



Food & Drink Policy

Statement of intent

Bottesford Bunnies Ltd aims to meet the EYFS statutory guidance (DfE EYFS 2025) by organising snack times, so that they are social occasions, in which children and educators participate. Snack times help children to learn about healthy eating and we provide healthy and nutritious snacks as well as accommodating specific dietary needs.

Details of the weekly snacks provided can be located on the Display Board (next to the main door) and on Parent zone, this information also includes any allergens these snacks may contain. This is in line with Food Standard Agency rules, a revised Food Law Code of Practice (England) was published in 2025.

Where children are provided with meals, snacks and drinks, they must be healthy, balanced and nutritious. To understand how to meet this requirement, providers must have regard to the ‘Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition guidance ‘Fresh drinking water must always be available and accessible to children. (DfE EYFS 2025 3.62)

Whilst children are eating there should always be a member of staff in the room with a valid paediatric first aid certificate for a full course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex A (of the EYFS 2025 3.63)

Before a child is admitted to the setting the provider must obtain information about any special dietary requirements, preferences, food allergies and intolerances that the child has, and any special health requirements. This information must be shared by the provider with all staff involved in the preparing and handling of food. At each mealtime and snack time providers must be clear about who is responsible for checking that the food being provided meets all the requirements for each child. (DfE EYFS 2025 3.64)

There must be an area adequately equipped to provide healthy meals, snacks and drinks for children as necessary. There must be suitable facilities for the hygienic preparation of food for children, if necessary, including suitable sterilisation equipment for babies’ food. Providers must be confident that those responsible for preparing and handling food are competent to do so. All staff involved in preparing and handling food must receive training in food hygiene. (DfE EYFS 2025 3.71)

Method

- Bunnies will record information about each child's dietary needs in his/her registration document and parent's/carer's sign the form to signify that this information is correct.
- Bunnies will complete a safe food agreement with parents/carers and review this every 3 month or sooner, should the need arise. All educators will sign the agreement.
- Bunnies will regularly consult with parents to ensure that our records of their children's dietary needs including any allergies are up to date. Parents sign the up-dated record to signify that this is correct.
- Bunnies will keep current information about individual children's dietary needs/allergies in the kitchen with a photograph of the child concerned for easier identification and in the main room (near snack) so that educators, students and volunteers are fully informed about them. They sign the safe food agreements to confirm, they have read these documents.
- Bunnies will implement systems to ensure that children receive only food and drink which is consistent with their dietary needs and their parent's/carer's wishes.
- Bunnies will provide healthy, balanced and nutritious food at all snack times, avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar, salt, artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- Occasionally, birthday treats may be provided by parents/carers to share with other children, **but these must be shop bought and allergens will be checked.**
- Bunnies will include the following elements in snacks, which are offered, protein for growth and essential minerals and vitamins in raw foods, salads and fruits.
- Bunnies will introduce children to foods from around the world during special events e.g., Chinese New Year. Children's parents may share food from their religion to take home (this does not happen during a pandemic)
- Through discussion with parents and research reading by educators, we obtain information about the dietary requirements of the different religious groups to which any children and their parents may belong and also information is obtained about vegetarians/vegans. We take account of this information in the provision of food and drinks.
- Bunnies requires all educators to show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. Educators endeavour to show that all children are included regarding choices at snack time and as such not singled out or labelled due to an allergy or dietary requirement. Parents will be asked to provide if necessary.
- Bunnies will ensure all educators have knowledge of all children's requirements by signing relevant documentation and resign after any changes, which are discussed at team meetings.
- Bunnies ensures all educators and Director/Manager hold an up-to-date food safety level 2 certificate, ensuring that those responsible for the preparation, handling and serving of food/ and snacks are competent to do so.

We use snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and feeding themselves. The children are able to cut up the fruit themselves, using special knives, during a pandemic, snacks time procedures will be adapted to ensure the safety of all children and educators. We provide children with utensils, which are appropriate for their ages and stages of development, and which take account of the eating practices in their cultures. This may be limited in the event of a pandemic.

