AYSCOUGHFEE HALL SCHOOL

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

Purpose

This policy sets out the school's approach to the provision of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). It reflects our commitment to providing a safe, inclusive and stimulating environment in which every child is supported to develop, learn and thrive. The policy outlines the principles that underpin our practice and ensures consistency across the EYFS.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff working within the EYFS, including Kindergarten and Reception, as well as volunteers, students and specialist teachers who work with EYFS children. It should be read in conjunction with the school's related policies for:

- Acceptable Use of IT
- Assessment and Reporting
- Behaviour
- Educational Visits
- First Aid
- Intimate Care
- Online Safety
- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- SEND and EAL
- EYFS Procedural Handbook

Aims

Through our EYFS provision, we aim to:

- provide a safe, happy, nurturing and inclusive environment where every child feels valued and respected;
- promote children's wellbeing, independence, confidence and resilience;
- deliver a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum that reflects the requirements of the EYFS Statutory Framework;
- support children to become confident, curious and enthusiastic learners through a balance of child-initiated play and purposeful adult-led learning;
- recognise and respond to each child's individual strengths, interests and developmental needs;

- work in close partnership with parents and carers to support children's learning and wellbeing;
- ensure that all safeguarding and welfare requirements are consistently met.

Legal Framework

This policy has been developed with reference to:

- the most recent Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the Independent School Standards;
- the Equality Act 2010;
- the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice: 0–25 years;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (current edition);
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (current edition).

Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher and Governors have overall responsibility for ensuring that the school's EYFS provision complies with statutory requirements. The EYFS Leader is responsible for the day-to-day leadership and implementation of the policy, supported by all EYFS staff. All practitioners are expected to maintain high standards of teaching, care and safeguarding, participate in professional development, and work collaboratively with colleagues, parents and external agencies to meet the needs of every child.

Monitoring and Review

The implementation of this policy is monitored by the Headteacher and EYFS Leader through regular review of teaching and learning, assessment, safeguarding practices and staff development. The policy is reviewed annually, or sooner if statutory guidance or school practice changes.

EYFS Principles and Curriculum

The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of Reception Year. The EYFS is based upon four principles;

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

The EYFS curriculum is organised into seven areas of learning, comprising three Prime Areas and four Specific Areas.

Prime Areas

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Physical Development
- Communication and Language

Specific Areas

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

All areas of learning are interconnected and are delivered through a balance of adult-led teaching, continuous provision and child-initiated experiences. Children develop through the characteristics of Effective Learning:

- **Playing and Exploring** – children investigate, experience and explore the world around them.
- **Active Learning** – children concentrate, persevere and develop resilience when facing challenges.
- **Creating and Thinking Critically** – children develop ideas, make connections and develop strategies for solving problems.

Our curriculum provides children with opportunities to develop knowledge, skills and understanding through meaningful experiences, high-quality interactions and purposeful play.

Aspects of Learning in EYFS

Opportunities are provided in:

Personal, Social and Emotional Development
We aim for each child to become a valued member of the class and school and to promote self-esteem, independence and confidence. They are encouraged to cooperate, working alongside their peers and other children listening to each other and showing respect and sensitivity. We aim to develop concentration, attention span, persistence and resilience. We hope to encourage an understanding of right and wrong and the need for appropriate behaviour. We aim to foster an enthusiasm for learning. We recognise that physical activity is vital in children's all-round development.

Physical Development
Children are given opportunities to move to music, use equipment, develop and practice their fine and gross motor skills. They develop an increasing understanding of how their body works and what is needed to be healthy. This is done in both indoors and outdoors and by working with a wide range of resources and specialist PE staff.

Communication and Language
We believe communication and language covers all aspects of language development and provides the foundation for literacy skills. Children at school will become confident communicators with rich and varied vocabularies. Children's developing competence in speaking and listening is a primary focus. We aim to extend and enrich the children's vocabulary through story time, rhymes, role-play and group discussions.

Children are encouraged to share their own experiences through speaking and acting out events in imaginative play and talking about their own ideas. They are encouraged to take part in class activities such as working with puppets, participating in music sessions, saying rhymes and singing songs together. Reception children take part in Spanish lessons.

