

# *Spilsby Playgroup*



## ***Food Safety and Nutrition Policy 2026***

***Including Healthy Lunches and Lunch Boxes***

### **Food safety and nutrition policy**

At Spilsby Playgroup, we provide a nurturing and healthy environment for all our children. It is our responsibility to ensure that children learn, develop well and are kept healthy and safe in accordance with the

Early Years Statutory Framework. A key part of this is ensuring that the food and drinks children consume meet high standards of nutrition and safety. Our packed lunch policy is in line with the DfE Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition guidance, published in April 2025.

By following this guidance, families can support and embed healthy eating habits in their children from an early age, laying the foundation for a lifetime of good health.

This policy was adopted by *Spilsby Playgroup on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2025 and is a part of a suite of policies designed to support health and safety, including but not restricted to, Food for Play, Food Preparation, Health and Safety Policy.*

## **Aim**

Spilsby Playgroup is a suitable, clean, and safe place for children to be cared for, where they can grow and learn. We meet all statutory requirements for food safety and fulfil the criteria for meeting the relevant Early Years Foundation Stage Safeguarding and Welfare requirements.

## **Objectives**

- We recognise that we have a corporate responsibility and duty of care for those who work in and receive a service from Spilsby Playgroup. Individual employees and service users also have responsibility for their own safety as well as that of others. Risk assessment is the key means through which this is achieved.
- Our Kitchen Policy is followed for general hygiene and safety in food preparation areas.
- We provide nutritionally sound meals and snacks which promote health and reduce the risk of obesity and heart disease that may begin in childhood.
- We ensure that children are supervised at mealtimes and that children are within sight and hearing of a member of staff at all times and staff are sat facing children when eating to ensure they are eating in a way that prevents choking and so they can prevent food sharing and be aware of any unexpected allergic reactions. (Prevention of choking Appendix 3)
- We follow the main advice on dietary guidelines and the legal requirements for identifying food allergens when planning menus based on the four food groups:
  - meat, fish, and protein alternatives
  - milk and dairy products
  - cereals and grains
  - fresh fruit and vegetables.
- Following dietary guidelines to promote health also means taking account of guidelines to reduce risk of disease caused by unhealthy eating.

We will meet our objectives by,

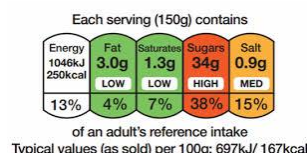
- Conducting cooking sessions within the setting that comply with risk assessments within the kitchen area. We teach the children about food safety and hygiene during these sessions as well as talking about and providing food that complies with the new guidance and is part of a healthy diet.
- Routinely we take a small group to children to walk to our local greengrocers or shop to gain the ingredients for our cooking sessions to promote use local produce and promote sustainability.
- We also provide images, text and activities based on healthy eating whilst in play with the home corner and other areas of the setting to help encourage the children to make good choices for their own health and being able to recognise real food when out and about with family as well as labels that food packets contain.
- Hot meals are provided from the neighbouring school, King Edward Academy that are in line with School Food Standards in regard to nutrition and welfare. We Inform our families to try and choose options that are in line with the EYFS guidance in regarding to nutrition and welfare when making choices for their child.
- For children aged two years and above, the Eatwell Guide (based on government guidance) shows what a balanced diet looks like, either across a single day or a whole week: [The Eatwell Guide - NHS](#) This is shared across our playgroup family via our website
  - A healthy, balanced diet is based on the 4 main food groups (fruit and vegetables; potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbohydrates; dairy or dairy alternatives; and beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins). These provide essential nutrients to help children grow and develop.
  - The Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance provides lots of information about which foods to provide, limit and avoid in your child's diet. We advise Parents to follow these guidelines as the basis for their child's healthy packed lunch: [Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition guidance](#)
- We operate the traffic light system as taken from the EYFS Nutrition guidance that all settings must follow.

**Traffic light food labels.** Some food labels use red, amber and green colour coding to tell you if a food has high, medium or low amounts of fat, saturated fat, sugars and salt:

• Red means high

• Amber means medium

• Green means low.



In general, a food or drink that has mostly greens on the label is a healthier choice. Red means the product is high in fat, saturated fat, salt or sugars, and you should avoid giving these to children and try to choose products which are low or medium in saturated fat and sugars, and low in salt.'

