



Cleeve Prior CE Primary School
'EYFS Food and Nutrition Policy'

Our vision

Our vision is to provide a safe, caring and nurturing environment, where everyone is given opportunities to learn, discover and grow in our changing world. We will live out our Christian values of Respect, Hope, Love, Forgiveness, Trust and Honesty and strive to guide our community into leading fruitful lives, learning from Jesus' teachings, to love themselves and one another in order to achieve success.

'Teach children how they should live, and they will remember it all their life.'

Proverbs 22:6

Policy Intent

At Cleeve Prior CE Primary School we are committed to promoting the health and well-being of all children in our care. We recognise the importance of a balanced, nutritious diet in supporting children's growth, development, and ability to learn. This policy outlines our approach to food and nutrition, in line with the EYFS framework and national guidelines. Please note due to the structure of Cleeve Prior CE Primary School classes, practices within EYFS are also available to children in Years 1 and 2.

Aims

- To provide nutritious and balanced meals, snacks, and drinks that meet children's dietary needs.
- To encourage positive attitudes towards healthy eating.
- To support children in making healthy food choices.
- To work with parents/carers to support children's individual dietary needs and preferences.
- To ensure food safety and hygiene standards are consistently maintained.

Legal Framework

This policy is based on the following:

- **EYFS Statutory Framework (2024)**
- **EYFS Nutrition Guidance May 2025**
- **Food Standards Agency Guidelines**
- **Eat Better Start Better** guidance (Public Health England)
- **Children and Families Act 2014** (for allergy management and special dietary needs)

Healthy Eating Education

- Our EYFS curriculum promotes healthy eating through practical activities, discussions, and positive role-modelling to teach children about balanced diets and

food origins (at an appropriate level for their age and development). Healthy eating is promoted through daily routines, discussions, and themed activities.

- Children are encouraged to try new foods and participate in food-related activities (this includes through sensory play and enhancements made to the continuous provision).
- Children will have the opportunity to cook, taste foods and plant different fruits and vegetables throughout their time in EYFS. This helps children to understand where food comes from and the importance of nutrition.

Mealtimes and Food Provision

- We provide a variety of healthy meals and snacks throughout the day (in accordance with the School Food Standards (SFS). Cooked dinners are prepared by Blackminster Middle School and transported to Cleeve Prior CE Primary School.
 - All Reception children have the opportunity for a free school dinner provided at lunchtime (as do children Years 1 – 2)
 - Water/milk and a healthy snack are provided throughout the day across EY.
- Meals include fresh fruit and vegetables, wholegrains, dairy, and protein sources.
- Water and/or milk is available and accessible at all times.
- Sugary, salty, and highly processed foods are avoided.
- We follow a 3-week rotating menu which is reviewed regularly to incorporate seasonal produce and feedback from children and parents.

Portion Size for children aged 1-5 years

A portion size for a child aged 1 to 5 is generally smaller than an adult portion. Portion size refers to 1 part of a meal.

For example - 1 portion of vegetables alongside a portion of carbohydrates and a portion of protein could be 1 meal. There are no official guidelines on exactly how much food children need. Portions should be appropriate for a child's body size and appetite. For toddlers, portion size is usually roughly the size of their clenched fist. About half a piece of fruit (cut appropriately) or a tablespoon of vegetables is a good portion size for a snack.

Staff will:

- Monitor a child's appetite and adjust portion sizes to make sure they get enough energy and nutrients.
- Encourage children to try different foods.
- Communicate with parents about any concerns regarding a child's intake of food

Staff will not:

- Make children finish everything on their plate or eat more than they want to
- Offer rewards to children for finishing everything on their plate (e.g. stickers or dessert).

Food brought in from home:

Cleeve Prior CE Primary School have a legal duty to provide healthy, balanced and nutritious food to children and encourage healthier food choices for packed lunches. It is important that food brought in from home aligns with the healthy options offered by the setting, so that children receive consistent messages about nutrition.

Parents/ Carers are encouraged to:

- Ensure the food is suitable for their child's individual developmental needs and prepared in a way to prevent choking.
- For perishable items that should be kept cool, pack food in insulated sealed bags. If ice packs are unavailable, the '4-hour rule' can be applied. This rule allows food to be stored outside of chilled conditions for up to 4 hours, but this should only be done once during the entire storage.
- Clearly label their child's name on the lunch bag.
- Pack foods that can safely be kept at room temperature.

The Food Standards Agency provides advice on listeria which has examples of ready-to-eat foods that should be eaten within 4 hours of removing them from the fridge. [Listeria | Food Standards Agency](#).

Allergies and Special Dietary Needs

- We work closely with parents to identify and accommodate food allergies, intolerances, and cultural or religious dietary requirements.
 - When children are eating a paediatric first aid trained member of staff is present.
 - Individual dietary requirements are clearly labelled and communicated to all staff. A health care plan will be written detailing a child's allergies, how symptoms present and the procedures that should be followed in the event of a reaction.
 - An allergy list is maintained and reviewed regularly.
 - All food brought from home are checked for potential allergens before being served to risk cross contamination.
 - Parents should provide written information from their qualified health professional about the nature of their specific needs so that their nutritional requirements can be achieved.
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Children with additional needs and other special diets

Cleeve Prior CE Primary School recognise that some children may have specific dietary needs because of physical or developmental issues, which may affect their ability to eat independently. Children may experience sensory needs in relation to foods, for example, sensitivity to textures, tastes or smells, which can lead to limited preferences or aversions towards specific foods.

Modifications to the menu may be made (following discussions with caterers) as well as adaptations to the eating environment. This can include but is not limited to limiting noise and other distractions, having a cloth to wipe hands if required and not pressuring the child to eat.