Literacy
We aim to foster a lifelong love of reading and writing by providing a language-rich environment where children develop confidence, curiosity and enjoyment in communication. Children are encouraged to value books and other reading materials and are given frequent opportunities to listen to, discuss and respond to a wide range of high-quality texts.

Children are supported to develop early reading skills through a structured, systematic phonics programme alongside opportunities to apply their developing knowledge in meaningful contexts. A range of carefully matched reading materials is provided to promote fluency, comprehension and a love of reading. Children read regularly with adults on an individual basis.

Children are encouraged to engage in mark-making and writing both indoors and outdoors through child-initiated play and adult-led activities. Planned opportunities for shared reading, phonics, storytelling and purposeful writing support the development of speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. Fine motor development and pencil control are promoted to help children develop the skills needed for writing, while ensuring that learning is appropriate to each child's age, stage of development and individual needs.

Mathematics
We aim for children to achieve a strong, positive grounding in mathematical learning and a firm foundation for numeracy through practical activities and using and understanding language in the development of simple mathematical ideas. Children are given the opportunity to learn about number, shape, space, position, pattern and measurement in all aspects of their EYFS journey.

Understanding the World
At school we guide children to make sense of their cultural, physical world and community through wide and varied personal experiences. All children are given opportunities to solve problems, investigate, make decisions and experiment. They develop the use of their senses, look at differences and similarities. They will learn about living things, their environment, the world around them and people who are important in their lives and communities.

Expressive Arts and Design
Throughout the children’s time in EYFS we develop their artistic and cultural awareness to support imagination and creativity. We provide opportunities for all children to explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of art, design, technology, music, drama, movement, dance and imaginative play activities. Children are given opportunities to paint, draw, collage create models and use musical instruments. Children learn and adapt songs and rhymes and enjoy singing them with each other. Colour recognition is taught, naming colours, mixing paints, sorting and matching. Children are given the opportunity to participate in school productions.

The EYFS curriculum is planned over a two-year cycle to ensure breadth, progression and continuity across Kindergarten and Reception classes.

Fundamental British values are promoted through everyday interactions, stories, play, routines and experiences that encourage respect, democracy, individual liberty, the rule of law and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Organisation

The school ensures that the EYFS is appropriately staffed by suitably qualified, experienced and competent practitioners who meet the requirements of the EYFS Statutory Framework. Staff are committed to maintaining high standards of professional practice through ongoing professional development and regular training.

Appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure children's health, safety and welfare at all times. Risk assessments are undertaken where necessary and reviewed regularly to support a safe learning environment.

The school's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENDCo) works closely with EYFS staff to ensure that children with additional needs receive appropriate support and that early identification and intervention are promoted.

All staff working within the EYFS share responsibility for implementing this policy and for promoting high-quality teaching, learning, safeguarding and care. Subject leaders also work collaboratively with EYFS staff to ensure progression and continuity across the curriculum.

Planning

Planning within the EYFS is responsive, flexible and informed by children's interests, developmental needs and ongoing assessment. Practitioners work collaboratively to ensure progression across all areas of learning while maintaining an appropriate balance between adult-led teaching, child-initiated learning and continuous provision.

Children are recognised as unique individuals who enter the setting with differing experiences, knowledge and skills. Planning reflects these differing starting points and is adapted to provide appropriate challenge and support for every child.

Learning opportunities are carefully designed to promote curiosity, independence, creativity and resilience. Practitioners make effective use of spontaneous learning opportunities, recognising that valuable learning can arise through children's interests and everyday experiences.

The indoor and outdoor learning environments are organised to provide rich, stimulating experiences that encourage exploration, investigation, communication and problem-solving across all areas of learning.

Teaching and Learning

All areas of learning are delivered through a balance of adult-led teaching, child-initiated experiences and continuous provision. Practitioners provide opportunities for children to explore, investigate, create, problem-

solve and develop their ideas through purposeful play and carefully planned learning experiences.

Children learn through a variety of groupings depending on the activity and their individual needs, including whole-class sessions, small groups, paired work and individual support. Opportunities are provided for children to collaborate, communicate and develop independence.

The EYFS environment is carefully planned to provide access to a wide range of resources and experiences both indoors and outdoors. Children are encouraged to make choices, follow their interests and become active participants in their own learning.