Packed Lunches

- For those children staying for lunch, parents/carers are asked to provide a packed lunch.
- Packed lunches **MUST NOT** contain nuts or nut products, to safeguard for the times children with a known nut allergy are present. **N.B some chocolate spreads also contain nuts and therefore we advise parents not to include chocolate spread which is not deemed healthy and nutritious.**
- Packed lunches **MUST NOT** contain other products in which an individual child may be allergic to and this will be cascaded to parents via regular newsletters, at induction, via texts etc.
- In order to protect a child with a food allergy, we don't allow the children to share and swap their food with one another. Allergy information is provided to parents at admission.
- We encourage parents/carers to provide a healthy, balanced packed lunch for their child and work with families by providing, support and advice on healthy eating and individual needs, where required. We do not warm food up at lunchtime, unless there is a specific dietary need for this, which is discussed and agreed on an individual basis and this food should also be healthy and nutritious.
- We discourage packed lunches that consist largely of crisps, processed foods and sweet products and we will talk to parents/ carers about this. Packed lunches **must also not** contain large chocolate bars (e.g., Mars) or sweets. **Amounts of crisps can be reduced by using a tub rather than a whole packet.** It is a good idea, not to provide too many items/too much choice.
- We give parents/carer's who provide packed lunches for their children information about suitable, clean containers for their food.
- We ask that an ice pack is placed in the children's lunch bags to keep the pack-up cool.
- We can provide guidance letters to parents about what they can put in pack ups, if required.
- We ask parents to chop fruit up appropriately (e.g. in batons, not chunks) to prevent choking.
- We check pack up's, during the morning, to ensure fruit is chopped correctly and we remove any items, that are deemed to be against our healthy eating policy, or out of date, these items will be sent home, parents will be text and informed.
- Educators are encouraged to sit down where possible (depending on the number of children) with the children to eat their lunch so that mealtime is a social occasion. Educators will always encourage the children to eat their

healthy food first i.e. sandwich, fruit, yoghurt and their treat (e.g. cake or biscuit) last, in order to promote healthy eating.

- Children are given a choice of water or juice with their lunch.
- We will support the children in their awareness of recycling during the lunch time session, by talking to them, in respect of disposing of empty packets, containers and left-over food etc. Food and packaging is sent home, apart from fruit waste etc, which is composted.
- We recognise that at times children will need support at mealtimes and where this is the case, Pre School educators will work in partnership with parents/carers to ensure that we can best meet children's individual needs, for example by discussing suggestions for food their child may like. If a child is reluctant to eat their lunch, we will offer encouragement and support, we may also offer their pack up a little later on, if the child does not seem hungry. If a child refuses to eat the savoury item in their pack up, it is our policy to offer another healthy alternative from their lunch box such as a piece of fruit, rather than a less healthy option such as a biscuit. Educators will then try and encourage the child to return to their savoury item. This is in line with our commitment to healthy eating. Although we will always encourage children to eat the lunches prepared for them, Pre School educators will under no circumstances force feed a child or place pressure on a child to eat all of their lunch. We recognise that there are occasions when children's appetites will vary and will strive to meet each child's individual needs, in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage principles and commitments and the ethos and values of the setting. We will discuss any concerns regarding individual children's eating with parents and carers and agree on consistent approaches to managing this.
- **Packed lunches must be put away by 12.20pm**, in time for the afternoon session. As the children get older, educators need to encourage them to become quicker in their eating, in preparation for their transition to school. We use visual timetables to give 5-minute warnings.

For children who drink milk, we provide semi-skimmed milk to try to help combat childhood obesity at snack times.

Bottesford Bunnies must notify Ofsted or the CMA with which the provider of CoDP is registered, of any food poisoning affecting two or more children cared for on the premises. This must be done as soon as is reasonably practical, but, in any event within 14 days of the incident A registered provider who, without reasonable excuse does not meet this requirement commits an offence (DfE EYFS 2025, 3.72) Parents will be informed, if this occurs.

Birthday Cakes

We are more than happy to celebrate children's birthdays with them and as such parents/ carer's are more than welcome to bring in a birthday cake or birthday buns for their child to share with their friends. However, we do only accept bought birthday cakes/buns from a reputable food supplier e.g. a supermarket/ shop, as we must take into account children in the pre-school with food allergies/ intolerances, along with adhering to the Food Standards Agency, 'Safer Food, Better Business' guidelines.

Food Play

At Bottesford Bunnies, we ensure any food we use for play with the children is carefully supervised. We will also use the following procedures to ensure children are kept safe:

- Choking hazards are checked and avoided.
- We will not use whole jelly cubes for play. If we do use jelly to enhance our play, then all jelly will be prepared with water as per the instructions and then used.
- All allergies and intolerances will be checked, and activities will be adapted to suit all children's needs, so no child is excluded.
- All activities including food will be included on the planning sheets showing all allergens, so all educators and parents are aware of the ingredients.
- Children's allergies will be visible to educators when placing out food play activities to ensure all needs are met, children must be identified, and a risk assessment must be completed identifying any allergies and control measure to be put in place.
- Any cooking activities will be checked prior to start to ensure all children are able to use all the ingredients based on their individual needs.
- We will not use food in play unless it enhances the opportunities children are receiving from the activity. Many of the foods will be reused in other activities, especially the dry materials.

