

Food Policy

Category: Early Years

Risk Management and Legal Implications

Failure to manage risk may impact on the delivery of Service objectives and the outcomes achieved by Service users. Education and Children's Services aim to mitigate the implications by ongoing management and review of risk in all elements of work activity.

The production of this document is one way in which we aim to reduce our exposure to risk. By providing staff with information on good practice, making reference to other guidance that is available across the Council and providing clarity on how we should do things, we can ensure that the management of risk is intrinsic to what we do.

Version Control:

Document Owner	Version	Date of Publication	Date of Next Review
Clark Graham	1.0	12/05/25	12/05/27



This policy has been created in line with the overall approach in Fife Council settings to the provision of food and should be read in conjunction with his policy.

Fifes-Fabulous-Food.pdf

Meal provision in local authority ELC settings

Children in all ELC settings receive a meal each day. This meal may be lunch, a big breakfast or an afternoon tea. These meals are all prepared by the Council's catering service and are planned to meet the requirements of the nutritional standards and practical guidance for ELC services in Scotland. All settings will provide snacks which are funded through the Scottish Milk and Healthy Snack Scheme. These offerings of fruit and vegetables are often supplemented by a setting's own snack provision to complement children's learning or seasonal celebrations. Many settings also provide breakfast to support the transition of children from home to nursery.

Setting the Table Guidance

Mealtime offerings

AM – Big breakfast and Snack
PM – Afternoon tea and snack
10 hours – Big breakfast, Lunch and snack
6 Hours – Snack and lunch

Big breakfast should provide approx. 20% of daily energy requirements
Lunch should provide approx. 30% of daily energy requirements
Afternoon tea should provide approx. 20% of daily energy requirements
Snack should provide approx. 10% of daily energy requirements

All meals are served with semi-skimmed milk, or an appropriate milk alternative, and water.

Organisation of mealtimes and the mealtime environment

Big breakfast / afternoon tea is served..... These meals are organised.....
Lunch is served..... These meals are organised.....
Snacks are prepared and served..... Children are involved through.....

Menus will be planned on afortnightlybasis to provide children with a variety of snacks and main meals.



Nutritional offering during mealtimes

Big breakfast/afternoon tea should provide.

- at least one serving from the fruit and vegetables group

Lunch should provide

- at least two servings of vegetables

Lunch, big breakfast and afternoon tea should provide

- one serving from the beans, pulses, fish, eggs meat and proteins group of foods

Lunch, big breakfast and afternoon tea should provide.

- at least one serving from the starchy food group (potatoes, bread, rice, pasta for example)

Snacks should be planned around the menus offered by the catering service to complement the foods offered.

Children should be encouraged to try different foods as research shows that re-presenting the same foods consistently is the most effective way to get children to try new foods.

Portion sizes should be appropriate for the age of the child. It should be remembered that children have differing appetites and cognisance should be taken of this during meal service times.

Food and drink standards

There are 14 food and drink standards which have to be addressed as part of menu planning;

- 1 Fruit and vegetables
- 2 Oily fish
- 3 Red and processed meat
- 4 Yoghurts and fromage frais
- 5 Sweetened and baked products, puddings and desserts
- 6 Breakfast cereals
- 7 Fried foods
- 8 Savoury snacks
- 9 Bread and bread rolls
- 10 Savoury pastry and pastry products
- 11 Oils and spreads
- 12 Salt, other condiments and preserves
- 13 Confectionery
- 14 Drinks



These standards will be considered when planning for snack provision and will be reflected in menu delivery.

Setting the Table Guidance

Celebrations and special occasions

Birthdays are celebrated in nursery in a variety of ways which do not always involve birthday cakes as we are mindful of the number of sweet treats children may be consuming in a day. When birthday cakes are baked these form part of the weekly menu planning process. We endeavour whenever possible to use healthy ingredients in our approach to baking and explore alternative approaches to celebrating birthdays as a setting.

These include.....

Food allergies

An allergic reaction occurs when the body's immune system reacts to a food or substance which is usually harmless. The most common food allergies are;

Cow's milk

Eggs

Gluten

Peanuts and tree nuts

Soya

Shellfish

Fish

Children who are allergic to certain foods should have a healthcare plan in place which will be regularly reviewed. All practitioners working with a child who has allergic reactions, or when allergic reactions may be suspected, should be aware of their healthcare plan and any associated care/medication needs.

Food intolerances

Intolerances are when the body has difficulty digesting certain foods and are not life threatening. Intolerances cause unpleasant symptoms. Common intolerances are;

Lactose

Gluten



Food additives/chemicals

Children who have a food intolerance should have a care plan in place which is regularly reviewed. All practitioners working with a child who has a food intolerance, or when an intolerance is suspected, should be aware of the child's care plan and any associated care/medication needs.

Dietary needs

Children who have specific dietary needs due to diabetes or coeliac disease for example, will have individualised plans in place detailing what they can/cannot eat. All practitioners working with a child who has specific dietary requirements due to a medical need should be aware of the child's care plan and any associated care/medication needs.

Cultural and dietary preferences

Children with special dietary requirements will be included alongside all children at meal and snack times as much as possible.

Information about special dietary requirements will be discussed with parents regularly and updated in the child's PLJ/care plan as necessary.

Discussion will take place with parents when the provision and preparation of food is required to be compliant with religious guidance for individual children. Information will be regularly updated in the child's PLJ.

Food brought in from home

Parents will be made fully aware of our food policy at the time of enrolment. This includes samples of lunch/snack menus and the requirement of ELC settings to follow the national guidance 'Setting the Table', these include choking, nutrition and allergen guidance.

If a child is to bring a packed lunch to nursery, we will provide them with examples of foods for packed lunches which can contribute to the provision of a balanced diet, using the guidance, Hungry for Success: A healthy packed lunch;

Hungry for Success



Learning about food

Learning about food will be incorporated through the curriculum and across many learning contexts. Experiences will also be linked to backdrop planning processes, including seasonal change and celebrations.

Particular attention will be paid when children express or display concerns about eating to ensure planning for learning opportunities provide a level of support to help address these concerns.

Cooking with children

Children will have an opportunity participate in meaningful baking or cooking experiences regularly. Children will be supported to follow food management and hygiene processes.

Food safety and hygiene

All staff should engage in the annual update on food management and safety/ house rules, indicating they have fully understood the implications for their practice and the setting.

[Guidance-On-Food-Management-Hygiene-Mar-24-1.pdf](#)

[Sept-2023-House-Rules-Food-Hygiene.pdf](#)

The nursery has at least one member of the team who holds the REHIS Elementary Food Hygiene Level 2 certificate. This member of the team has an overview of the preparation of snacks.

All staff have an awareness of Care Inspectorate's good practice guidance in the prevention and management of choking episodes in babies and children will follow recommend ways to prepare food so that it is safe.

Sustainability

Menus have been developed in line with Setting the table and The Eatwell Guide which has lower environmental impact than the current UK diet.

Staff will aim to use food that is grown locally and in season and buy products with minimal packing or reuseable packaging.

When possible, we use fruit, vegetable and herbs that are grown in the setting.

Protecting children's health



Staff keep up to date with current guidance, legislation and policies to inform practice, this includes guidance from Setting the Table, Food Standards Scotland, NHS, Public Health Scotland and Care inspectorate.