We believe children learn best when they experience success, develop confidence and feel valued. Practitioners provide encouragement, celebrate achievements and support children to develop a positive attitude towards learning.

Children have access to digital technology where appropriate to enhance learning experiences. Any use of technology is purposeful, age-appropriate and supports children's learning and development. Devices used for observations or special events are managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding and acceptable use procedures. Staff do not use personal mobile devices to photograph or record children.

Safer Use of Screens

Our EYFS setting recognises that young children learn best through hands-on play, active exploration, real-life experiences and high-quality interactions with adults and peers.

Screen use is carefully considered and only used where it has a clear educational purpose that enhances children's learning. Digital content is selected carefully and practitioners engage alongside children to encourage discussion, language development and critical thinking.

Screens are not used as a substitute for adult interaction, physical activity, outdoor learning or creative experiences. We work in partnership with parents and carers to promote healthy digital habits and support children's overall wellbeing.

Digital Technology, Photographs and Videos

- Digital technology may be used to support learning, assessment and communication safely and appropriately.
- Photographs and videos are personal data and must be managed in line with UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018, school policies and current DfE/ICO guidance.
- Images must only be taken for approved educational, assessment, safeguarding or communication purposes, with appropriate permissions checked.
- School-owned devices should be used to take photos of children and store data. Personal devices must not be used.
- Images must be stored securely on approved school systems and never shared through personal messaging, social media or unauthorised platforms.

- Staff must follow the school’s safeguarding, acceptable use, filtering and monitoring procedures.
- Any loss, accidental disclosure or inappropriate use must be reported immediately to the DSL and/or Data Protection Lead.
- Procedures will be reviewed regularly and staff will receive appropriate guidance and training.

Break and Lunch Time Supervision

The safety and wellbeing of all children are paramount throughout the school day. Appropriate levels of supervision are maintained during breaktimes, lunchtimes and all transitions in accordance with the requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and the school's risk assessments.

Reception children are supervised appropriately within the wider school environment, while Kindergarten children have access to a dedicated EYFS outdoor area with supervision that reflects their age, stage of development and individual needs. Staffing ratios are maintained at all times and there is always a member of staff with a current Paediatric First Aid qualification available whenever EYFS children are present, including during mealtimes and educational visits, in line with statutory requirements.

The school operates effective supervision arrangements to ensure children remain visible and supported whilst indoors and outdoors. Procedures are in place for adverse weather, movement around the school site and the safe management of shared spaces. Appropriate communication systems are available to enable staff to seek assistance promptly if required.

Additional adults, including students and volunteers, may support learning and supervision where appropriate. They are suitably inducted, supervised and vetted in accordance with the school's safeguarding and safer recruitment procedures. Students and volunteers are not included in statutory staffing ratios unless they meet the requirements of the EYFS Statutory Framework.

Educational visits are planned and risk assessed in accordance with the school's Educational Visits Policy. Appropriate staffing levels are determined through the visit risk assessment, taking account of the age, needs and number of children, and a suitably qualified Paediatric First Aider accompanies visits where required by statutory guidance.

Assessment

Information about children joining the Kindergarten is gathered prior to admission through discussions with parents and carers, previous early years settings and, where appropriate, other professionals. This information helps staff to develop an understanding of each child's interests, experiences, strengths and individual needs, enabling a smooth transition into school.

On entry to the EYFS, practitioners use this information alongside their own observations and professional judgement to establish each child's starting points. Assessment is an ongoing process that is integral to effective teaching and learning, informing planning and ensuring that learning experiences are tailored to each child's stage of development.

Staff use the non-statutory *Development Matters* guidance, alongside their knowledge of child development and the requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, to support professional judgement, identify next steps in learning and recognise where additional support may be required. Assessment is based on high-quality interactions, observations and knowledge of the child rather than the completion of checklists.

Throughout the Reception year, practitioners use ongoing assessment and professional judgement to inform each child's Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. Parents and carers are kept informed of their child's progress through regular communication, parent consultations and the school's chosen methods of sharing learning. At the end of the Reception year, parents receive a written report summarising their child's attainment against the Early Learning Goals and the Characteristics of Effective Learning, as required by the EYFS Statutory Framework.

Working with Parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between school and home. Parents and carers are valued as experts in their child's development and are encouraged to share information about their child's experiences, interests, strengths and individual needs.

