



St Oswald's C of E Academy

I can do all things through him who gives me strength

Healthy Eating Policy **For the Early Years Foundation Stage** Document Date: January 2026

Version	Date	Author	Changes
1	January 2026	Rachel Greer	Policy created

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Policy aims

We recognise the importance of healthy food and drink for young children, so aim to:

- Provide a comfortable and appropriate environment for children's meals
- Give children the opportunity for social interaction whilst eating and drinking
- Provide healthy, nutritionally balanced meals, snacks and drinks for the children in our care

- Encourage children to enjoy a varied food and drink intake, taking into account the differing cultural and religious needs
- Supervise and educate children in expected behaviours at mealtimes
- Meet high standards of food hygiene and safety when preparing food and drink
- Encourage children to participate in growing, cooking and sharing food
- Promote the Healthy Start Scheme
- Encourage parents to provide healthy packed lunches, when brought in from home
- Educate children in sustainability and waste reduction
- Lead by example and be positive, healthy role models for the children in our care
- Implement regular healthy eating promotional activities with parents and children.

Policy Aim	Measures
Provide a comfortable and appropriate environment for children's meals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that mealtimes are an enjoyable experience, with all children seated on a chair, at a table and with adequate space around them. • Provide a clean, comfortable and calm eating environment which is free from distractions.
Give children the opportunity for interaction whilst eating and drinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a designated mealtime for all children, where they eat face to face and as a group
Provide healthy, nutritionally balanced meals, snacks and drinks for the children in our care.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the provision of food and snacks will meet the Voluntary Guidelines for Food and Drink, in the Early Years settings. These guidelines will also apply when cooking activities are carried out with parents, carers and children. • Provide children with a healthy choice of snacks. Dried fruit such as raisins will not be offered as a snack as they are sticky, contain sugar and may cause tooth decay. • Include in staff induction, information about healthy food and drink for the under 5s. • Discourage the use of non-spill, valve cups as they may prove harmful to teeth. • Offer children plain water or milk. • Ensure that children can request a drink of water anytime. • Demonstrate to children who are able, how they can obtain drinking water. • Encourage children to drink water between meals.
Encourage children to enjoy a varied food and drink intake, taking into account the differing cultural and religious needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a variety of foods from different cultures and encourage all children to sample.
Supervise and educate children in expected behaviours at mealtimes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervise children at all times when eating and drinking. • Provide the correct utensils for children at mealtimes.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate to children how to use a knife, fork and spoon and encourage them to put this into practice.
Meet high standards of food hygiene and safety when preparing food and drink	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include information at staff induction, about the safe handling and storage of food and drink. • Ensure that all staff preparing and serving food and drink have the appropriate food hygiene qualifications. • Provide suitable facilities for the hygienic preparation of food for children • Establish an area which is adequately equipped to provide healthy meals, snacks and drinks for children as necessary.
Encourage children to participate in growing, cooking and sharing of food.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable children to understand and appreciate the process of a meal, from its source – to the plate. • Educate children in the health benefits of fresh, rather than processed food.
Promote the healthy start scheme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and encourage parents to access the Healthy Start Scheme.
Encourage parents to provide healthy packed lunches, when brought in from home.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all food and drink brought in from home conforms to the healthy eating standards. • Educate parents in safe food storage and also good nutrition. • Provide a fridge or cool storage for packed lunches or suggest that children bring lunch in a cool bag with a frozen ice block, to keep food cool. • Return to parents, all uneaten food brought in from home. No left-over food will be put in the bin. Parents are then fully aware how much or how little their child is eating.
Educate children in sustainability and waste reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate children in the importance of reducing litter and food waste. • Encourage parents to place packed lunches in a reusable container, rather than the shop packaging. • Ensure that all packaging is returned home with the child. • Offer all children vegetables and fruit from the nursery garden, including those children who bring in food from home.

<p>Lead by example and be a positive, healthy role model for the children in our care.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge that all guidelines apply to staff, as well as children. • Ensure that staff do not display or allude to behaviours which contradict policy.
<p>Discourage the use of food for rewards or celebrations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refrain from the use of food as a reward. • Discourage the use of confectionary for celebrations and as treats; as this gives children positive associations with unhealthy foods - and may result in fruit and vegetables being perceived as less desirable options. • Inform families of the events we celebrate and give them ideas of what to bring in for celebrations
<p>Implement regular healthy eating promotional activities with parents and children.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide parents with information and organise meetings with a healthy eating theme. • Carry out games and activities with the children to promote healthier eating practices.