Food Safety Policy

I have a duty to ensure that safe and healthy practices are followed regarding the storage, preparation, handling, and serving of food within my setting and when providing children with meals and snacks on outings.

I am fully aware of my responsibilities under food hygiene legislation and have completed training in food hygiene to ensure the safe preparation, storage, and handling of food in my setting. I follow [Food Standards Agency](https://www.food.gov.uk/) (FSA) guidance, including completing the [*Safer Food Better Business for Childminders* pack](https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/safer-food-better-business-for-childminders) and adhering to best practices outlined in [Food and nutrition for childcare settings: food hygiene and safety](https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2024-09/section-6-food-hygiene-and-safety.pdf).

Normally parents supply bottles of milk, baby food, a packed lunch and/or dinner. However, I provide snacks during the day, we do various cooking/tasting activities and have messy play with food items (such as jelly, spaghetti, rice etc). If required I can also provide lunch and/or dinner.

**Hygiene and Safe Food Handling**

* Hands are washed thoroughly before handling or preparing food.
* Children are taught proper handwashing techniques and must wash their hands before meals and after playing outside, using the toilet, or touching animals.
* I educate children on the importance of good hygiene.
* I ensure that all work surfaces and utensils are thoroughly cleaned and sanitised before food preparation.
* I use suitable sterilisation equipment for baby bottles, feeding equipment, and utensils.
* Laundry is not carried out during food preparation times, and soiled clothing or detergents do not come into contact with food areas.
* I also follow the guidance in “Infection, Prevention and Control for Childcare Settings (0-5 years)” (produced by Public Health Wales) in the storage, preparation and serving of food, milk and drinks.

**Storage and Temperature Control**

* I follow FSA guidance on the safe storage and handling of food.
* I check my fridge and cupboards regularly for expired food and always read labels before use.
* I ensure that food is stored at the correct temperatures:
  + Fridge: Below 5°C
  + Freezer: Below -18°C
* I check the fridge temperature daily. Any issues with the fridge temperature are then recorded along with the action I have taken to rectify the problem.
* I label and date prepared meals and ensure they are stored correctly.
* I ensure that any packed lunches provided by parents are stored in a chilled or cool place.

**Allergen and Special Dietary Requirement Management**

* I collect, record, and regularly update information on allergies and dietary requirements.
* I provide parents with allergen information on the food I serve and request that they update me on any changes to dietary requirements immediately.
* I keep a record of what food I have provided to each child every day along with the list of allergens in the food I’ve provided
* Cross-contamination is prevented by using separate utensils and food preparation areas for allergenic ingredients.
* Children do not share food to reduce the risk of allergic reactions.
* I may request certain foods not be brought into my setting to reduce risks.
* Myself and my assistant are trained in recognising symptoms of allergic reactions and anaphylaxis, with reference to [NHS guidance on food allergies and anaphylaxis](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/anaphylaxis/).

**Safe Eating Practices & Choking Prevention**

* Mealtimes are relaxed, enjoyable, and social experiences where children are encouraged to sit together, promoting healthy eating habits and table manners.
* Children are supervised during all meal and snack times to monitor food consumption, prevent food sharing, and ensure safe eating practices.
* Hot foods and liquids are kept away from children to prevent burns and allowed to cool sufficiently before serving.
* A paediatric first aider (myself or my assistant) is always present while children are eating and sit facing the children while they eat to monitor food to quickly identify any potential choking incident.
* Children are always within sight and hearing while eating, as choking can be silent.
* Children are encouraged to eat safely seated at a table or in a securely fastened highchair.
* Food is prepared appropriately for each child's developmental stage:
  + Grapes, cherry tomatoes, and similar foods are cut lengthways into quarters.
  + Hard fruits, vegetables, and cheese are sliced instead of served as chunks.
  + Bones, pips, and stones are removed from food.
* To avoid distractions whilst eating, I do not allow toys to be brought to the table and the TV is not used during mealtimes.

If a choking incident occurs and requires intervention:

* Parents are informed immediately.
* The incident is recorded, detailing what food was involved, how the child choked, and what action was taken.

**Parental Communication & Weaning Support**

* I have ongoing discussions with parents regarding children’s dietary needs, including weaning progress and appropriate food textures.
* I do not make assumptions based on age and work with parents to introduce solid foods at a pace suitable for each child.
* I refer to [NHS Weaning - Start for Life](https://www.nhs.uk/start-for-life/weaning/) guidance to support children’s transition to solid foods.
* Parents receive daily updates on what their child has eaten via messaging, contact diaries, or daily reports.

**Outings and External Food Provision**

* When providing food outside my setting (e.g., on outings or at playgroups), I check that it is suitable, safe, and allergy-friendly.
* Parents are informed about what their child has eaten via messaging, daily reports, or contact diaries.

**Food Poisoning & Outbreak Management**

* If two or more children experience food poisoning while in my care, I will notify Care Inspectorate Wales within 14 days.
* All food receipts (including those under £10) are kept to assist in tracing the source of contamination.
* Parents are notified immediately if their child shows symptoms of foodborne illness.

**Additional Guidance & Resources:**

* NHS Advice on Food Allergies: [Food allergy - NHS](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/food-allergy/)
* NHS Anaphylaxis Treatment Guidance: [Anaphylaxis - NHS](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/anaphylaxis/)
* BSACI Allergy Action Plan: [BSACI Allergy Plan](https://www.bsaci.org/)
* Food Safety for Early Years Settings: [GOV.UK - Food Safety](https://help-for-early-years-providers.education.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/food-safety)
* NHS Weaning Guidance: [Weaning - Start for Life](https://www.nhs.uk/start-for-life/weaning/)

For further details on nutritional guidelines, healthy food choices, and meal planning, please refer to my **Healthy Eating Policy**.

**Note**: This is a nut-free setting. Parents are required to ensure they do not bring any nuts or products containing nuts into the setting.

**Review and Monitoring**

* This policy is reviewed regularly to ensure compliance with Care Inspectorate Wales requirements and food safety best practices.
* Updates are communicated to parents and staff as necessary.

This policy was designed by Little Rosebuds with regard to the following legislation.

**The National Minimum Standards for regulated Childcare for children up to the age of 12 years**

* Standard 1: Information about the setting
* Standard 2: The contract – dietary needs
* Standard 10: Healthcare
* Standard 12: Food and Drink
* Standard 22: Environment
* Standard 24: Safety

**Infection, Prevention and Control for Childcare Settings (0-5 years)** (Public Health Wales)

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| Date this document was last updated – | 25/04/25 – removed healthy eating (created a new policy for healthy eating) |
| Dates reviewed – | 25/04/25 |
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