International School of London

Early Years Safer Eating Policy 2026-2027

Date reviewed
September 2026

To be reviewed
September 2027

Statement

At **ISL**, we are committed to ensuring the health, safety, and wellbeing of all children during mealtimes and snack times. This Safer Eating Policy outlines our approach to:

- Preventing choking
- Managing allergies and dietary needs
- Ensuring staff supervision and training
- Promoting safe and hygienic food practices

This policy complies fully with the **Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS, September 2025)** and all relevant food safety legislation.

Aims

- To prevent avoidable choking risks.
- To safely accommodate all children with allergies or medical dietary needs.
- To ensure all staff are trained and competent in safer eating practices.
- To create a calm, supportive, and supervised eating environment.

Choking Risk Prevention

We follow NHS guidance to minimise choking hazards, including:

- Avoiding high-risk foods for under-fives (for example, whole grapes, popcorn, cherry tomatoes, and hard raw vegetables).
- Cutting round foods lengthwise and into small pieces.
- Removing pips, stones, skins, and bones where applicable.
- Ensuring children sit while eating and do not walk, talk, run, or play with food in their mouths.
- Supervising children at all times during meals and snacks.

Allergy and Dietary Needs Management

- We collect and regularly update dietary requirements from parents and carers, including allergies, intolerances, and religious or cultural preferences.
- An Allergy and Dietary Chart is displayed securely in food preparation and classroom areas and includes the child's name, allergy details, photograph, and emergency protocol.
- Staff follow individual Health Care Plans (HCPs) and emergency procedures, including the use of prescribed medication such as EpiPens.
- Children with severe allergies are provided with suitable alternatives and have individual risk assessments in place.
- All food labels are checked for allergens by trained staff.
- No food is given to a child if the ingredients cannot be confirmed.

Food Preparation and Hygiene

- All food is stored, prepared, and served in accordance with Food Standards Agency and Environmental Health requirements.
- Only appropriately trained staff handle food.
- Cross-contamination is prevented through the use of designated equipment and robust cleaning procedures.
- All cutlery, cups, and plates are age-appropriate and regularly checked for safety.
- Eating areas are cleaned and disinfected before and after meals and snacks.

Supervision and Mealtime Practice

- A trained paediatric first aider is present during all meals and snack times.
- Mealtimes are calm, sociable, and well organised.
- Children are encouraged to eat safely, try new foods, and follow established routines, such as sitting whilst eating, chewing carefully, and avoiding rushing.
- Staff remain vigilant for signs of distress, choking, or allergic reactions and respond immediately where necessary.
- No child is permitted to eat unsupervised at any time.

Training

All relevant staff, including students and lunchtime supervisors, receive training in:

- Safer eating and choking risk prevention.
- Food allergy awareness and emergency response.
- Food hygiene and cross-contamination prevention.
- Paediatric First Aid, including responding to choking incidents and administering auto-injectors such as EpiPens.

Training is:

- Provided during induction.
- Refreshed annually.
- Recorded within the staff training log.

Emergency Procedures

Choking

Staff will:

- Follow paediatric choking first aid procedures.
- Call for additional assistance.
- Contact emergency services where required.

Allergic Reaction

Staff will:

- Administer an EpiPen immediately where prescribed.
- Call 999.
- Inform parents or carers.
- Follow the child's individual medical plan.

All incidents will be recorded and reviewed in line with safeguarding and first aid procedures.

Parental Responsibility

Parents and carers must:

- Provide accurate and up-to-date dietary and medical information.
- Notify the school immediately of any changes to their child's dietary or medical needs.
- Supply prescribed emergency medication, such as EpiPens, ensuring it is in date and clearly labelled.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The **EYFS Lead and Head of Primary** are responsible for the implementation and monitoring of this policy.

- Regular audits of food safety, choking prevention, and allergy procedures are undertaken.
- Mealtime practices are observed and reviewed each term.
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At ISL London, Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone’s responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. To fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.