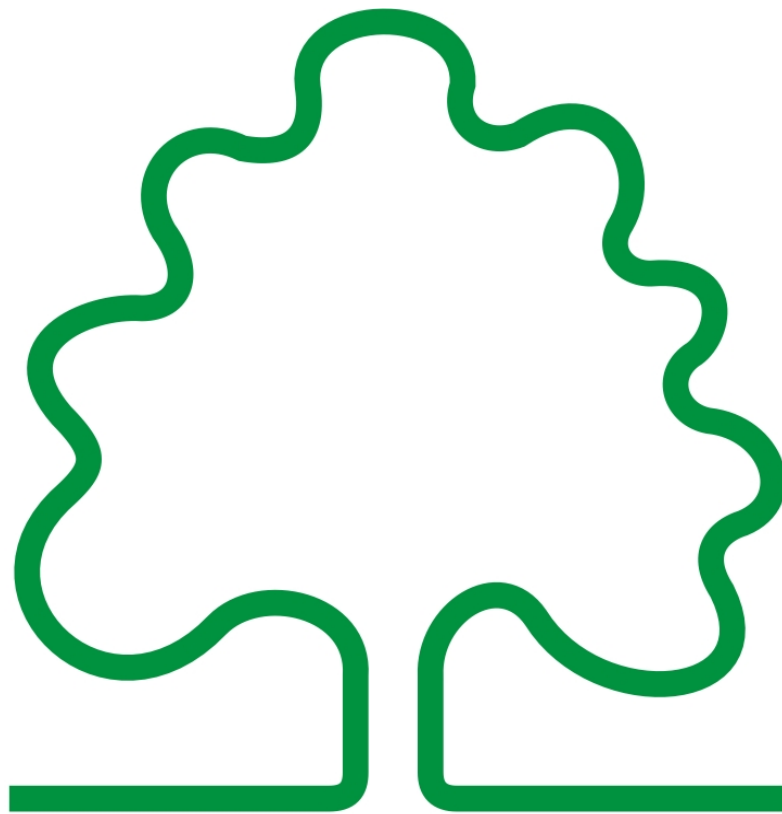




HENLEY GREEN

Primary School

Food and Nutrition Policy

September 2026

The Department of Education's updated Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition guidance supports providers in meeting the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework requirement 'Where children are provided with meals, snacks and drinks, these must be healthy, balanced and nutritious'.

The EYFS statutory framework will includes a safeguarding and welfare requirement that asks providers to follow this nutrition guidance unless there is good reason not to.

The aim of this policy is to:

- promote the health and wellbeing of the children and their families through food within Henley Green Primary School.
- to establish good food habits and help reduce obesity.
- to help children and parents gain the knowledge of how to keep themselves healthy.
- to ensure that everyone who it applies to is aware of our food policy.
- to ensure compliance with the EYFS food and nutrition guidance and statutory framework.

Development and Implementation of the Food policy:

- to ensure that all staff, parents, carers and children are aware of the setting's approach to food and drink provision and learning about food.
- to ensure that parents and carers are provided with the knowledge and information they require about the food and drink provision at the setting.
- to ensure children receive consistent messages about healthy eating.

When and to whom the Policy applies:

- to food provided by the setting, to food brought in from home and food provided at events or on trips.
- to all staff within the setting, including those planning menus, (food menus are created by GROW catering as part of the school meals contract in school) cooking, preparing and serving food and to parents who bring food into the setting from home.

Information on Food and Drink Provision:

- Fresh water is freely available at all times.
- Snack time for EYFS and KS1 children is provided by the Free Fruit scheme and the school.
 - Food and drink provided by the setting follows the Healthy eating guidelines, taking into account the dietary needs of the cohort of children. This includes a variety of seasonal fruit and vegetables.
- KS2 snacks are provided by home.
 - Parents are provided with information about healthy snacks and allergies and are encouraged to follow the nutritional guidelines in the April 2025 DfE Nutrition document.
- Water is provided as a drink at snack times and lunch times and throughout the day. EYFS children also have the opportunity to have milk to drink at snack times.
- Lunch is provided by either parents with lunch boxes or through school hot lunches provided by GROW catering. Children's lunchboxes are monitored when the staff help the children to eat their lunch and on occasions parents may be advised on ways to include more healthy food in their child's packed lunch.

