EYFS Healthy Food Policy

2026/2027

In God's hands, we love, learn, grow and inspire

"What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? It is like the mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on the earth. Yet, when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade.

Mark 4: 30-32

Reviewed: September 2026

Next Review: September 2027

1. Purpose

At Pencombe CofE Primary School, we are committed to promoting children's health and wellbeing through a safe, consistent, and positive approach to food and nutrition.

This policy sets out our expectations for:

- Meals and snacks
- Packed lunches
- Birthdays and celebrations
- Food safety, allergies, and cultural/religious needs

2. Principles

All children are entitled to a healthy, balanced diet that supports their growth, development, and learning.
Mealtimes are inclusive, calm, and social experiences.
Food must never be used as a reward or punishment.
Staff will model positive attitudes to healthy eating at all times.

3. Meals and Snacks

The school provides free, government-funded fruit and vegetables each day.
School milk is provided free of charge until a child's fifth birthday and is available for purchase thereafter.
Drinks are restricted to plain water or milk. Squash, juice, or fizzy drinks are not permitted.
Seasonal fruit and food prepared during cookery sessions may also be offered at snack time.
Children are encouraged, but never forced, to try new foods.

4. Packed Lunches

Parents and carers are encouraged to provide a balanced lunch containing:

- Fruit or vegetables
- Starchy food (bread, rice, pasta, potatoes)
- Protein (meat, fish, eggs, beans, pulses)
- Dairy or alternatives (yoghurt, cheese, milk, fortified alternatives)

The following items are not permitted:

- Sweets, chocolate bars, sugary yoghurts, jelly
- Fizzy or sweetened drinks
- Choking hazards (whole grapes, cherry tomatoes, popcorn, cheese cubes, whole nuts)

⚠️ Grapes, cherry tomatoes and similar foods must be cut into quarters.
⚠️ We operate a strict NO NUTS policy, including chocolate spreads such as Nutella.

If a child's lunch regularly contains unsuitable items, staff will raise this privately with parents or carers.

5. Birthdays and Celebrations

Parents may send in birthday or celebration cakes, but must first check with the class teacher regarding allergies and intolerances.
Non-food alternatives, such as stickers or small gifts, are welcomed.
There is no expectation for families to provide items. The school provides a toy cake with candles so every child can be celebrated.
Cultural and religious food traditions will be respected where safe and appropriate.

6. Cooking and Forest School

Weekly cookery and Forest School sessions take place in Pippin Class, using seasonal ingredients wherever possible.
Children are encouraged to prepare and share food, developing skills and trying new tastes.
Cooking activities are linked to class topics, festivals, and cultural traditions.
Celebratory foods may be prepared and shared with families and the wider community.

7. Allergies and Special Diets

Parents and carers must inform the school of any allergies, intolerances, or dietary requirements, and update staff of any changes.
Allergy information is clearly shared with staff and displayed in food preparation areas.
Cross-contamination is strictly avoided.
Staff are trained in allergy awareness, choking procedures, and the use of EpiPens.

8. Oral Health

The school promotes good oral health through healthy food choices and by encouraging water and milk rather than sugary drinks. Learning about dental health may be included within the curriculum.

9. Safeguarding and Equality

All children have the right to safe and appropriate food that respects their health, culture, and family circumstances.
Food-based teasing or negative comparisons between lunchboxes will not be tolerated.
Staff will never criticise or comment negatively on a child's food in front of them.

10. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly and updated in line with EYFS guidance and national public health recommendations.

Through this policy, Pencombe CofE Primary School aims to create a positive food culture and help children establish healthy eating habits for life.