Little Acorns Foundation Unit

Safer Eating Policy

Statement of Intent

At Stoke Canon C of E Primary school, the safety and wellbeing of our children are at the heart of everything we do. In line with the EYFS 2025 statutory framework and the Early Years nutrition guidance, this policy sets out how staff in the Little Acorns Foundation Unit ensure that children eat safely, with reduced risks of choking, allergic reactions, and other food-related hazards. This policy is aligned with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (September

2025) and the Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance (May 2025).

This policy applies to:

· All staff and volunteers working with children in the EYFS class (ages 2–5)

· Lunchtime supervisors, teaching assistants, and catering staff when supporting children at mealtimes.

· Breakfast and Afterschool Club Staff

· Parents and carers providing packed lunches.

Supervision

· A paediatric first aid (PFA) trained member of staff will always be present in the dining hall or extended schools' room where children in Preschool or Reception are eating.

· Staff will ensure children remain within sight and hearing at all times during meals and snacks.

· Staff will closely supervise children at their tables during lunch, ensuring they remain within sight and hearing and can intervene promptly if required.

· During snack times, staff will closely supervise children by sitting alongside them, encouraging safe eating habits while maintaining vigilance for any signs of choking or allergic reactions.

Dietary Needs and Allergies

On entry, parents provide full details of their child's dietary requirements, allergies,

intolerances, and health conditions. This information is held by the school office and

displayed (confidentially) in classrooms and the kitchen.

- Each child with an allergy has an Individual Healthcare Plan, agreed with parents and, where necessary, medical professionals.
- A named key adult (class teacher or lunchtime organiser) checks food provision for children with allergies before it is served.
- Children are not permitted to share food under any circumstances.

Food Preparation and Choking Prevention

- Grapes, cherry tomatoes, and similar foods cut lengthways and into quarters. Fruits such as plums need cutting and the stone removing.
- Some hard fruit/veg such as carrots may be grated, cooked, or cut into thin strips.
- No nuts, seeds, popcorn, marshmallows, hard sweets, or other high-risk foods.
- Sausages/skinned foods cut lengthways into strips (not rounds).

Eating Environment

- Preschool and Reception children eat in a calm, structured environment:
- EYFS children eat their lunch in the school hall
- Children sit at age-appropriate tables and chairs.
- Mealtimes are free from running, playing, or distractions.
- Staff encourage an unhurried pace, supporting children to chew thoroughly and swallow before speaking.
- Mealtimes are also used to promote our Christian ethos of community and thankfulness, with prayers said before meals.

Incident Response

If a child chokes:

- The nearest adult will apply first aid procedures immediately.
- A PFA-trained member of staff must take the lead.
- An ambulance will be called if required.

If an allergic reaction occurs:

- The child's Individual Healthcare Plan followed (e.g. use of prescribed medication).
- Emergency services called if required.
- Parents contacted immediately (after emergency services are called, if required).

All incidents will be recorded on CPOMs, reported to parents on the same day and reviewed termly to improve practice.

Staff Training

All EYFS staff (teachers, TAs, lunchtime supervisors) and Breakfast and Afterschool Club staff receive Paediatric First Aid (PFA) training.

- Annual review of updates on choking prevention and food safety.

Parental Partnership

Parents are informed of this policy when their child starts in our EYFS class

Families are expected to:

- Provide up-to-date allergy/health information.
- Follow safer eating guidance for packed lunches.
- Work in partnership with staff during any dietary transitions.

Policy to be reviewed annually and as and when new guidance comes through

Policy updated July 2026 by Jo Attwater.