



**FLASH LEY COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL
& NURSERY**

EARLY YEARS FOOD, NUTRITION AND FEEDING POLICY

Produced by: Mrs R Hughes

Approved by: _____

To be reviewed: July 2026

Intention:

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Food, Nutrition and Feeding policy has been written to ensure that the needs of children in Early Years are met in line with published guidance. At Flash Ley we believe all children are entitled to receive a balanced and nutritional diet. It is our intention to provide children in Early Years with a diet which meets their nutritional requirements and supports their physical development. This policy outlines the practise used across our Early Years provision in relation to the preparation, storing and handling of food and drinks. We aim to work in partnership with Parents and Carers to ensure all children develop healthy eating habits.

Implementation:

Upon admission:

Before children are admitted to Voyage and Flash Ley Primary School parents are required to complete an admissions form detailing any dietary requirements, preferences or allergies. Appropriate arrangements are made to ensure all individual children's needs are met. Care plans are put into place and signed by Parents/Carers.

The dietary requirements of children are made known to staff and strictly adhered to when food is provided.

Babies 0 - 6 months:

Babies in our care follow individual eating plans devised in partnership with parents. Staff knowledge and published guidance is shared with parents if required to support them in their babies early feeding. Feeding patterns are kept consistent and form part of each individual babies care.

Staff are aware of feeding cues from individual babies and fed children in line with their agreed feeding patterns acting responsively to their needs. A strict procedure is followed in order to ensure all bottles, utensils and feeding equipment is sterile and babies feeds are prepared correctly and hygienically in line with manufacturer guidelines.

Baby led weaning begins in line with NHS guidance at around 6 months.

Parents and Carers are supported in breastfeeding should they wish to provide breastmilk and this is stored in line with NHS guidance – *safe storage of expressed breastmilk*. Where required we will provide a safe, comfortable space for parents who wish to breastfeed within the setting.

Babies 6 months to 1 year:

In Early Years we work in partnership with parents throughout their child's weaning process. Voyage provide a flexible approach to weaning in order to meet each child's individual needs. The introduction of solid foods should only begin once a baby can:

- Stay in a sitting position and support their own head
- Coordinate their hands, eyes and mouth so they are able to look at their food, pick it up and put it in their mouth
- Swallow food competently

On-going discussions with Parents and Carers will take place about the progress of weaning to enable staff to take into account the foods children are exploring at home and their next steps. Babies will be exposed to new textures and tastes using purees and finger foods in line with NHS guidance. Staff will ensure foods are the correct size for each child's age and stage of weaning to minimise choking risks. Children are fully supervised and supported when eating. Discussions will take place with Parents and Carers around common allergy foods and extra care will be given when children encounter these foods for the first time.

The only drinks provided for babies 6 months to 1 year will be water from open or free-flow cups, infant formula or breastmilk. In line with guidance we discourage the use of 'follow on milks' or formulas labelled for beyond 6 months as research shows these provide no benefit to babies who can continue to have first infant formula up until 12 months old.

Children 1 – 5 years:

At Flash Ley we intend for meal times to be a positive experience in which children socialise, try new foods and develop their physical skills.

Hot meals during lunch periods are out-sourced through a catering company regulated by the School Food Standards (SFS) agency. SFS define which foods and drinks must be provided, those that are restricted and those which must not be provided on school premises up until 6pm - including breakfast and after school clubs. Whilst compliance with the SFS is mandatory and adhered to at all times, extra care is given within this policy to ensure Early Years specific guidance is also followed and detailed below.

Dietary requirements:

Each child is an individual and may have specific dietary requirements relating to allergies, preferences or religious beliefs. Each child has an individual care plan with all staff made aware of dietary requirements within the setting. Posters showing the child's photograph are placed within the school kitchen and details of their dietary needs which are adhered to at all times. Dietary requirements are taken into account when food is prepared, stored and eaten within the setting. Parents and Carers are encouraged to provide regular updates on any changes to dietary requirements. All staff are first aid trained to ensure signs of an allergic reaction are spotted and treatment provided in line with children's individual care plans. Where children have medical needs which require food or drink that does not align with school policy we will document this as evidence with Parents and Carers.

Breakfast club:

Children in Early Years are provided with a choice of breakfast items including toast, cereal and fresh fruit. Children are supervised and encouraged to develop physical skills such as sitting to develop core strength, using cutlery and positive eating habits. Where possible cereals provided are labelled green for sugar content and those labelled as red are avoided. Bread labelled red for salt content is also restricted where possible.

Drinks:

All children in Early Years are provided with open access to drinks throughout the day. We only offer semi skimmed milk or water and will not provide children with fruit juice, squash, milkshakes or smoothies. Children are supervised when drinking at allocated spaces within the environment and encouraged to sit and develop physical skills such as pouring drinks and using an open cup. We work in partnership with Parents and Carers to discourage the introduction of sugary drinks in Early Years.

Snacks:

All children have access to snacks outside of meal times consisting of fruit and vegetables only. Children are supervised during snack times in line with Department for Education Food Safety Guidance. Children eat snack in designated areas to ensure good hygiene practises and develop their physical skills.

Food from home:

Some families may wish to bring lunch or snacks from home for children to consume within the setting. We work in partnership with Parents and Carers to encourage a balanced diet avoiding high sugar and salt items where possible. Where possible we ensure food from home aligns with healthy options offered within the setting. Food provided from home is stored in line with '4 hour rule' from the Food Standards Agency.

Choking Guidance:

Some foods provided may pose a greater choking risk due to their shape. Staff will ensure all foods are presented to children in an appropriate size for their age and stage of development. High risk foods such as but not limited to grapes, strawberries, sausages and tomatoes will be cut into quarters to prevent choking. Stones will be removed from fruit where necessary. All children are supervised during meal times by first aid trained staff. Staff will work in partnership with Parents and Carers to ensure food provided from home also follows this guidance.

Celebrations:

At times families may choose to celebrate occasions within settings, providing food from home to share with others for example birthday cake. It will be suggested to Parents and Carers that food provided for celebrations is a healthy option for example fruit platters but we appreciate this is not always possible. Where items are provided that do not align with school guidance such as sweets or cake children will be given the food to take home to consume with Parents and Carers at their discretion. This also ensures all children's dietary requirements are adhered to.

Impact:

- All children in Early Years are encouraged to develop positive eating habits and an understanding of the importance of healthy food choices.
- All children receive healthy, balanced meals and snacks promoting positive physical development taking into account dietary needs.
- All children develop the skills needed to succeed physically such as core strength from sitting, drinking from an open cup and using cutlery.
- Parents and Carers are supported in ensuring all children develop positive eating habits and avoid diet related issues in the future.