## Packed Lunches

- Following the new guidance, we advise parents to not include the following in their child's packed lunches:
- Any food with a red label
- Any form of cakes,
- Chocolate (including chocolate spread, chocolate coated rice cakes)
- Biscuits
- Sweets
- Popcorn
- Nut products including Peanut Butter
- Smoothies
- Crisps, (unless they have an amber colour, e.g. Baked or some vegetable crisps)
- No left over 'take away' foods

Parents advised not to use with the new guidance.	Alternatives (orange or green labels)
Crisps	Baked crisps, pea stick crisps, rice cakes
Chocolate	Fresh piece of fruit
Sweets	Low fat yoghurt
Biscuits	Cheese and crackers
cakes	Soreen bars

- As we do not have facilities to refrigerate packed lunches brought from home, we recommend that packed lunches are sent in insulated lunch bags or contain ice packs to ensure food is kept cool, particularly during the summer months. We are unable to cool or heat food, so please ensure all packed lunch items are ready to eat.
- We provide parents with a link to the EYFS nutrition guidance.
- The Traffic light system on food packages as listed above by the EYFS is monitored within lunch boxes from home and if red items are brought in, we will send a leaflet home to the parent/carers after the 3rd instance to suggest an alternative option that fits within the new guidance. Within the leaflet we include key points regarding lunch boxes from the EYFS guidance as well as our policy and a list of alternatives to consider.
- All packed lunches that are brought from home and food that is provided within the setting needs to be safe to consume to reduce choking hazards. As set out in the new guidance all fruit and vegetables need to be cut into batons this includes, carrot, cucumber, grapes, bananas and tomatoes.

### **Snack and lunch times**

- Children wash their hands, sit at tables with our staff and enjoy their snack / lunch. At snack times, the children are independently able to choose their snack and either water or milk.
- Fresh drinking water is available for the children that they can access throughout the day.

### **Celebrations**

- Celebrations within playgroup, including festivals and birthdays are celebrated with various activities depending on the celebration, but are in line with EYFS nutrition guidelines. For further information please see our 'Celebrations Policy'
- We ask parents to not bring in birthday cake and or sweets for a child's birthday, but to consider other options as suggested in our 'Celebrations Policy'. This is in line with the new EYFS nutrition guidance.
- For other celebrations, religions as well as sensory needs, or health needs that may affect a child's diet these are discussed with parents and arrangements are put in place to accommodate their own individual needs.

### **Individual dietary needs**

- Parents/carers share information about their children's particular dietary needs and allergies with staff when they enrol their children and on an on-going basis with their key person. This information is shared with all staff who are involved in the care of the child.
- Every child is an individual and their individual developmental needs are considered in consultation with parents/carers to help children to move on to the next stage in their development with regard to a healthy diet as per the guidance listed below.
- Spilsby Playgroup ensures that all staff are aware of the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis and the differences between allergies and intolerances which may develop at any time.
- Foods provided by the setting for children have any allergenic ingredients identified on the menus.
- Care is taken to ensure that children with food allergies and intolerances do not have contact with food products that they are allergic to.
- We notify Ofsted of any food poisoning affecting two or more children in our care as soon as possible and at least within 14 days.
- Risk assessments are conducted for each individual child who has a food allergy or specific dietary requirement.
- If a child suffers a choking episode at any time parents are contacted and details are recorded.

### **Legal references**

Regulation (EC) 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the hygiene of foodstuffs.

Food Information Regulations 2014

The Childcare Act 2006

### **Further guidance**

[Safer Food Better Business for Caterers](#) (Food Standards Agency)

[Paediatric Allergy Action Plans - BSACI](#)

[Food allergy – NHS \(Appendix 1\)](#)

[Anaphylaxis - NHS](#) (Appendix 2)

[Weaning - Start for Life - NHS](#)

[Help for early years providers : Food safety](#)

[Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance \(2025\)](#)

[Allergy action plan](#)

[The Eatwell Guide - NHS](#)

[Eat-Better-Start-Better1.pdf](#)

[Allergy School Self-Assessment - NARF Allergy School](#)

[Online food safety training | Food Standards Agency](#)

## Appendix 1

**Food allergy** - A food allergy is where your body reacts to certain foods. It is often mild but very serious for some people.

## Symptoms of a food allergy

Symptoms of a food allergy can affect any part of the body, including different parts of the body at the same time.

Common symptoms of a food allergy include:

- feeling dizzy or lightheaded
- itchy skin or a raised rash ([hives](#))
- swelling of the lips, face and eyes ([angioedema](#))
- coughing, wheezing, breathlessness, noisy breathing or a hoarse voice
- sneezing or an itchy, runny or blocked nose
- feeling sick or being sick
- tummy pain
- diarrhoea

You may get symptoms straight after eating the food you're allergic to, or days later.

Information:

A food allergy is different from having a [food intolerance](#), which causes symptoms such as bloating and tummy pain, usually a few hours after eating the food you're intolerant to.

