

Adopted:	September 2026
Next review:	September 2027
Approved by:	Governing Body
Responsibility of:	Jonelle Yeoman
Local Authority or School Policy:	School



Brougham Street Community Nursery School Food and Nutrition Policy

1. Policy Statement

At Brougham Street Community Nursery School, we are committed to promoting healthy eating habits and ensuring that all children receive nutritious, balanced, and safe meals whilst in our care. We believe that a healthy, varied diet is essential for children's growth, development, and long-term well-being.

This policy supports the statutory requirements of the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework**, with particular reference to the **April 2025 EYFS nutrition guidance**. We also incorporate healthy eating as an integral part of our curriculum to help children build lifelong positive food habits.

2. Aims

- To ensure that all food and drink provided meets or exceeds the EYFS nutritional requirements.
- To create a positive, inclusive food culture where healthy choices are encouraged and celebrated.
- To teach children about food, nutrition, and healthy lifestyles through age-appropriate activities.
- To accommodate individual dietary needs, including allergies, cultural preferences, and medical requirements.

3. Babies 0-6 months

In the first year of life, babies follow individual feeding and sleeping patterns that can regularly change. Here at Brougham Street Community Nursery School we always ask parents and/or carers about their baby's current pattern. These patterns will be kept consistent and will be part of the baby's care plan each day, wherever possible.

Our highly skilled team are confident with the signs that babies show when they are hungry. Babies here are always fed responsively according to their needs. This means feeding babies whenever they show signs that they are hungry, feeding at their own pace and using the cues that they are full.

Baby-Led Weaning and Independent Feeding

At Brougham Street Community Nursery School, we recognise the importance of fostering healthy eating habits and supporting children's development through positive, respectful, and responsive feeding practices. Our approach to feeding, including **Baby-Led Weaning (BLW)** and **independent feeding**, is rooted in promoting children's autonomy, motor skill development, and a healthy relationship with food from the earliest stages.

Baby-Led Weaning (BLW)

We support parents and carers who choose to follow a Baby-Led Weaning approach, which allows babies to feed themselves from the start of weaning, typically around 6 months of age, when they are developmentally ready.

In line with current NHS guidance and early years best practices, we will:

- Offer soft, age-appropriate finger foods that are safe and manageable for babies to self-feed.
- Sit babies upright during meals and supervise closely to ensure safety at all times.
- Respect babies' hunger and fullness cues, never pressuring them to eat or restricting intake unnecessarily.
- Collaborate with parents to understand each baby's weaning journey and accommodate individual preferences, allergies, and cultural or dietary needs.
- Avoid purees and spoon-feeding unless this is part of the family's chosen weaning method, in which case a combination of approaches can be supported.
- Encourage exploration of a wide variety of tastes, textures, and colours to support sensory development and healthy food acceptance.
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Independent Feeding and Promoting Autonomy

We view mealtimes as an important opportunity for children to build independence, confidence, and social skills. As such, we provide a supportive environment that encourages all children, regardless of age, to participate in their own feeding to the best of their ability.

Our practice includes:

- Providing child-sized cutlery, cups, and plates to enable children to feed themselves as independently as possible.
- Encouraging children to serve themselves where appropriate, for example, during family-style meals or snack times.
- Allowing children to decide how much they want to eat and recognising their right to refuse food without pressure.
- Offering consistent encouragement and support, while allowing children to take the lead and develop their motor skills at their own pace.
- Ensuring staff are trained to model positive eating behaviours, engage in conversations about food, and create a calm, unhurried mealtime atmosphere.

We believe that by fostering autonomy in eating from an early age, children develop lifelong skills around food choice, body awareness, and self-care. Our goal is to build a foundation for healthy eating behaviours in a respectful, inclusive, and child-centred way.

We avoid purees and spoon-feeding unless this is part of the family's chosen weaning method, in which case a combination of approaches can be used.

4. Breastfeeding

Here at Brougham Street, we always support parents or carers wishing to continue breastfeeding and we encourage parents to provide breastmilk for their baby whilst attending the setting.

There are comfortable spaces within our setting where parents can breastfeed. We also encourage parents and/or carers who wish to provide expressed breastmilk for their babies and children to do so.

5. Infant Formula

If a baby is not exclusively breastfed, then formula can be provided. Our highly skilled staff team are experts at preparing milk.

6. Babies aged 6-12 months

From around 6 months of age, babies will be introduced to a wide range of foods, flavours and textures, alongside their usual milk feeds. Wherever possible, we prepare these foods from scratch. This helps to introduce babies to a range of appropriate flavours and textures.

Our staff team will always have discussions with parents and/or carers about common food allergens that have been introduced at home. These foods will be introduced one at a time and in very small amounts so that we can spot any reactions.

