

Blue Windmill Nursery
Safer Eating, Allergies and Nutrition Policy

At Blue Windmill Nursery we believe that eating and drinking should be safe, enjoyable and social experiences that support children's health, wellbeing and development.

We are committed to providing healthy, balanced meals and snacks, meeting individual dietary requirements, managing allergies safely and creating positive mealtime experiences where children can develop independence and confidence around food.

We recognise that food safety is an important part of safeguarding children and take all reasonable steps to minimise the risk of choking, allergic reactions, food contamination and food-borne illness.

Healthy Eating and Nutrition

We plan our menus in line with current government guidance for early years nutrition, ensuring children receive healthy, balanced meals and snacks that support their growth, development and wellbeing.

Our menus:

- Are planned in advance and reviewed regularly.
- Include a balance of protein, carbohydrates, fruit, vegetables and dairy foods.
- Avoid excessive sugar, salt, additives and processed foods.
- Reflect children's cultural, religious and dietary requirements.
- Encourage children to experience a variety of foods and flavours.

Fresh drinking water is available throughout the day.

Milk is offered daily and provided in accordance with current nutritional guidance.

Positive Mealtimes

We aim to create calm, relaxed and enjoyable mealtimes where children:

- Eat while seated and supervised at all times.
- Are encouraged to develop independence through self-feeding and serving where appropriate.
- Are given sufficient time to eat without being rushed.

- Are never forced to eat food they do not want.
- Are encouraged to listen to their own feelings of hunger and fullness.

Staff sit with children where appropriate, model positive eating habits and support conversation and social interaction.

Food is never used as a reward or punishment.

Baby Feeding and Weaning

We work closely with parents to follow each baby's individual feeding routine.

We support breastfeeding and can safely store expressed breast milk that is clearly labelled with the child's name and date.

Weaning is introduced in partnership with parents and follows each child's developmental stage and readiness rather than age alone.

Formula milk is prepared in accordance with current NHS guidance.

Allergies and Dietary Requirements

Before a child starts nursery, parents are asked to provide details of:

- Food allergies.
- Food intolerances.
- Medical dietary requirements.
- Cultural or religious dietary requirements.
- Personal food preferences where relevant.

Parents must inform the nursery immediately of any changes to their child's dietary needs.

Where appropriate, the nursery will complete an individual **Child Allergy Risk Assessment** and **Allergy Record** with parents or carers.

All dietary and allergy information is treated as a priority safeguarding matter.

Allergy Management Procedure

Blue Windmill Nursery operates a clear allergy management system to reduce the risk of allergic reactions.

When a child has an allergy:

- The allergy is recorded on registration and confirmed when the child starts nursery.
- The Manager updates the nursery **Dietary Requirements** sheet and distributes it to the kitchen and playrooms.

Allergy information is shared with:

- The cook
- Office staff
- All playrooms

The cook prepares a daily **Daily Allergy Checklist** identifying children with allergies and the meals provided.

The Daily Allergy Checklist is checked and confirmed daily with the relevant Room Supervisor.

Meals are individually prepared and checked to avoid cross-contamination.

The cook verbally confirms ingredients with serving staff and labels allergy meals before serving.

Children with allergies use colour-coded table mats to provide an additional visual safety check.

At tea time, responsibility is handed over to the Manager or designated staff member preparing tea.

The Daily Allergy Checklist is checked again before any food is served.

At every meal and snack time a designated member of staff is responsible for ensuring that the correct food is given to the correct child.

Preventing Cross-Contamination

To minimise risk:

- Allergy meals are prepared separately where required.

- Preparation surfaces and utensils are cleaned before use.
- Staff follow handwashing procedures before handling food.
- Children are supervised during meals and snacks.
- Food sharing between children is discouraged and monitored.
- Careful consideration is given to seating arrangements when necessary.

Allergic Reactions

All staff receive training and information regarding allergies and allergic reactions.

Staff are aware of the signs of allergic reactions, including:

- Rash or hives.
- Swelling of lips, tongue or face.
- Vomiting or stomach pain.
- Difficulty breathing.
- Wheezing.
- Anaphylaxis.

If a child experiences an allergic reaction:

- A paediatric first aider will respond immediately.
- Emergency medication will be administered where prescribed and authorised.
- Emergency services will be called if required.
- Parents will be informed immediately.
- The incident will be recorded and reviewed.

Choking Prevention

- Children are supervised at all times when eating or drinking.
- A paediatric first aid trained member of staff is present during all meals and snack times.
- Staff preparing and serving food are trained to reduce choking risks and follow current Food Standards Agency guidance.
- Food is prepared in age-appropriate sizes and textures, taking account of children's developmental stage.
- Children are encouraged to sit calmly while eating and are not permitted to walk around with food.
- Mealtimes are organised to allow staff to supervise children effectively and respond quickly in the event of an emergency.

Food Hygiene and Safety

The nursery complies with current food hygiene legislation and maintains appropriate food hygiene procedures. The nursery operates a documented Food Safety Management System (Safer Food, Better Business).

We will:

- Ensure food handlers receive appropriate training.
- Maintain safe food storage temperatures.
- Follow cleaning and infection control procedures.
- Monitor food preparation areas.
- Work with Environmental Health requirements and guidance.

Working with Parents

We believe children benefit when parents and nursery staff work together.

We will:

- Share menus with parents.
- Discuss children's dietary needs and preferences.
- Inform parents of any concerns regarding eating, allergies or nutrition.
- Encourage consistency between home and nursery where possible.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner following any significant allergy incident, change in legislation or change to nursery procedures.