## Immediate action required: Call 999 if:

- your lips, mouth, throat or tongue suddenly become swollen
- you're breathing very fast or struggling to breathe (you may become very wheezy or feel like you're choking or gasping for air)
- your throat feels tight or you're struggling to swallow
- your skin, tongue or lips turn blue, grey or pale (if you have black or brown skin, this may be easier to see on the palms of your hands or soles of your feet)
- you suddenly become very confused, drowsy or dizzy
- someone faints and cannot be woken up
- a child is limp, floppy or not responding like they normally do (their head may fall to the side, backwards or forwards, or they may find it difficult to lift their head or focus on your face)

You or the person who's unwell may also have a rash that's swollen, raised or itchy.

**These can be signs of a serious allergic reaction and may need immediate treatment in hospital.**

**If you have an adrenaline auto-injector**

If you or someone you're with is having a serious allergic reaction and has an adrenaline auto-injector (such as an EpiPen), you should use it immediately.

Instructions are included on the side of the injector if you forget how to use it or someone else needs to give you the injection.

Call 999 for an ambulance after using the injector, even if you or the person you're with seems to be feeling better.

## Non-urgent advice: See a GP if:

- you think you or your child may have a food allergy

### Causes of food allergy

A food allergy is caused by your immune system overreacting to certain types of food.

It's not clear why this happens, but certain foods are more likely to cause an allergic reaction in some people.

The most common allergic foods include:

- cows' milk
- eggs
- peanuts, soybeans, peas and chickpeas
- tree nuts, such as walnuts, almonds, hazelnuts, pecans, cashews, pistachios and Brazil nuts
- shellfish, such as prawns, crab and lobster
- wheat

But you can be allergic to any type of food, including celery, mustard, sesame seeds and lupin flour found in some baked goods.

You have a slightly higher chance of getting a food allergy if you or a close family member have other allergies, asthma or eczema.

Information:

## Oral allergy syndrome

Some people get an itchy mouth and throat after eating raw fruit or vegetables. This is called oral allergy syndrome.

It's not usually serious and eating fruit and vegetables that have been well cooked helps.

[Find out more about oral allergy syndrome on Allergy UK](#)

## Tests for food allergy

You may be referred to a specialist for tests if a GP thinks you have a food allergy.

Tests you may have include:

- a skin-prick test (where a drop of liquid containing a food you may be allergic to is put on your skin to see if it reacts)
- blood tests
- a special diet where you avoid eating the food you might be allergic to, to see if your symptoms get better

You may also be asked to keep a food and symptoms diary to help work out what may be triggering your symptoms.

## Treatments for a food allergy

If you have a food allergy, you will not be able to eat the food you're allergic to, including foods where you're allergic to any of the ingredients.

You'll be given medicines to help manage your symptoms or use in case of an emergency.

These include:

- antihistamines for mild allergic reactions
- emergency medicines called adrenaline auto-injectors, such as an EpiPen, for severe allergic reactions

Your specialist will give you an allergy management plan that will explain how to manage your allergy.

Children with a peanut allergy may have immunotherapy to help their bodies become less sensitive to peanuts, but they should still avoid eating peanuts.

## Things you can do if you have a food allergy

There are steps you can take to help manage your food allergy.

### Do

- check food labels and restaurant menus carefully to make sure they do not contain the food you're allergic to
- tell friends, family, nursery, school and work about your allergy
- carry 2 adrenaline auto-injectors with you at all times, if you need them
- tell staff at restaurants and cafés about your allergy
- tell airlines and cabin staff about your allergy before you fly
- wipe down surfaces in public before eating

- do not eat foods without checking what ingredients are in them first
- do not cut foods out of your diet without speaking to a GP

## **Appendix 2**

**Anaphylaxis** - Anaphylaxis is a life-threatening allergic reaction that happens very quickly. It can be caused by food, medicine or insect stings. Call 999 if you think you or someone else is having an anaphylactic reaction.

### **Symptoms of anaphylaxis**

Symptoms of anaphylaxis happen very quickly.

They usually start within minutes of coming into contact with something you're allergic to, such as a food, medicine or insect sting.

Symptoms include:

- swelling of your throat and tongue
- difficulty breathing or breathing very fast
- difficulty swallowing, tightness in your throat or a hoarse voice
- wheezing, coughing or noisy breathing
- feeling tired or confused
- feeling faint, dizzy or fainting
- skin that feels cold to the touch
- blue, grey or pale skin, lips or tongue – if you have brown or black skin, this may be easier to see on the palms of your hands or soles of your feet

You may also have a rash that's swollen, raised or itchy.

