Two Rivers Federation

Safer Eating Policy EYFS

Intent

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that children in our care are provided with a safe eating environment that supports healthy eating, minimises food-related risks, and ensures compliance with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework, including the changes introduced in September 2025.

Key Principles

- Ensure all meals and snacks are nutritious, well-balanced, and cater to the individual dietary needs of children.
- Promote healthy eating habits from an early age.
- Safeguard children from food-related risks, including choking hazards and food allergies.

Food Allergies and Special Dietary Requirements

We recognise the importance of catering to children's dietary needs, including food allergies and intolerances. All food allergies or special dietary requirements must be disclosed to the Pre-School/School by parents and carers on the 'Registration Form' when a child starts Pre/School/School.

Record Keeping

We maintain up-to-date records of children's allergies, intolerances, and dietary preferences. This information is shared with all relevant staff members and stored securely. We will prompt parents to update the information we hold regarding special dietary needs annually and expect parents to keep us updated.

Communication

We will ensure that all staff are aware of the allergy needs of the children in their care An Allergy Care Plan is written in conjunction with parents, staff and, if necessary, medical professionals and shared with relevant staff. Parents are encouraged to provide emergency medication where applicable.

Responsibility

At each mealtime and snack time, practitioners are clear about who is responsible for checking that the food being provided meets the requirements for each child.

Safer Eating Practices

To minimise the risk of choking and ensure safe eating environments for young children, the following practices are implemented:

- **Supervision:** All children are supervised during mealtimes and snack time. Children will be within sight and hearing of a member of staff whilst eating. Where possible, staff will sit facing

children whilst they eat so they can be sure children are eating in a way to prevent choking and so they can prevent food sharing and be aware of any unexpected allergic reactions.

- **Choking Hazards:** Staff will prepare food in a way to prevent choking and be vigilant to ensure foods sent in packed lunches have also been prepared safely. Firm, spherical foods like grapes and cherry tomatoes must be sliced into quarters or segments.
- **Mealtime Environment** -Children will sit down and remain seated while eating and be given time to chew and swallow their food properly. Food sharing is not allowed.

Healthy Eating and Nutrition We aim to support the health and wellbeing of all children by promoting healthy eating habits:

- Snack Time: In Pre-School we offer the children a mid-morning/afternoon snack during their session. This consists of fresh milk or water, a selection of fresh fruits and vegetables or crackers. In Reception the children are offered fresh fruit or vegetables. Children may bring in a fresh fruit or vegetable snack from home.
- Packed Lunches: Parents are advised about providing health packed lunches during each child's induction to Pre-School/School.

Educational Opportunities: We will engage children in learning about food, nutrition, and healthy eating through age-appropriate activities and discussions.

Mealtime Hygiene and Safety To ensure the safety and hygiene of food, the following procedures will be followed:

• Food Storage and Preparation: All food will be stored at the correct temperature, in compliance with food safety regulations. Food preparation areas will be kept clean, and staff will adhere to strict handwashing procedures before handling food.

• Safe Utensils and Equipment: All kitchen utensils and eating equipment will be safe and age appropriate for the children.

• Hand Hygiene: Children will wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. Staff will ensure that all children have clean hands before meals and snack are served.

Training and Awareness

Staff will receive regular training in paediatric first aid, food safety, allergy management, and safe eating practices. This includes:

• First Aid and Emergency Procedures: All staff will be trained in first aid procedures specific to food related incidents, including how to handle allergic reactions and choking. Whilst children are eating there will be at least one member of staff with a valid full paediatric first aid certificate present in the room. Paediatric First Aid will be updated at least every three years.

• All Pre-school staff are trained in food hygiene.

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