



Willoughton Primary School

Little Lancasters and Early Years Food and Nutrition in the Early Years Policy

<u>Policy Information</u>			
Status:		Reviewed by:	Full Governing Board
Cycle of Review:		Policy Ratified	July 2025
Signed as accepted:			

1. Policy Statement

At Little Lancasters (and the wider Cliff Federation), we are committed to supporting the health, safety, and development of every child by providing nutritious, safe, and inclusive meals and snacks. Our food provision aligns with the Department for Education's 2025 *Nutrition in Early Years* guidance and the EYFS statutory framework.

2. Aims

We aim to:

- Provide healthy, balanced, and age-appropriate meals and snacks.
- Reduce choking and allergy risks through safe food practices.
- Support children's individual dietary, cultural, and medical needs.
- Promote positive food habits and mealtime routines.
- Empower families to make informed choices about food brought from home.

3. Food Provision and Menu Planning

We follow the DfE's "Provide, Limit, Avoid" framework:

-  **Provide:** Vegetables, fruit, wholegrains, dairy, and a variety of protein sources.
-  **Limit:** Salt, sugar, processed foods, fried items.
-  **Avoid:** Sugary drinks, sweets, large chunks of raw hard food, unpasteurised products.

Governing Body: Full Governors

Review Date:

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Our menus encourage variety across **four food groups**: fruits & veg; starchy carbs (preferably wholegrain); dairy or fortified alternatives; protein sources including oily fish (served no more than twice weekly).

We follow child-sized portion guidance (roughly a child's fist) and encourage responsive eating without pressuring them to finish.

Menus:

- Little Lancaster snacks are planned on a 2-week rotation and updated seasonally.
 - Hot school meals are on a termly menu and updated seasonally (provided by Ideal School Meals)
 - Include at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables daily.
 - Cater to all dietary, cultural, and religious needs.
 - Displayed clearly for parents/carers.
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4. Choking and Food Safety

We adhere to EYFS 2025 safer eating reforms:

- Food is cut/prepared safely (e.g., grapes halved lengthwise, apples peeled and sliced).
 - High-risk foods avoided for under-5s (e.g., whole nuts, popcorn).
 - Children are always seated and supervised during meals/snacks.
 - Staff sit **facing children** while they eat.
 - Staff who supervise eating are trained in **paediatric first aid**, with at least one qualified staff member present during mealtimes from **September 2025**
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5. Allergy and Medical Diets

- Parents/carers must complete an allergy and dietary needs form on admission.
 - All allergens are clearly labelled on menus.
 - Individual **Allergy Action Plans** are developed where needed.
 - Food is prepared in line with current allergy-safe practices and cross-contamination is strictly avoided.
 - Emergency medication is readily accessible and staff are trained in its use.
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6. Packed Lunches and Food from Home

If parents opt out of nursery meals, we require:

- A healthy packed lunch in line with DfE guidance.
- No high-sugar, high-salt, or choking-risk foods.

- Clear labelling of containers and items.
- No sharing of food between children.
- Water only in drinks bottles (no squash or juice).

We reserve the right to speak with families if a packed lunch does not meet health or safety standards.

7. Drinks and Hydration

- Fresh drinking water is available throughout the day.
 - Milk is offered as per government nutritional recommendations.
 - Sugary drinks are not permitted.
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8. Mealtimes and Social Development

- Mealtimes are calm, sociable, and unhurried.
 - Staff eat with children to model good eating behaviours.
 - Children are encouraged to try new foods but never forced to eat.
 - Self-help skills like pouring drinks and serving food are encouraged.
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10. Cultural, Religious and Ethical Considerations

- We respect and accommodate all religious, cultural, and ethical food requirements.
 - Families are encouraged to share information about dietary customs or preferences.
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11. Monitoring and Evaluation

- Menus and food practices are reviewed termly by the Deputy Nursery Manager.
 - Parental feedback is invited regularly.
 - Choking or allergy incidents are logged, reviewed, and reported to parents and Ofsted where applicable.
 - Staff receive ongoing training and supervision related to nutrition and food safety.
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12. Charges and Consumables

- Meal charges are voluntary and separate from funded childcare hours.
- Parents may opt out of meals and provide food from home.

- All costs are transparent and itemised on invoices.