or unsalted unsweetened rice or corn cakes as part of at least 1 snack each day. 3. **Provide** at least 3 different types of starchy food and a variety of wholegrain and white starchy foods across breakfasts, snacks, lunch and tea each week. 4. **Provide** wholegrain starchy foods for at least 1 breakfast, lunch and tea each week. 5. **Limit** sugar and salt content in breakfast cereals. Choose those with the lowest sugar and salt content which are labelled as 'low' (green).

	1. **Provide** oily fish (such as salmon, sardines or mackerel) at least once every 3 weeks; this can be provided as part of lunch or tea. When oily fish is not provided as a main meal in the week, you could try to provide oily fish as a snack. 2. **Limit** oily fish to a maximum of twice per week. 3. **Limit** the provision of processed meat products (e.g. sausages, breaded chicken, meatballs), processed fish products (e.g. fish fingers, fish cakes), and products made from meat alternatives (e.g. vegetarian sausages), to once a week for each of the 3 types as these products can be high in saturated fat and salt.
For all foods	1. **Avoid** foods high in saturated fat, salt, and/or sugars like cakes, sweet and savoury pastries, biscuits, crisps, chocolate and other confectionary. 2. **Avoid** artificial sweeteners as they may encourage children to prefer very sweet foods

Drinks	1. **Provide** children with access to water throughout the day. 2. **Provide** only fresh tap water and plain milk to drink. 3. **Provide** whole milk, semi-skimmed cow's milk or unsweetened calcium fortified non-dairy alternatives for children from 1 year of age. 4. **Avoid** skimmed and 1% cow's milk. 5. **Avoid** sugary drinks (including fruit juices, squash and smoothies).

Example meals and snacks for children aged 1-5 years

Meal	Example dishes
Breakfast	1. Banana and berry porridge 2. Egg and wholemeal toast fingers with quartered tomatoes 3. Cinnamon and banana toast 4. Egg and mushroom cups with wholegrain bread strips

Lunch or tea	**Main dish:** 1. Jerk chicken and slaw with wholegrain wraps 2. Chickpea biryani 3. Roasted aubergine and tomato curry with chapatis 4. Cornflake chicken, sweet potato wedges and sweetcorn 5. Black bean and lentil koftas with cous cous 6. Creamy lentil and broccoli pasta 7. Homemade chicken burger 8. 5 bean chilli and homemade nachos **Starter, side dish or second dish:** 9. Bubble and squeak 10. Butternut squash and red pepper soup 11. Guacamole and pepper sticks 12. Hard-boiled egg with cooked carrot sticks 13. Plain yoghurt and banana finger sticks 14. Cheese and sliced strawberries 15. Unsweetened rice pudding and halved blueberries
Snacks	1. Cheesy English muffins and cucumber sticks 2. Hummus and vegetable fingers 3. Tuna dip and wholemeal pitta
Drinks	The only drinks that should be provided are: 1. fresh drinking water (which should be available throughout the day a 2. plain whole or semi-skimmed cow's milk or unsweetened calcium fort