FOOD SAFETY AND SAFER EATING

Our Commitment
The Orchard Nursery is committed to maintaining the highest standards of food safety, hygiene, and nutrition in line with statutory requirements and best practice. We follow guidance from the **Food Standards Agency's "Safer Food, Better Business" toolkit** and ensure all procedures are fully embedded in our day-to-day operations.
We aim to:

- Provide children under 5 with a **wide and nutritionally balanced diet** to support health, growth, and wellbeing.
- Encourage **positive social experiences at mealtimes**, promoting sharing and interaction.
- Maintain a **safe, inclusive environment** for children with allergies or dietary restrictions.

Food Handling, Preparation & Hygiene
All staff involved in food preparation and handling follow strict hygiene protocols:

- Staff showing signs of illness **cannot handle food**.
- Hand hygiene is strictly observed: wash hands before and after food preparation, after toilet use, and after changing nappies.
- Food preparation surfaces are cleaned before and after use with antibacterial spray and blue cloths.
- **Colour-coded chopping boards** are used correctly to prevent cross-contamination.
- **Colour-coded clothes are used in different areas of the nursery.**
- Utensils, equipment, and surfaces are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected after use.
- Cuts or sores are covered with **blue waterproof dressings**.
- Staff wear **appropriate PPE**: aprons, gloves, and closed-toe shoes in kitchen.
- All relevant staff hold **Food Hygiene training certificates**, renewed regularly.

Cleaning Procedures
Fridge & Freezer Maintenance:

- Fridges cleaned weekly; all items checked for expiry dates.
- Freezers (non-frost-free) are defrosted and deep cleaned monthly.
- Fridge temperatures checked twice daily and logged.

General Kitchen Cleaning:

- Worktops and food contact surfaces cleaned before and after each use.
- Kitchen waste disposed of promptly and hygienically.

Healthy Eating & Nutrition

- Children eat foods from **all four main food groups daily**:
    1. Bread, cereals, potatoes
    2. Fruit and vegetables
    3. Milk and dairy products
    4. Meat, fish, or alternatives (pulses: peas, beans, lentils, soya)
- Sugary drinks are NOT given; sugar-containing foods are only given **as part of meals**.
- Snacks: fruit, vegetables, rice cakes, breadsticks (sugar-free and nutritious).
- Drinks: **water and milk only**; water is the only drink allowed in bottles.
- Menus operate on a **minimum two-week cycle** and are **attractive with varied textures**.

- **Cultural, religious, ethical, and medical dietary requirements** are respected, and multicultural foods are included to encourage appreciation of global diets.

Food Allergy & Intolerance Management

- Allergy information collected at registration and updated regularly.
- Individual **allergy plans** for children with food allergies/intolerances.
- Clear visual indicators:
  - Rainbow lanyards with photo ID allergy card
  - Photo Id allergy displayed in kitchen area
  - Labels added to special meals (e.g., vegan, halal, nut-free, packed lunch)
- Staff trained to:
  - Recognise allergic reactions and anaphylaxis
  - Administer emergency medication (e.g., EpiPen)
  - Read food labels for allergens
  - Prevent cross-contamination
- Staff are aware of the difference between allergies, intolerances and preferences.
- Allergies – red ID card, Intolerances – Orange ID card and preferences eg vegetarian – Green
- All allergy-related documentation securely stored and accessible.
- A paediatric first aider must be present during mealtimes.
- Children must be within sight and hearing of staff at all times.
- One member of staff to be sat at the head of each table at ALL meal times.
- In baby and pears room 2 members of staff to be at the table at all times.
- Children sit in highchairs or age-appropriate low chairs in a designated eating area.
- Distractions are minimised.

Nut-Free Policy:

- The nursery is **nut-free**.
- Risk assessments conducted for children with known nut allergies.
- Special attention to foods labelled “may contain nuts” or “cannot guarantee nut-free.”

Safe Food Storage & Temperature Control

- Fridges maintained at ≤5°C; freezers at ≤-18°C.
- Dry foods stored in cool, dry, pest-free areas in sealed containers.
- Cooked and raw foods stored separately.
- All food is labelled and dated on receipt and opening.
- Packed lunches brought in by parents MUST have an ice pack.
- Children on Funded only contract, who are having tea at nursery, MUST be brought in at 3pm and NO earlier.

Feeding Babies & Weaning Guidelines

- Work with parents to support **safe feeding routines**, including baby-led weaning and have ongoing discussions with parents to keep updated.
- Babies always seated upright and supervised while eating.
- Babies sat in appropriate seating, in a designated area.
- Avoid choking hazards:
  - Round, hard, or sticky foods cut appropriately
- Serve only a few pieces at a time; allow relaxed feeding without rushing.
- Record food and drink intake for babies; share with parents.

Choking Prevention & Response

- Choking can be silent – staff watch children closely when eating/drinking.
- Avoid or cut high-risk foods into safe sizes.
- Children sit while eating; no eating during play.
- All staff hold paediatric first aid and use approved choking response.
- If standard choking response fails, trained staff may use a LifeVac device as an emergency measure. All uses are recorded and reported to parents. Device maintained and checked regularly.
- Call 999 if obstruction remains or child becomes unconscious.
- Record incidents and inform parents promptly.

Nursery Hot Lunches

- Comply with : EYFS Nutrition guidance.
    - Starchy foods: bread, potatoes, rice, pasta
    - Fruit and vegetables
    - Milk and dairy foods
    - Meat, fish, or other protein sources
    - If parents opt for a funded-only contract and provide their own packed meals, they **MUST** follow the nursery's Packed Meals Policy, which sets out strict guidelines on safe food preparation, allergy awareness, choking hazard prevention, and nutritional balance, in line with EYFS requirements.
    - **Checks:** Staff check meals on arrival and may remove/replace unsafe items; parents informed the same day.

Equal Opportunities & Cultural Awareness

- Respect all children and families, accommodating **food preferences, religious requirements, and cultural practices**.
- Celebrations of festivals allow sharing of traditional foods.

Oral Health

We promote good oral health by teaching children about the effects of sugary foods, encouraging twice-daily tooth brushing with fluoride toothpaste, supporting regular dental visits, and using story-based activities to make learning fun.

We conduct daily supervised dry tooth brushing sessions following Big Brush Club guidance with 3-4 year olds.

Food Safety & Reporting

- If food poisoning suspected:
    - Manager contacts **Environmental Health & Health Protection Agency**
    - Confirmed cases affecting **two or more children** reported to **Ofsted within 14 days**

Signed on behalf of the nursery.....Emma Middleton.....Date:… August 2026