



**Excalibur Academies Trust**  
**Preschool Lunch Policy**

Date of approval	September 2025
Approved by	Mrs Garbutt
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## 1. Aims

1.1 This policy outlines our approach to food, packed lunches, safety, and healthy eating in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework (2025), with a focus on supporting children aged 2–4.

We are committed to:

- Promoting healthy eating habits from an early age
- Ensuring children's dietary and medical needs are met
- Maintaining a safe and hygienic mealtime environment

1.2 Our setting does **not provide hot meals**. Food for lunch must be provided from home in a packed lunch. We store all lunchboxes in a **refrigerator**, so please notify us if any food **should not be chilled** (e.g. warm rice or heated leftovers).

## 2. Legislation and statutory guidance

2.1 This policy complies with [statutory Early Years nutrition guidance](#).

## 3. Healthy Eating Expectations

3.1 We encourage parents to pack nutritious, balanced meals, in line with **DfE Early Years Nutrition Guidance (2025)**. A healthy lunchbox might include:

- ✓ Wholegrain sandwiches/wraps or rice/pasta
- ✓ Lean protein (e.g. chicken, beans, egg)
- ✓ At least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetables
- ✓ Milk, water or low-sugar yogurt

⚠ Please try to avoid:

- Sweets, chocolate bars, crisps or fizzy drinks
- Highly processed meats (e.g. salami, pepperoni)
- Nuts or nut products (due to allergy risk)

## 4. Safe Eating & Choking Prevention

4.1 To reduce choking risks:

- Grapes, cherry tomatoes and similar items **must be sliced lengthways**
- Hard raw vegetables (like carrots and apples) should be sliced thinly
- No whole nuts, popcorn, hard sweets or marshmallows

4.2 Staff will supervise mealtimes closely. All meals are eaten sitting down at tables with staff **within sight and hearing** at all times. Staff are trained in **Paediatric First Aid**.



## 5. Allergy Awareness & Special Diets

### 5.1 We are a **nut-free setting**.

5.1.1 Please inform us in writing of:

- Any **food allergies or intolerances**
- Religious or cultural dietary requirements
- Medical needs requiring a specific diet

Where necessary, an **Allergy Action Plan** and/or **Individual Healthcare Plan (IHCP)** will be created and shared with staff.

## 6. Hygiene & Storage

6.1 All lunchboxes must be:

6.1.1 **Labelled clearly** with the child's name

6.1.2 Contained in a **wipe-clean or washable bag or box**

6.2 Lunches are stored in a **refrigerator** upon arrival to ensure food stays fresh and safe.

**🔔 If your child's food must not be refrigerated**, please inform a staff member on drop-off and clearly label the item.

6.3 Staff follow strict hygiene procedures when handling food or assisting children.

## 7. Incident Reporting

7.1 Allergic reactions (even mild) are recorded and shared with parents

7.2 Choking incidents or near misses are logged and reviewed as part of our safeguarding and risk management procedures.

## 8. Communication with Parents

8.1 We will:

- Share this policy during registration and review it annually
- Provide advice or sample lunchbox ideas upon request
- Let you know if we notice any recurring issues (e.g. unsafe items or lack of nutrition)

8.2 We aim to support, not judge, and are happy to work with families to encourage healthy food habits at home and in the setting.



## **9. Inclusion & Flexibility**

9.1 We understand that every child is unique. If your child has:

- Specific sensory sensitivities or food aversions
- Needs related to neurodiversity (e.g. autism, ARFID)
- Any other dietary need

Please talk to us. We will work with you to ensure your child is included, supported, and safe during mealtimes.

This policy will be reviewed by Preschool Manager annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by Principal.