

Home Prepared Food Policy



At Ambourne House, we are committed to ensuring that all children, including those with allergies or special dietary requirements, can enjoy their meals safely. Contamination of allergens can have severe and life-threatening consequences. To prevent food-related accidents, we have a robust Healthy Eating and Food Safety Policy in place. Our chefs and staff are trained to follow strict procedures to maintain a safe eating environment.

To maintain flexibility for families who choose to provide home-prepared meals, we have outlined clear guidelines for Packed Lunches to minimise the risk of food contamination and to support healthy eating habits.

Food Safety Guidelines:

- All packed lunches must include a cold ice pack to ensure food is stored at a safe temperature.
- Dairy, cold meats, and fish must not be consumed without an ice pack, as harmful bacteria can multiply on food stored at room temperature.
- A Packed Lunch Questionnaire must be completed to inform staff of allergens present in your child's lunch. Should the content of the packed lunch change, a new questionnaire will have to be submitted. This information is confidential and only shared with necessary staff members.
- An accompanying declaration must be completed under which you warrant that the information you provide is correct with you accepting liability for any false or misleading given on the Packed Lunch Questionnaire.



Restricted Foods – Do Not Include:

To protect children with severe allergies, the following foods must not be included in packed lunches:

- Crustaceans and shellfish (e.g., prawns, crayfish, mussels, clams, squid, etc.)
- Peanuts and tree nuts (e.g., almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, cashews, peanut butter, nut-containing spreads, etc.)
- Sesame seeds and sesame-based products
- Foods likely to contain traces of crustaceans/shellfish, peanuts and tree nuts, sesame seed and sesame-based products
- Any food that requires reheating
- Rice dishes brought from home
- Canned foods requiring heating (e.g., beans, spaghetti hoops)
- Bread intended for toasting
- Sugary drinks (e.g., fruit shoots, Ribena, fizzy drinks, squash)

NB: in the event that we are required to look after a child with special dietary needs, we reserve the right to expand upon this list of prohibited foods or to request further warranties and undertaking from parents over the origin and content of consumables brought on to our premises.

Healthy Eating Guidelines:

A variety of foods should be included in your child's lunchbox, as their preferences may change daily. Providing choices encourages independence and better eating habits.

Sugary treats such as cakes, sweets, chocolate, and biscuits are not allowed in our Nursery.

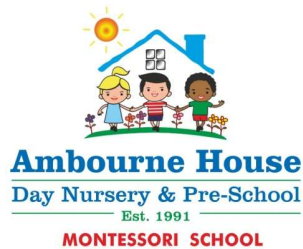
Sugary drinks are not allowed, as they can lead to sugar crashes, irritability, fatigue, and hunger.

Water or milk is encouraged.

Grapes and cherry tomatoes must be cut in half lengthways to prevent choking hazards.

If your child is a fussy eater, consider trying our nursery-cooked meals, which provide a variety of nutritious foods and encourage social mealtime experiences.





Special Diets & Exemptions:

If your child has a medically verified dietary requirement requiring any restricted food, please inform the Nursery Manager so that an individual health care plan can be created.

All Packed Lunches and Questionnaires will be checked by the Nursery team on arrival

If a child's packed lunch contains restricted food, it will be given back to the parent to remedy.

If a completed Packed Lunch Questionnaire is not received, we cannot serve the packed lunch to your child and will be returned to the parent.

In the event of a packed lunch being returned and not remedied, or not being accompanied by an appropriately completed packed lunch questionnaire, a nursery meal will not be provided.

At busy times it may not be possible to inspect the home prepared food and questionnaire thoroughly, but all food will be rechecked prior to serving.

For additional guidance, see links below, the Healthy Lunchbox Ideas with practical tips and recipes for nutritious, balanced meals. For more information on food allergies, visit NHS Food Allergy Guidance.

Thank you for your cooperation in maintaining a safe and healthy eating environment for all children at our nursery!



An Example of acceptable Lunches



An example of unacceptable Foods



Further Information

SAFER FOOD BETTER BUSINESS FOR CATERERS : <https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/safer-food-better-business-for-caterers>

Lunchbox ideas and recipes – Healthier Families – NHS: <https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes/>

The Eatwell Guide - NHS : <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/food-guidelines-and-food-labels/the-eatwell-guide/>

Food allergy and intolerance | Food Standards Agency : <https://www.food.gov.uk/safety-hygiene/food-allergy-and-intolerance>



Child's Name:

Date:

Allergens:

Please Indicate which allergens are present in your child's packed meals by ticking the chart below.

Celery	
Cereals containing gluten	
Crustaceans	
Eggs	
Fish	
Lupin	
Milk	
Molluscs	
Mustard	
Peanuts	
Sesame	
Soybeans	
Sulphur Dioxide	
Sulphites	

Nursery specific banned foods:

Parent Name:

Parent Signature:

I warrant that the information given in my Packed Lunch Questionnaire is correct to the best of my knowledge and belief and accept all and any liability arising from any false or misleading information given in, or omitted from, that questionnaire. I acknowledge that the checking of packed lunches by staff is a precaution and not a substitute for me having undertaken suitable due diligence before completing the Questionnaire.





Early years choking hazards food safety advice

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For babies and young children, food can be a choking hazard, especially when they do not chew their food well or they try to swallow it whole.

Choking can happen with any foods, but 'firm foods', bones and small round foods that can easily get stuck in the throat present a higher risk. Therefore, care givers should follow these five essential steps:

- 1** Make sure food is **suitably prepared and served** for babies and children under 5 years old. For suitable foods, see <https://www.nhs.uk/start4life/weaning/> Introduce babies to solid foods from around 6 months of age.
- 2** **Think about size, shape and texture of food.** Cut food into narrow batons, avoid round shapes and firm foods. Firm fruit & vegetables can be softened by cooking.
- 3** Ensure that babies and young children are **alert and seated safely upright** in a highchair or appropriately sized low chair whilst eating.
- 4** **Babies and young children should be supervised at all times** while eating. You will be able to identify the early signs of choking and prevent harm.
- 5** **Encourage babies and young children to chew food well.** Teach children how to chew and swallow food properly, and ensure they take their time during meals. This will reduce their risk of choking.

Care givers and parents should be familiar with how to respond to a choking incident in line with guidance on first aid for children:

How to stop a child from choking: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/first-aid-and-safety/first-aid/how-to-stop-a-child-from-choking/>

How to resuscitate a child: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/first-aid-and-safety/first-aid/how-to-resuscitate-a-child/>

