

Food and Nutrition Policy

Policy date: September 2026

Review date: September 2028

In line with the DfE's EYFS Nutrition Guidance – May 2025

Food and Nutrition Policy

At Manor Court Community Primary School and Manor Court EYC we are committed to promoting healthy eating habits and ensuring that all children receive a nutritious and balanced meal while in our care whilst also ensuring that healthy eating is part of our curriculum.

What We Provide

For Manor Court EYC, we provide a healthy fruit snack and milk or water per session and in the mornings for Reception. In Key Stage One, we provide a healthy fruit snack at break time. All children across the school have access to fresh drinking water throughout the day. We offer a selection of healthy breakfast choices including cereal, brown toast and porridge in our breakfast club and a small healthy snack consisting of toast, fruit or rice cakes in our after-school club. Parents are responsible for providing their child's packed lunch if they do not have a school dinner.

In Manor Court EYC & Reception, parents are responsible for providing their child's packed lunch if they do not have a school dinner. As a preschool we will provide children with a snack in the afternoon. This will consist of fruit, vegetables or a portion of dairy.

Whole School Packed Lunch Expectations

We kindly ask that packed lunches include:
- **A portion of starchy food** (e.g. bread, pasta, rice, or wraps).
- **At least one portion of fruit or vegetables.**
- **A source of protein** (e.g. meat, eggs, beans, lentils, or fish).
- **A dairy item** (e.g. cheese, yoghurt or a suitable alternative).

We ask that the following items are avoided:

- Confectionery such as sweets and chocolate bars.
- Sugary fizzy drinks. Water recommended as the best drink for children.
- Foods high in salt or saturated fat (e.g. crisps, sausage rolls) should be limited.
- Marshmallows, popcorn, boiled sweets and jelly cubes (all of which are choking hazards for under 5s).

Snack Expectations

Children are required to bring in a snack for the morning. We ask that the snacks provided are in line with our policy and are of a healthy and nutritious nature for example:

- Fruit or vegetables
- Crackers, rice cakes or breadsticks
- Fruit pouches or fruit strings (e.g. Yo Yo Bears)

We kindly ask that you avoid anything requiring refrigeration such as yoghurts, chicken bites and boiled eggs, as we do not have the facilities to keep snacks cool.

For children in Reception and Manor Court EYC, when preparing food to be consumed in setting – either packed lunches or snacks, please ensure these are cut correctly to avoid choking hazards. Some main examples include:

- Grapes, cherry tomatoes and any other round fruits or vegetables should be halved lengthwise or quartered.
- Cocktail sausages should be cut lengthwise.
- For younger children apples, carrots and other hard fruits should be sliced or grated.

If you require any more information about what to provide for a snack or how to prepare food safely for your child, please speak to a member of staff.

Food Safety and Storage

Please note that we do not have the facilities to reheat or refrigerate food. To keep packed lunches safe and fresh:

• Use an **insulated lunch bag or box,** clearly labelled with your child's name.
• Include **ice packs** to keep perishable items cool.
• If sending a warm meal, please use a **child-friendly food flask** designed to retain heat.

Allergies and Dietary Needs

To ensure the safety of all children:

• Please do not include any food items containing **nuts**, as we are a **nut-free setting**.
• Inform us of any **dietary needs or allergies** your child has (this information is requested on your child's registration form. However we must be notified of any changes to your child's dietary needs or allergies. This also includes cultural preferences.

Mealtimes are a calm and social part of our day. They can introduce children to a new range of foods that they see other children and staff are enjoying. Staff are with the children at all times during lunchtime to supervise safety, behaviour and to support with opening containers etc. We provide gentle encouragement for children to try new foods in a pressure-free way. Staff supervising mealtimes have all completed either 12-hour paediatric first aid training or Emergency First Aid. There will always be paediatric first aid trained staff present.

Drinks

Fresh drinking water is always available to children throughout the day. We encourage children to drink water regularly to stay hydrated, especially during physical activity and warmer weather. Water is offered with meals and snacks, and children are supported to access it independently. We do not provide sugary drinks, in line with our commitment to promoting healthy choices.

Celebrations

As a setting we value children's birthdays. Families are welcome to bring in a treat or to celebrate by bringing in a non-edible option such as bubbles or stickers to share with the children. If you do choose to bring in a cake or sweet treat – we ask that you double check dietary requirements with us before providing any. These will be sent home with the children and can then be given at parents' discretion.

Cooking and learning about Food

Cooking and learning about food are a key part of our curriculum. We teach children about both healthy and fatty foods and encourage them to make good choices. When cooking with children we make sure we are cooking with a range of different foods including those from a variety of different cultures. We always welcome parents' input about their own cultures and if you would like to come in and cook alongside the children, please let a member of staff know.

Food safety and Hygiene

We ensure that all staff complete food hygiene and allergy training and are made aware of children's individual dietary needs which are also recorded on both the register and in the kitchen. All epi pens are clearly labelled and stored safely.

Supporting Families

We understand that every family's circumstances are different, and we aim to work in partnership with parents and carers to support healthy eating both at home and in our setting. If you ever need advice, ideas for affordable nutritious meals, or support with providing snacks or packed lunches, please speak to a member of staff. We are here to help and can offer guidance or signpost to additional resources where needed.