If a child requires a special diet for a medical reason, then confirmation will be sought from their qualified health professional about the nature of their specific needs so that their nutritional requirements can be achieved.

This information will be recorded, updated regularly and communicated to all staff involved in the preparing and handling of food. For children on a special diet, the parents and/or carers and carers or registered dietitian should supply the early years setting and food service provider with details of the child's dietary needs. This will include suitable food choices for meals and snacks, foods that should be excluded or specifically included, or supplements that may be required.

Foods for religious faiths and beliefs

Cleeve Prior CE Primary School understand that children may have specific food preferences or dietary needs according to cultural or religious beliefs. We will engage in open communication with parents/carers to ensure that all food provided meets children's food preferences and dietary needs according to their religious faiths and beliefs.

Safely managing special dietary requirements

Responding to the needs of children with special dietary requirements requires early and effective communication with parents and/or carers and carers as well as the food service provider and any relevant health professionals (in the case of food allergies or food avoidance for other medical reasons). Information on the needs of an individual child must be obtained in advance of them starting at the setting.

All staff working in EYFS, the wider school and the Catering team understand that:

- each child's special dietary requirements including which foods or ingredients need to be avoided, and which should be included
- food modification for particular children
- their responsibility in reducing risk, for example: preparing and serving meals and snacks, making sure each child receives the correct food
- which children have allergy action plans in place, how to access these and follow the procedures described within them

- encouraging children with food allergies to ask about what is in the food that is offered to them

Staff working in EYFS also understand:

- How to balance safety and inclusion for each child
- Their responsibility in reducing risk within the learning environment for example 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)
- Supervising children appropriately at mealtimes to avoid food sharing and cross contact
- Taking care with celebrations (e.g. birthdays, festivals or holidays) where foods are brought in from home and shared by providers or parents and/or carers
- Informing all parents and/or carers of the potential risk of foods brought from home for other children
- Warning signs or symptoms to look out for in the case of food allergies or intolerances, including action to take in case of an emergency and correct administration of prescribed medication.

Role of Staff

- Staff model healthy eating behaviours and sit with children at mealtimes to encourage social interaction.
- Staff monitor children's food intake and notify parents of any concerns.
- Regular training is provided on food safety, nutrition, and allergy awareness.
- Staff ensure that food is prepared/cut safely to avoid choking (see appendix 1).
- When children are eating, a paediatric first aid trained member of staff is present.

Partnership with Parents/Carers

We work closely with families to ensure consistency in promoting healthy eating at home and in the setting.

Parents are informed about the weekly menu and are able to select a meal for their child – this is done through the school office. Alternatively, parents may wish to provide a packed lunch for their child. See further guidance.

Celebrations

Many families like to share to celebrate their child's birthday and other special events by bringing in cakes and sweets. We encourage parents/carers to consider choosing healthier options for example a fruit platter or non-edible options (like stickers or bubbles) that can be shared.

Any food brought into EYFS to share with children should be shop bought (not home-made) with the list of ingredients clear for staff to check for potential allergens.

Cakes and sweets will not be shared with children during the session but given to parents upon collection.

Food Safety and Hygiene

- All food is stored, prepared, and served in line with food hygiene regulations.
- Cleve Prior CE Primary School does not provide refrigeration for packed lunches and do not reheat food brought in by children. Parents should ensure that food provided should follow the '4-hour rule'. This rule allows food to be stored outside of chilled conditions for up to 4 hours.
- We maintain high standards of cleanliness in food preparation areas.
- All staff involved in cooking food hold up-to-date Food Hygiene certificates.

Monitoring and Review

- This policy is reviewed annually or when there are significant changes to legislation, guidance or structure of the school i.e. Reintroduction of under 4s.
- Menus and food practices are regularly evaluated with feedback from staff, parents, and children.

Appendix 1:



Early years choking hazards food safety advice

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For babies and young children, food can be a choking hazard, especially when they do not chew their food well or they try to swallow it whole.

Choking can happen with any foods, but 'firm foods', bones and small round foods that can easily get stuck in the throat present a higher risk. Therefore, care givers should follow these five essential steps:

- 1** Make sure food is **suitably prepared and served** for babies and children under 5 years old. For suitable foods, see <https://www.nhs.uk/start4life/weaning/> Introduce babies to solid foods from around 6 months of age.
- 2** **Think about size, shape and texture of food.** Cut food into narrow batons, avoid round shapes and firm foods. Firm fruit & vegetables can be softened by cooking.
- 3** Ensure that babies and young children are **alert and seated safely upright** in a highchair or appropriately sized low chair whilst eating.
- 4** **Babies and young children should be supervised at all times** while eating. You will be able to identify the early signs of choking and prevent harm.
- 5** **Encourage babies and young children to chew food well.** Teach children how to chew and swallow food properly, and ensure they take their time during meals. This will reduce their risk of choking.

Care givers and parents should be familiar with how to respond to a choking incident in line with guidance on first aid for children:

How to stop a child from choking: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/first-aid-and-safety/first-aid/how-to-stop-a-child-from-choking/>

How to resuscitate a child: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/first-aid-and-safety/first-aid/how-to-resuscitate-a-child/>

Early years food choking hazards

Below is a table of advice on key foods for care givers who are involved with preparing and serving food for babies and young children (under 5 years old)

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.

Make sure food is prepared appropriately for children under 5 years old, see: <https://www.nhs.uk/start4life/weaning/>

It is also advisable that care givers are familiar with how to respond to a choking incident, see: How to stop a child from choking: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/first-aid-and-safety/first-aid/how-to-stop-a-child-from-choking/>

and How to resuscitate a child: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/first-aid-and-safety/first-aid/how-to-resuscitate-a-child/>