Practitioners work closely with families to develop a shared understanding of each child's learning and development. Regular communication enables parents and carers to celebrate achievements, contribute to children's learning and discuss any areas where additional support may be beneficial.

Key Person Approach

Every child in the EYFS is assigned their class teacher as their key person who, along with the Teaching assistants supports their wellbeing, learning and development. The key person builds positive relationships with the child and their family, helping children to settle into school, feel secure and develop confidence.

The key person ensures that children's individual needs are understood and works in partnership with parents and carers to support each child's development. Where appropriate, the key person also supports families in accessing additional guidance or specialist support.

Safer sleeping

Although children in our EYFS setting are aged 3 years and above and do not routinely sleep during sessions, we recognise that some children may occasionally fall asleep or require a period of rest. Where a child falls asleep, staff will ensure they are placed in a safe, comfortable sleeping position and remain within sight and hearing of a member of staff at all times. Sleeping children will be checked regularly and monitored for their comfort, wellbeing, temperature, and breathing. The sleep area will be kept free from hazards and excessive bedding, and children will not be left to sleep in equipment such as buggies, beanbags, or seating that could compromise their airway. Parents will be informed if their child has slept during the session. Staff will follow current safe sleep guidance and take account of any individual health, medical, or care needs identified for the child.

Intimate Care

At our setting, we recognise that children may occasionally require intimate care, such as support with toileting, changing clothes following an accident, or assistance with personal hygiene. We are committed to ensuring that all intimate care is carried out sensitively, respectfully, and in a way that protects each child's dignity and privacy. Our staff are suitably trained in the giving of intimate care. In line with the statutory guidance in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**,** providers must ensure that children's privacy is respected and that their individual needs are met in a safe and appropriate manner. Staff will encourage children to develop independence wherever possible while providing the support they need. Any non-routine intimate care incidents or accidents will be recorded and shared with parents/carers via our Intimate care carbon copy slips which can be sent home and a record kept in school. If a child needs to be changed into spare clothing provided by the setting, parents/carers are kindly asked to return the clean, washed items as soon as possible so that they remain available for other children when needed. Routine intimate care needs will be recorded as part of the child's Healthcare Plan and parents informed in the jointly agreed manner.

Behaviour

We understand that the behaviour of very young children can depend upon a variety of factors, including age, previous social experiences and separation from parents. The following behavioural procedures apply to our EYFS children.

We will ensure that staff and parents work together to realise and value all children, promoting positive behaviour. We endeavour to encourage all children to understand and develop qualities such as empathy, honesty, kindness and have the ability to consider others, which will include sharing, taking turns and the ability to play with compromise.

We aim to foster a caring, family atmosphere in which care and learning take place in a safe and happy environment.

Children flourish in environments where they feel confident that clear boundaries are in place. In order to achieve this:

- Each class will establish Class Rules at the start of the year and refer to them often.
- We will value children and treat them with respect.
- We will develop a positive self-image through regular verbal praise, stickers and encouragement.
- We will provide positive role models for the children with regards to friendliness, care and courtesy.
- We will constantly praise and endorse desirable behaviour such as kindness and willingness to share.
- We will create an environment in which challenging or unacceptable behaviour is re-directed into appropriate behaviour.
- All staff will have a realistic approach and expectations towards the children they are caring for. This will be explained to new staff as part of the induction.

- The behaviour of a child can be dependent on their age and their stage of development. Sometimes the behaviour is a child's way of expressing their feelings, and this will be taken into consideration when dealing with behaviour.
- We will reward positive behaviour much in the same way as the whole school, through the use of praise, stickers and house points (Reception class). EYFS children are included in celebration assemblies and all the associated rewards.

When children behave in an unacceptable way (EYFS):

- Children who display undesirable behaviour will be given extra support to reinforce and role model positive behaviour.
- Adults will remain calm when addressing challenging behaviour.
- If a certain behaviour is unacceptable, where appropriate to the age of the child, the reasons why this is unacceptable will be explained to the child.
- It will always be made clear to the child or children who do display unacceptable behaviour that it is the behaviour that is not welcome and not the child that is unwelcomed.
- Any intervention to a recurring problem will be tackled in partnership with the child's parent/carer to establish the cause.
- If undesirable behaviour is persistent, we will monitor this and establish triggers which will help us to prevent further instances.
- Staff will always discuss concerns with parents/carers. This will be balanced with positive feedback.
- When a child's challenging behaviour is dangerous, or is disrupting others and distraction has failed, we will direct the child to alternative activities or some quiet time with another member of staff to co-regulate.

