



Nutrition and Healthy Eating Policy

Ladybirds Preschool

Bishops Itchington Primary School

September 2025

Next Review Due: Sept 2026

1. Policy Statement

At Ladybirds Preschool, we are committed to promoting the health and wellbeing of all children in our care. We recognise that good nutrition in the early years is essential for healthy growth, development, and learning. This policy outlines our approach to promoting healthy eating and supporting families in providing nutritious lunchboxes for their children.

This policy has been developed with reference to:

- The **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework** (DfE, Sept 2025)
- **Eat Better, Start Better**: Voluntary Food and Drink Guidelines for Early Years Settings in England
- NHS guidance on children's nutrition
- **Early years Foundation Stage Nutrition guidance** April 2024

2. Aims of the Policy

- To promote a consistent, whole-setting approach to healthy eating.
- To ensure that children attending with lunchboxes receive balanced, nutritious food.
- To work in partnership with parents and carers to support healthy eating practices at home and in the setting.
- To meet requirements of the EYFS, particularly regarding safeguarding children's welfare and promoting good health.

3. Our Approach to Healthy Eating

a. Parental Responsibility for Lunchboxes

As we are a *lunchbox-only provision*, parents and carers are responsible for providing their child's lunch. However, we provide support and guidance to help parents make informed and nutritious choices.

b. Healthy Eating Guidance for Lunchboxes

We encourage lunchboxes to reflect the following:

- A **starchy carbohydrate** (e.g., bread, wrap, pasta, rice, potato)
- At least one portion of **fruit** and one portion of **vegetables**
- A **source of protein** (e.g., meat, fish, eggs, beans, hummus, cheese)
- A **dairy or dairy alternative** (e.g., yogurt, cheese)
- **Water** is available and encouraged throughout the day
- Contain a **cool pack** and placed in a suitable, clearly named, container / lunch box.
- Contain appropriate portion sizes (<https://www.nutrition.org.uk/creating-a-healthy-diet/portion-sizes/>)
- Small items such as grapes, cherry tomatoes and blueberries are cut lengthways to reduce choking hazards – see Early Years Choking Hazards: https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/Early%20Years%20Choking%20Hazards%20Table_English.pdf

To support oral and overall health, we ask that the following are **avoided**:

- Fizzy drinks, squash, or juice (water or milk only)
- Confectionery (e.g., chocolate bars, sweets)
- Fried, salty snacks (e.g., crisps – baked or low-salt options are preferred)
- Products high in sugar (e.g., cakes, sweet pastries – very small portions only if included)

We recognise that occasional treats may be included, but we encourage parents to follow the above guidance.

c. Allergies and Dietary Needs

We are a **nut-free setting** due to allergies. We ask all parents not to include any nut or nut-containing products in their child's lunchbox.

We respect and support individual dietary needs, including allergies, intolerances, cultural and religious dietary requirements. Parents must inform us of any such needs, which will be clearly recorded and shared with staff.

4. Role of the Setting

a. Supervision of Lunchtime

Children will be appropriately supervised during lunch, and staff will:

- Encourage children to eat their savoury items first
- Support children to try new foods and eat at their own pace
- Model good eating habits and table manners
- Check for uneaten or problematic food (e.g., choking hazards or shared items)

We will monitor lunchboxes discreetly and will **never criticise or shame** a child for the contents of their lunch. We will speak to parents if we have any concerns regarding the contents of your child's lunchbox.

b. Promoting Healthy Choices

- We will provide regular communication (e.g., newsletters, parent workshops) to share ideas for balanced lunchboxes.
- We use stories, role play, cooking, and food-themed activities to develop children's understanding of healthy eating, as part of the EYFS curriculum.
- We provide snack in the morning session. This will be either a piece of fresh fruit, Vegetable, breadstick or a cracker.

c. Drinks

Children will have access to **fresh drinking water** at all times, and you are welcome to send a water bottle each day (especially in warmer weather). Parents are not required to send drinks in lunchboxes unless previously discussed with staff.

5. Staff Training and Development

All staff involved in food and mealtimes receive training in:

- Choking prevention and safe food handling
- Healthy eating practices in the early years

6. Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy is reviewed annually and updated as necessary to reflect changes in guidance or setting needs. Parent feedback is welcomed to ensure our policy is inclusive, supportive, and practical.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Sample Lunchbox Ideas

- Wholemeal sandwich with cheese, cucumber sticks, apple slices
- Chicken wrap, carrot sticks, banana, plain yogurt
- Pasta salad with sweetcorn and ham, orange wedges, rice cakes

Appendix 2: Resources for Parents

- NHS Change4Life: <https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/>
- Eat Better Start Better Guidance: <https://foundationyears.org.uk/files/2017/11/Eat-Better-Start-Better1.pdf>

This policy has been produced and adapted by all staff

Date: September 2025