



SEVENOAKS

PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Status and Review Cycle	Statutory / At least annually
Policy reviewed and amended	September 2025
Next review date	September 2026
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1. Policy Statement

At Sevenoaks Pre-Prep, we recognise the importance of healthy eating in promoting children's physical growth, brain development and emotional well-being. Our approach ensures that every child has access to nutritious food and develops positive attitudes towards healthy eating for life. We value mealtimes as social occasions that contribute to learning, independence, and good manners.

Our provision supports the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) requirements and reflects our *Way of Life* values, promoting respect, responsibility and care for ourselves, others and the environment.

2. Policy Development

This policy has been developed in consultation with:

- Early Years staff team
- Catering staff
- Children (through discussions and observations of preferences and interests)

We will review the policy annually to ensure it remains relevant and reflects current best practice and parental feedback.

3. Food and Drink Provision

- Morning snack, lunch and afternoon snack are provided daily by the school's catering team.
- Menus are planned on a seasonal rotation to offer variety and balance. They meet current Public Health England (PHE) School Food Standards and the Eatwell Guide.
- Fresh fruit, vegetables, wholegrains, dairy products and lean proteins are offered daily.
- Drinking water is freely available throughout the day.
- Sugary foods and high-salt processed foods are avoided.

4. Mealtime Environment and Social Aspects

- Mealtimes are calm, unhurried and promote conversation.
- Staff sit with children to model good table manners, encourage tasting and promote independence (e.g. using own water bottle and recognising it as theirs, serving food).
- We encourage children to listen to their appetite and avoid pressuring them to finish everything on their plate.

5. Celebrations and Special Occasions

- Birthdays and cultural events are celebrated in ways that reflect our healthy eating ethos.

- Families may provide their own healthy options for sharing on special occasions as long as all ingredients are listed and teachers will ensure it is checked before serving to any children with allergies.
- Cultural and religious celebrations are used as opportunities to introduce children to new foods in a safe, inclusive way.

6. Management of Food Allergies and Dietary Needs

- All allergies, intolerances and dietary requirements are recorded on a central register and communicated to all relevant staff.
- The catering team and staff ensure that suitable alternatives are provided without cross-contamination.
- Staff are trained in allergy awareness and emergency procedures, including the use of auto-injectors where applicable.

7. Cultural and Dietary Preferences

- We respect and accommodate religious, ethical and cultural dietary preferences in our menus.
- We work in partnership with families to ensure these needs are met appropriately.

8. Food from Home

- Children in Nursery and Kindergarten may bring in a healthy packed lunch if they are struggling to manage school lunches. This should be agreed and discussed with the Head of Early Years and class teacher before beginning this arrangement.
- Packed lunches should follow our healthy eating guidelines:
 - At least one portion of fruit and/or vegetables
 - A protein source (meat, fish, eggs, pulses)
 - A starchy carbohydrate (bread, pasta, rice, crackers)
 - Dairy or dairy alternative
 - No sweets, chocolate bars or sugary drinks

- Reception children eat lunch provided by the school unless agreed otherwise for medical or cultural reasons.

9. Commercial Baby and Toddler Foods

- Commercial baby food is not used in our provision for children aged 2–5 years, except where medically advised.
- We encourage freshly prepared food that supports children’s developing tastes and textures.

10. Learning About Food

We embed food education in our curriculum:

- Learning about where food comes from
- Exploring different tastes, textures and smells
- Discussing healthy choices and how food helps our bodies grow strong
- Linking food activities to seasonal themes, festivals and topic work

11. Cooking with Children

- We offer age-appropriate cooking and baking activities to develop skills, confidence and curiosity about food.
- Recipes are chosen to reflect healthy eating principles.
- All cooking activities follow food hygiene and allergy-safe practices.

12. Food Safety and Hygiene

- Staff handling food follow have appropriate food hygiene training.
- Children are taught to wash hands before eating or handling food.
- All food preparation areas and utensils are cleaned thoroughly before and after use.

13. Sustainability

- We aim to minimise food waste through portion control and menu planning.

- We use seasonal, locally sourced produce where possible.
- We encourage children to appreciate and respect food by avoiding waste.

14. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if there are significant changes in legislation or school practice. Feedback from parents, staff and children will inform each update.