EYFS arrangements:

EYFS children's eating arrangements are in line with the safer eating procedures outlined in the EYFS statutory framework.

On entry to the EYFS, staff gather information about young children's weaning stage and, where needed, prepare food in line with parent's preference. We do not give children commercial baby food and drink within the setting. If this is requested by a parent, where possible, we would discuss with parents how we could provide a similar freshly cooked option suitable to the eating stage or needs of the child.

At lunch time, Little Acorns and Nursery children, alongside children in Reception children with additional support needs, eat in the classroom environment where there is limited noise and distraction to support safer eating and their routines.

A paediatric first aider is always present when EYFS children are eating and children are always within sight and hearing of a member of staff. EYFS staff all complete a food hygiene qualification.

Staff follow the guidance below to prepare food to minimise the risk of choking.

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)

Food Category	Advice
Vegetable and fruits	
Pipe or stone in fruit	Always check beforehand and remove hard pipe or stone 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	
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	
Grate or cut cheese	Grate or cut cheese into short strips. Cut lumps of cheese as narrow as possible.
Nuts and seeds	
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	
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	
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 see jelly cubes.
Boiled sweets and ice cubes	Do not give babies and young children boiled, hard, gummy, 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/childlife/feeding/>
 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/>

The eating environment and social aspects of mealtimes:

Snack times and lunch times are an ideal opportunity when everyone is gathered to discuss healthy eating and why it is important.

- All children and staff wash their hands before eating meals and snacks.
- EYFS and Y1 children are required to sit down to eat snacks as this provides a sociable environment where they can talk to their friends, and a safe place to eat.
- Whilst eating, children are always accompanied by an adult.
- Children are encouraged to try new foods.
- At lunchtimes the staff always supervise children whilst they eat.
- Children eat at different rates so therefore they are given a sensible amount of time to eat in comfort.
- Children are not to share food with others and school appreciates home support in teaching this message.

Communicating with children and Families:

Cooking is a regular activity within the school and provides an ideal environment to discuss food and healthy eating. Healthy eating is talked about through play, with role play and play foods being an obvious vehicle for good discussion and learning.

Parents are encouraged to contribute to and attend special events and celebrations, workshops and stay and play sessions that incorporate food and cooking.

Management of food allergies, dietary requirements and cultural/ dietary preferences:

It is important that settings provide food for children following special, cultural or religious diets, including children with food allergies, and manage this appropriately and effectively. We talk to the family when the child starts our school to find out about all their needs including dietary.

We ensure that all staff are made aware of these needs by details on the Registration forms, individual care plans, a whole school medical list and a list of cultural/ dietary preferences.

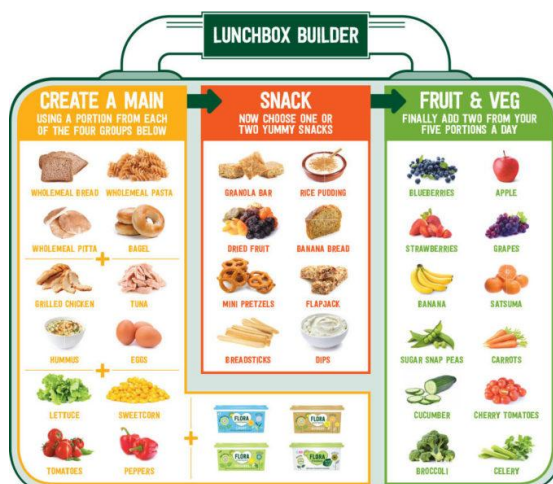
Where there are children in a year group with an allergy a letter is sent out at the start of the school year asking parents not to send in items containing these allergens.

We avoid art and craft activities with allergen foods and staff have training shared about the warning signs and symptoms to look out for in the case of food allergies and intolerances.

No child is ever made to feel different from the others because of their dietary needs.

Food brought in from home:

Lunch and KS2 snack can be provided by the parents at Henley Green. We advise parents on suggestions for healthier lunchboxes. We respect parents' economic circumstances and aim to support parents to make healthier lunchboxes. We have a regulatory responsibility to provide healthy, balanced and nutritious food and so we as a school encourage healthier food options. The 'Lunchbox Builder' chart gives some guidance as to how to create a healthy, balanced lunch using wholefoods and non ultra-processed foods vital for healthy development, weight and energy levels.



