



Registered Charity No. 1022409

6 Food safety and nutrition policy and procedures

Designated Health and Safety Officer is: Flora Lau

6.4 Food for play and cooking activities

Some parents and staff may have strong views about food being used for play. It is important to be sensitive to these issues. For example, children who are Muslim, Jewish, Rastafarian, or who are vegetarian, should not be given any food to play with that contains animal products (Gelatine). Parents' views should be sought on this. In some cases, it is not appropriate to use food for play at all, particularly in times of austerity.

- Food for play may include dough, corn flour, pasta, rice, food colourings and food flavourings.
- Jelly (including jelly cubes) is not used for play.
- Food for play is risk assessed against the 14 allergens referred and is included in the written risk assessment undertaken for children with specific allergies.
- Staff are constantly alert to the potential hazards of food play, in particular choking hazards and signs of previously undetected allergies.
- Pulses are not recommended as they can be poisonous when raw or may choke.
- The use of raw vegetables for printing is discouraged.
- Dried food that is used for play should be kept away from food used for cooking.
- Foods that are cooked and used for play, such as dough, have a limited shelf life.
- Cornflour is always mixed with water before given for play.
- Cornflour and cooked pasta are discarded after an activity; high risk of bacteria forming.
- Utensils used for play food are washed thoroughly after use.
- Food play activities are suspended during outbreaks of illness.

Children's cooking activities

- All cooking activities take place under adult supervision.

- Before undertaking any cooking activity with children, members of staff should check for allergies and intolerances by checking children's records.
- Children are taught basic hygiene skills such as the need to wash hands thoroughly before handling food, and again after going to the toilet, blowing their nose or coughing.
- The area to be used for cooking is cleaned.
- Children should wear aprons that are used just for cooking.
- Staff wear an apron, roll up sleeves and tie hair back, if necessary, during activity.
- Utensils provided are for children to use only when cooking, including chopping/rolling boards, bowls, wooden spoons, jugs, and are stored in the kitchen.
- Safe utensils used for cutting, mixing and chopping, under supervision
- Members of staff encourage children to handle food in a hygienic manner.
- Food ready for cooking or cooling is not left uncovered.
- Cooked food to go home is put in a suitable food bag and refrigerated until home time.
- Children have no access to kitchen and are not involved in heating food or liquids
- Staff speak to parents about known cultural dietary rules, allergies or intolerances and ensure children only touch or prepare food that is consistent with their dietary needs and preferences

This policy was adopted on

6th September 2025

Date to be reviewed

6th September 2026

Signed by committee chairperson

Signed by preschool manager
