



Oakbridge Little Learners LTD
66-68 Bridge Cross Road
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Packed Lunch Policy

Policy Statement

Oakbridge Little Learners Ltd is committed to promoting healthy eating and ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children. Where parents/carers choose to provide packed lunches or snacks from home, the nursery works in partnership with families to ensure meals are nutritious, balanced and safe.

This policy supports children's health, development and learning and is implemented in line with the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**.

This policy should be read alongside the **Food Safety & Nutrition Policy, Health, Safety & Hygiene Policy, Allergies and Anaphylaxis Policy**, and the **Parent Handbook**.

Aims of the Policy

- To ensure children receive meals that support their health, energy and learning
- To promote healthy eating habits and positive attitudes towards food
- To provide a safe and hygienic eating environment
- To support parents/carers in providing balanced packed lunches
- To manage food safely in line with allergy and infection control requirements

Our Approach

- The nursery recognises that families make individual food choices
- We aim to support and guide, not judge or criticise



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- Children are never made to feel uncomfortable or singled out because of food choices
 - Any concerns are discussed sensitively and privately with parents/carers
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Healthy Packed Lunch Guidance

Packed lunches should include a balanced selection of foods, such as:

- A portion of **starchy food** (e.g. bread, pasta, rice, crackers)
- **Fruit and vegetables** (prepared appropriately to reduce choking risk)
- A source of **dairy or dairy alternative** (e.g. yoghurt or equivalent)
- A drink such as **water, milk or diluted squash**
- One small sweet item equivalent to a nursery dessert, where appropriate

Foods such as grapes and cherry tomatoes must be **cut into 1/4s** to reduce choking risk.

Foods Not Permitted

For health, safety and allergy reasons, the following items must not be included:

- Nuts or foods containing nuts (including “may contain” products)
- Sweets or confectionery
- Crisps or popcorn
- Sugary spreads
- Chocolate items

The nursery reserves the right to **remove or return** any food items that pose a risk to children’s health or safety.



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Special Diets and Allergies

- The nursery recognises that some children require special diets for medical, cultural or religious reasons
- Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring food provided meets their child's specific needs
- All food must be clearly labelled
- Allergy management is carried out in line with the **Allergies and Anaphylaxis Policy**

Food Safety Requirements

- All packed meals and snacks must be:
 - Clearly labelled with the child's name
 - Labelled with the date and intended meal time
 - Provided in food-grade, airtight containers
- Insulated lunch bags with ice packs must be used
- The nursery is **unable to refrigerate or reheat food**
- Meals must be suitable to be eaten cold
- Food must be cut into appropriate sizes to reduce choking risk

Food Labelling on Packed Lunch Items (Guidance)

To support food safety, allergy management and children's routines, we kindly ask parents/carers to ensure that:

- All packed lunch containers are **clearly labelled with the child's name**



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- Containers and items are labelled with **the time of day the parent/carer wishes the food to be offered**
(for example: lunch, afternoon snack)
- Where food is transferred from original packaging, parents/carers are mindful of:
 - ingredient content
 - potential allergens
- Pre-packaged food items are provided **in their original packaging wherever possible**, as this helps staff to identify ingredients and allergen information if required

This guidance helps staff to support children's individual routines while ensuring food is offered safely and appropriately.

Early Years Free Entitlement (EYFE)

In line with EYFE funding requirements, parents/carers may choose to provide all meals and snacks from home. Where this option is chosen, all guidance within this policy must be followed in full.

Monitoring and Partnership with Parents

- Staff will monitor packed lunches to ensure they meet health and safety expectations
 - Where lunchbox contents regularly fall outside this policy, staff will discuss concerns sensitively with parents/carers
 - The nursery aims to work collaboratively with families to promote healthy choices
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Policy Review

This policy is reviewed regularly to ensure it remains compliant and effective.

Created: August 2015

Reviewed: January 2026