8. Meals and Snacks

We provide:

- **Healthy meals and snacks** that are freshly prepared on site or sourced from approved suppliers. At least one of our snacks will contain carbohydrates.
- **A varied menu** that reflects the recommended food groups and portion sizes (dependant on the child's individual needs) from the April 2025 EYFS guidance.
- **Fresh drinking water** available to children at all times.
- **Milk/Milk alternatives** as a mid-morning option for children over one year of age

Meal times include:

- Breakfast (if booked in for this session)
- Mid-morning snack
- Lunch
- Afternoon snack
- Tea (if booked in for this session)

9. Menu Planning

Our menus:

- Are planned on a **seasonal 3-week rotation** to ensure variety and nutritional balance.
- Include **at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables per day**.
- Are low in sugar, salt, and saturated fat.
- Are shared with parents in advance and are displayed on our website and our menu board.

We consider:

- Children's **allergies, intolerances, and medical diets**, with individual care plans in place where necessary.
- **Cultural and religious food requirements** with inclusive menu options.
- Use of **locally sourced, sustainable ingredients** wherever possible.

10. Cutting food safely

Our staff ensure that we cut food to a size that is right for a child's size, age and stage of development. This helps to avoid choking.

Foods that are a good choice for first finger foods include:

- soft-cooked fruit such as peeled apple slices or finger sticks of bananas, kiwis
- soft-cooked vegetables in finger sticks such as carrots, broccoli, courgette sticks
- cooked protein in finger sticks such as tofu or chicken.

For more advanced eaters, from around 9 months old, we cut food into small, bite-sized pieces so that babies can practise their pincer grasps.

When preparing food, we ensure that we avoid round shapes as these are a choking hazard.

Small fruits are always cut lengthways and then halved again (quarters).

These fruits include:

- bananas
- grapes
- raspberries
- strawberries
- cherry tomatoes.

5. Mealtime Environment

We promote a **calm, social, and educational environment** by:

- Encouraging children to serve themselves (during snack time) wherever possible,

promoting independence and portion awareness.

- Having staff sit with children to model healthy eating habits and supervise whenever children are eating.
- Using mealtimes as **opportunities for conversation**, learning, and social development.
- Encouraging good **table manners**.
- Staff always encourage children to try a variety of foods and develop positive eating habits, but children are never forced to eat or to finish everything on their plate.
- All staff are paediatric first aid trained.

6. Teaching and Learning

Healthy eating and food education are embedded into our curriculum through:

- **Planned activities** such as cooking, food tasting, growing vegetables, and theme days.
- **Key worker group time** about healthy choices, where food comes from, and the importance of drinking water.
- Links to **Understanding the World** and **Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)** as outlined in the EYFS.

7. Special Dietary Requirements

We ensure:

- **Allergies and intolerances** are clearly documented in a traffic light system and are communicated to all staff members.
- Strict **no nut** policy in line with allergy management procedures.
- Parents work with the nursery to provide necessary documentation from healthcare providers when applicable.
- Alternative meals are provided when required, ensuring that no child is excluded.
- All staff members, including non-child facing are qualified in allergens and anaphylaxis

8. Partnership with Parents and Carers

We recognise the role of families in promoting healthy eating and work collaboratively by:

- Carrying out a home visit before your child starts at Brougham Street to ensure that we are fully informed about your child's food preferences and any intolerances/allergies.
- Sharing our **menus and our food and nutrition policy** with parents.
- Offering **guidance and resources** on healthy lunchboxes (if applicable).
- Communicating regularly about children's eating habits, preferences, and any concerns.
- Inviting families to participate in **cooking sessions, growing projects, and food-**

related workshops.

- Regular parent consultation meetings to discuss your child's progress and any allergen changes.

9. Treats and Celebrations

- We promote **healthy celebrations**
- Birthdays and special events are acknowledged with non-food-based celebrations where possible.
- We discourage sugary foods and drinks being brought into the nursery.
- We will however always celebrate with your child.

10. Monitoring and Evaluation

- The **Headteacher** and **Designated Health & Nutrition Lead** are responsible for the implementation and monitoring of this policy.
- Feedback is sought from staff, parents, and children to improve food practices.
- The policy is reviewed **annually** or sooner in response to new guidance or changes in practice.

11. Legal Framework and Guidance

This policy has been developed with reference to:

- **Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), 2025**
- **EYFS Nutrition Guidance (April 2025)**
- **Eat Better, Start Better** voluntary food and drink guidelines
- **Food Standards Agency (FSA)** hygiene and safety guidance
- **Allergen regulations under the Food Information for Consumers Regulation (EU FIC)**
- **Benedics Law (2026)**

Signed:	Jonelle Yeoman
Date:	September 11th 2026
Review Date:	September 2027