Please read in conjunction with our School Behaviour Policy

Safeguarding and welfare procedures

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure. We provide a positive and welcoming environment where children feel valued and are supported to develop confidence and independence.

We promote children's health and wellbeing through teaching and everyday experiences, including:

- healthy eating and balanced lifestyles;
- the importance of physical activity;
- oral health and personal hygiene;
- safe choices and awareness of risk;
- appropriate use of technology;
- the importance of rest and sleep.

Staff are trained to recognise signs that a child may be at risk of harm and follow the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures. Attendance and absence procedures are managed in accordance with the school's Attendance Policy.

Paediatric First Aid requirements

In line with the statutory framework, there is always at least one member of staff who is paediatric first aid trained on site and available when the children are present and on outings.

Food and drink and safer eating

We ensure that staffing arrangements meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety. Our meals and snacks are healthy, balanced and nutritious and are always prepared in a way that avoids choking see appendix A for the Food Standards Agency Guidance which is shared regularly with parents. Fresh drinking water is always available and accessible to the children. We ensure that children are adequately supervised, especially when eating. This includes ensuring that whilst eating children are always in sight and hearing of a member of staff. There is also always a member of staff in the room with a valid paediatric first aid certificate during eating times. All staff involved with preparing and handling food receive training in food hygiene. This is all in line with the Safer Eating requirements as part of the EYFS Statutory framework for group and school-based providers from September 2025. This is also referenced in Appendix B.

Transition

We recognise that effective transitions are fundamental to children's wellbeing, confidence and continued progress. We are committed to ensuring that all transitions are carefully planned, supportive and responsive to each child's individual needs, enabling children to feel safe, secure and ready to learn.

Transition from Home to Kindergarten

We work closely with parents, carers and, where appropriate, previous early years settings to ensure children experience a positive start to school. Wherever possible, staff visit children in their current setting to gain an understanding of their interests, strengths and individual needs. Prior to admission, children and their families are offered opportunities to visit the school through a range of transition sessions, helping children to become familiar with the environment, routines and staff. Parents and carers are encouraged to share information that will support their child's successful transition into Kindergarten.

Transition from Kindergarten to Reception

Transition within the EYFS is a continuous process. Kindergarten and Reception staff work closely throughout the year to ensure continuity of care, learning and development. Regular shared learning opportunities enable children to become familiar with the Reception environment, routines and adults. Information about each child's progress, achievements and individual needs is shared between staff to ensure that learning builds upon prior experiences and that appropriate support is in place from the start of the Reception year.

Transition from Reception to Year 1

Transition into Key Stage 1 is planned to ensure children continue to feel confident and secure as they move into Year 1. Reception and Year 1 staff work collaboratively to share information about each child's attainment, learning characteristics and individual needs. Children are given opportunities to become familiar with their new classroom, teacher and routines through planned transition activities. The Year 1 curriculum builds upon children's learning and experiences in the EYFS, supporting a smooth progression into the next stage of their education.

Where children have additional or specific needs, transition arrangements are personalised in partnership with parents, carers and relevant professionals. Additional visits, meetings and bespoke transition activities are arranged where appropriate to ensure every child is well supported throughout periods of change.

Supervision of staff

The school is committed to supporting the professional development and wellbeing of all EYFS staff through regular supervision and performance management arrangements.

Supervision provides opportunities to reflect on professional practice, discuss children's learning and wellbeing, identify training and development needs, and promote the continuous improvement of teaching and safeguarding practice.

Staff are encouraged to raise any concerns relating to children's welfare, their own wellbeing or professional practice through the school's established support and reporting procedures.

Whistleblowing

The school is committed to maintaining the highest standards of safeguarding and professional conduct.

All staff are expected to report any concerns regarding poor practice, unsafe practice or safeguarding without delay, in accordance with the school's Whistleblowing Policy. Concerns are taken seriously, investigated appropriately and managed in line with statutory guidance.