### **Immediate action required: Call 999 if:**

- **your lips, mouth, throat or tongue suddenly become swollen**
- **you're breathing very fast or struggling to breathe (you may become very wheezy or feel like you're choking or gasping for air)**
- **your throat feels tight or you're struggling to swallow**

- your skin, tongue or lips turn blue, grey or pale (if you have black or brown skin, this may be easier to see on the palms of your hands or soles of your feet)
- you suddenly become very confused, drowsy or dizzy
- someone faints and cannot be woken up
- a child is limp, floppy or not responding like they normally do (their head may fall to the side, backwards or forwards, or they may find it difficult to lift their head or focus on your face)

You or the person who's unwell may also have a rash that's swollen, raised or itchy.

**These can be signs of a serious allergic reaction and may need immediate treatment in hospital.**

## What to do if you have anaphylaxis

Follow these steps if you think you or someone you're with is having an anaphylactic reaction:

1. Use an adrenaline auto-injector (such as an EpiPen) if you have one – instructions are included on the side of the injector.
2. Call 999 for an ambulance and say that you think you're having an anaphylactic reaction.
3. Lie down – you can raise your legs, and if you're struggling to breathe, raise your shoulders or sit up slowly (if you're pregnant, lie on your left side).
4. If you have been stung by an insect, try to remove the sting if it's still in the skin.
5. If your symptoms have not improved after 5 minutes, use a 2nd adrenaline auto-injector.

Do not stand or walk at any time, even if you feel better.

Information:

### How to use an adrenaline auto-injector

There are different types of adrenaline auto-injectors and each one is given differently.

- [EpiPen instructions \(EpiPen website\)](#)
- [Jext instructions \(Jext website\)](#)

### Treatment for anaphylaxis

Anaphylaxis needs to be treated in hospital immediately.

Treatments can include:

- adrenaline given by an injection or drip in your vein
- oxygen
- fluids given by a drip in your vein

You'll usually stay in hospital for around 2 to 12 hours, but you may need to stay longer.

Before you leave hospital, you'll be given 2 adrenaline auto-injectors to keep in case you have another anaphylactic reaction.

An adrenaline auto-injector is a special device for injecting adrenaline yourself. You'll be told how and when to use it.

You should be shown how to use your adrenaline auto-injector each time you're prescribed it.

You may also be referred to an allergy specialist for tests and advice.

## Things you can do to help prevent anaphylaxis

There are some things you can do to help prevent anaphylaxis or prepare for if it happens.

### Do

- avoid the food, medicine or thing that you're allergic to – for example, if you have a food allergy, check food labels carefully and tell staff at restaurants and cafes about your allergy
- carry 2 adrenaline auto-injectors with you at all times
- check your adrenaline auto-injector expiry dates regularly and get new ones before they expire
- practise how to use your adrenaline auto-injector by using a trainer injector (an injector that has no needle or medicine in it) – you can order one online from the company that makes your injector
- teach friends, family, colleagues or carers how and when to use your adrenaline auto-injector
- use your adrenaline auto-injector if you think you may have anaphylaxis, even if your symptoms are mild
- wear medical alert jewellery such as a bracelet with information about your allergy – this tells other people about your allergy in case of an emergency

### Don't

- do not leave your adrenaline auto-injectors anywhere too hot or cold such as in the fridge or outside in the sun

Information:

## Food safety advice for children age 5 and under

### How to reduce the risk of choking

Choking can happen with any food, but there are steps you can take to minimise the risks.

Food preparation:

- remove any stones and pips from fruit before serving
- cut small round foods, like grapes, strawberries and cherry tomatoes, lengthways and into quarters
- cut large fruits like melon, and hard fruit or vegetables like raw apple and carrot into slices instead of small chunks
- do not offer raisins as a snack to children under 12 months – although these can be chopped up as part of a meal
- soften hard fruit and vegetables (such as carrot and apple) and remove the skins when first given to babies from around 6 months
- sausages should be avoided due to their high salt content, but if offered to children these should be cut into thin strips rather than chunks and remove the skins
- remove bones from meat or fish
- do not give whole nuts to children under five years old
- do not give whole seeds to children under five years old
- cut cheese into strips rather than chunks
- white bread can form a doughy ball in the throat, consider wholemeal or toasted bread and for very young children cut all types of bread into strips
- do not give popcorn as a snack
- do not give children marshmallows or jelly cubes from a packet either to eat or as part of messy play activities as they can get stuck in the throat
- do not give children hard sweets

### Supervision

**Infants and young children should be seated safely in a highchair or appropriately sized low chair while eating. Infants and young children should never be left alone while they are eating, and staff should be familiar with paediatric first aid advice for children who are choking.**

Providers should, where possible, sit facing children whilst they eat so they can:

- make sure children are eating in a way to prevent choking
- prevent food sharing
- be aware of any unexpected allergic reactions

From September 2025 early years settings will be required to always have a member of staff with a valid paediatric first aid certificate in the room when children are eating. This requirement will be part of the EYFS statutory framework.