Best practices for packing lunch boxes:

- Ensure the food is suitable for their child's individual developmental needs and prepared in a way to prevent choking – foods should be in small pieces which do not constitute a choking-hazard, eg grapes, cherry tomatoes etc should be halved.
- 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 your child's name on the lunch bag and detail the contents.
- Pack foods that can safely be kept at room temperature as there is no refrigerated area for storing food brought from home. 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. Providers do not have to provide refrigeration for packed lunches of children.
- Providers will not reheat food brought in by children.
- Allergen information for children within the year group is shared anonymously to minimise risk of contact with children at risk.

Breakfast Club:

Henley Green school offers a breakfast club for children to attend. At the breakfast club, children have the option to choose from a selection of low sugar (green) and low salt content cereals (green) and toasted bagels.

If EYFS children attend breakfast club, safer eating guidance as set out in the EYFS framework is followed:

- A paediatric first aider is present.
- Children eat in sight and hearing of an adult.
- Staff serving food have completed an award in food hygiene training.
- EYFS ratios are adhered to.

Learning about and through Food/ Cooking with children:

Learning about and through food is relevant through all 7 areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum and the KS1 and KS2 Science and Design and Technology Curriculum. Additional enrichment opportunities such as Language and Culture Day give further opportunities for children to learn about different foods and cultures.

Cooking with children is both an enjoyable activity in its own right and an effective way of encouraging all children to try and eat a wide range of foods. We ensure that all children have the opportunity to cook regularly and involve them in measuring, mixing, cutting and chopping (including safe handling of tools) and stirring to make a variety of recipes. We work in small groups with adult supervision at all times. We discuss the changes that have occurred when foods have been heated.

Children with additional support needs and other special diets:

Some children may have specific dietary needs because of physical or developmental issues, which affect their ability to eat independently, for example difficulty with swallowing. These children may need their food prepared in a particular way to make it easier to eat. In these cases, this is discussed with parents.

Children may also have 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. In these cases, parents are able to provide specific foods and school staff encourage these children to try different foods through shared mealtimes.

Fussy eating and fear of new foods are part of early childhood development. A child who appears fussy about their food but is growing well is probably eating a sufficient balance of foods and getting enough energy and nutrition. Severe selective eating is rare and generally starts from early feeding difficulties or significant health problems. In cases like these we would be guided by other health professionals. For the majority of children who are fussy eaters, we ensure that they are seated with non-fussy eaters who provide good peer models and we encourage positive discussion about the foods eaten. Children are never forced to eat something new but are always encouraged to try a small bit. Praise is always given for trying new foods.

Food Safety and Hygiene:

All those who are involved in preparing and handling food are trained to do so. Lunches are delivered to school by GROW catering. Food is prepared in the school kitchen at Henley Green Primary school.

We make sure that the children understand why it is important to always wash their hands before they take part in cooking activities or eating and why it is not safe to eat food that has been dropped on the floor.

Sustainability:

We endeavour to be as sustainable as possible, limiting our food waste and recycling any food waste in school as much as possible. We have a school allotment and we encourage children to grow some foods.

Protecting children's health

Everyone working at Henley Green has a responsibility to protect children's health, including:

- helping children to maintain a healthy weight as they grow.
- EYFS children taking part in dental health work.
- the school nurse completing height and weight checks in both Reception and Year 6.
- Workshops with One Body, One Life.

If we have concerns we will talk to the child's parents and /or other health professionals.

Celebrations and Special Occasions:

Our school has children from a range of cultural backgrounds. If they have different dietary needs this is discussed with the parents when the children start to ensure that we can cater for them whenever possible. Even if there are no children from minority ethnic, cultural or religious groups attending, it is still important to introduce all children to a variety of foods and so they can learn to appreciate the diets of different cultures.

We work closely with the families from ethnic minorities so that we can share in and learn about their festivals and celebrations. Many families like to celebrate their child's birthday and other special events by bringing in a cake or sweets to school to share. This is a lovely celebratory gesture, but can mean that some children are eating these

unhealthy foods several times a week. We recommend as a school that where possible, any celebratory treats or snacks are balanced and nutritious such as a fruit platter or possible non-edible such as bubbles or stickers. Any food shared in the setting should be checked for potential allergens.

Reviewed and agreed: September 2026

Review date: September 2027