Inclusion

We are committed to providing an inclusive, welcoming and nurturing environment in which every child is valued, respected and supported to achieve their full potential. We recognise that children develop at different rates and bring a wide range of experiences, strengths and needs to our setting. Through high-quality teaching, appropriate support and close partnership with parents, carers and external professionals where appropriate, we ensure that all children, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), English as an Additional Language (EAL), or other individual needs, have equitable access to a broad, balanced and ambitious EYFS curriculum. We are committed to promoting equality, celebrating diversity and ensuring that no child is disadvantaged or discriminated against, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

Outside Agencies

The school values the contribution of external agencies and community organisations in enriching children's learning and supporting their development.
Where appropriate, practitioners work collaboratively with health professionals, local authority services, educational psychologists, therapists and other agencies to ensure that children's individual needs are identified and supported effectively.

Children also benefit from opportunities to engage with the wider community through educational visits, visitors to the school and participation in whole-school events, helping to broaden their experiences and develop an understanding of the world around them.

Students, volunteers and visitors may support learning within the EYFS where appropriate. They are inducted, supervised and vetted in accordance with the school's safeguarding and safer recruitment procedures and are not included within statutory staffing ratios unless permitted by the EYFS Statutory Framework.

Any reference to the word 'School' implicitly includes all its associated clubs/activities including Kids Club. This policy also applies to EYFS

PREPARED BY	AUTHORISED BY	LAST REVIEWED	REVIEW DATE	NO. OF PAGES
Early Years Lead	Theresa Wright	Autumn 2026	Autumn 2027	13

Appendix 3

Early years food choking hazards

Food Standards Agency
food.gov.uk

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/

Appendix B

Safer Eating requirements for group and school-based providers (Effective from 1st September 2025)

3.63 Whilst children are eating there should always be a member of staff in the room with a valid paediatric first aid certificate for a full course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex A.

3.64 Before a child is admitted to the setting the provider must obtain information about any special dietary requirements, preferences, food allergies and intolerances that the child has, and any special health requirements. This information must be shared by the provider with all staff involved in the preparing and handling of food. At each mealtime and snack time providers must be clear about who is responsible for checking that the food being provided meets all the requirements for each child.

3.65 Providers must have ongoing discussions with parents and/or carers and, where appropriate, health professionals to develop allergy action plans for managing any known allergies and intolerances. This information must be kept up to date by the provider and shared with all staff. Providers should refer to the British Society for Allergy and Clinical Immunology (BSACI) allergy action plan. Providers must ensure that all staff are aware of the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis, the differences between allergies and intolerances and that children can develop allergies at any time, especially during the introduction of solid foods which is sometimes called complementary feeding or weaning. Providers should refer to the NHS advice on food allergies: Food allergy - NHS (www.nhs.uk) and treatment of anaphylaxis: Anaphylaxis - NHS (www.nhs.uk).

3.66 Providers must have ongoing discussions with parents and/or carers about the stage their child is at in regard to introducing solid foods, including to understand the textures the child is familiar with. Assumptions must not be made based on age. Providers must prepare food in a suitable way for each child's individual developmental needs, working with parents and/or carers to help children move on to the next stage at a pace right for the child. The NHS has some advice providers should refer to: Weaning - Start for Life - NHS (www.nhs.uk).

3.67 Providers must prepare food in a way to prevent choking. This guidance on food safety for young children: Food safety - Help for early years providers - GOV.UK (education.gov.uk) includes advice on food and drink to avoid, how to reduce the risk of choking and links to other useful resources for early years providers.

3.68 Babies and young children should be seated safely in a highchair or appropriately sized low chair while eating. Where possible there should be a designated eating space where distractions are minimised.

3.69 Children must always be within sight and hearing of a member of staff whilst eating. Choking can be completely silent, therefore, it is important for providers to be alert to when a child may be starting to choke. Where possible, providers should sit facing children whilst they eat, so they can make sure children are eating in a way to prevent choking and so they can prevent food sharing and be aware of any unexpected allergic reactions.

3.70 When a child experiences a choking incident that requires intervention, providers should record details of where and how the child choked and ensure parents and/or carers are made aware. The records should be reviewed periodically to identify if there are trends or common features of incidents that could be addressed to reduce the risk of choking. Appropriate action should be taken to address any identified concerns.