Food Safety Management

We take guidance from the Food Standard Agency – Safer Food, Better Business. At Bottesford Bunnies, we purchase food from a reputable supermarket each week and we retain receipts for this food.

Educators Personal Hygiene

All educators here at Bottesford Bunnies follow good personal hygiene practices to prevent bacteria from spreading (*as per the Food Standard Agency – Safer Food Better Business*) to food including;

- Thoroughly washing hands under warm running water with soap and water and drying using hand dryers (to prevent cross contamination) or paper towels.
- Covering any cuts or grazes with a 'Blue' waterproof dressing/plaster
- Wearing disposable gloves for food preparation
- Wearing of an apron when preparing food
- Ensuring clothes worn are clean
- Tying up long hair when preparing food

Educators must not attend Bunnies for 48 hours after their last bout of sickness. Educators who feel unwell and, on the rota, to prepare snack, will either be sent home or given an alternative task.

Food Storage and Preparation

We adhere to guidance in the latest Food Standard's Agency guidance 'Safer Food Better Business'

At Bottesford Bunnies we have a pre-school fridge for milk and food, unwashed fruit and vegetables are kept separate from ready-to-eat food. **We do not purchase or store any raw meat or poultry.** Once opened ready to eat food is covered and a label put on the food stating the date the food was opened e.g. cooked ham, packet cheeses. We regularly check the 'used by date' and the 'best before date' to ensure the food we provide to the children is safe to do so.

When purchasing food, all allergens are checked on the supermarket website, any allergens are noted on the snack weekly menu, copies of the menus are situated in the outdoor notice board, next to the main door, on Parentzone and in the kitchen. If a child has a severe allergy, where possible we will avoid purchasing foods with this allergen in but if this is not possible, we will store the food separately.

Milk is date checked daily, destroyed when out of date and is stored in date order, top to bottom in the fridge.

Any food brought from home by educators, stored in the fridge will be labelled with name and date.

When preparing fruit, vegetables and salad ingredients, we wash them thoroughly in clean running water. We have separate coloured boards to prepare food on which are sterilized according to the antibacterial spray instructions we use (*see maintenance and cleaning below*)

Four times a day the temperatures of the fridges are checked to ensure these are within the safe limits i.e. that the food is kept at 8°C or below, which is the legal requirement in England. If the temperature of the fridges rises above 8°C, the food will be discarded immediately and not used, and this information will be recorded in our fridge temperature book. The ideal fridge temperature is between 0- and 5-degrees C.

Maintenance and Cleaning

We make sure our kitchen/ food preparation area is in good condition and we replace any damaged equipment, utensils, dishes immediately e.g. worn chopping boards, cracked dishes, chipped glasses etc.

We regularly clean and disinfect all the items frequently, within the kitchen these include worktops, sinks, taps, handles, switches etc. We wash and disinfect chopping boards before we use them for preparing food, in line with the instructions on the disinfectant/ antibacterial spray we use.

At the start of each day, we use a brand-new disposable cloth which is then thrown away each night or before if required. Also, a clean tea towel is used each day and at the end of the week these are washed in a washing machine at a temperature of 90 degrees centigrade.

We use different coloured cloths for the messy area, toilets and the kitchen.

Pest Control

At the start of each day we have daily checks in place, in which we check a number of safety measures including the fridge temperature and signs of pests, e.g. in our food cupboards, in corners on the floor etc. We would look for any droppings or where food packaging has been damaged. If there were any signs of pests we would contact our local authority/ pest control immediately and any food damaged would be discarded. However, at Bottesford Bunnies we keep the majority of our food in a high wall cupboard, other food such as flour kept in a lower cupboard where it is stored in an airtight container and labelled with the best before date.

References to other policies and documents:

- Admissions Policy
- Communication & Working in partnership Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Equality of Opportunities Policy
- Health, Safety, Welfare & Hygiene Policy
- Climate Change Action Plan.

Policy Review

- This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if required.
- Any complaints regarding this policy should be dealt with via the current complaints procedure.

This policy is in line with EYFS and Every Child Matters – ‘Being Healthy’. and the Food Standard’s Agency - Safer Food Better Business (January 2020)

Reviewed: Jan 2012

Next Review Due Date: Jan 2013 Updated Jan 2013 Updated April 2013 Next review April 2014

Reviewed at meeting on 7th May 2014 by Owner, Manager, Deputy & Practitioners
Next review May 2015

Reviewed: 23rd April 2015 by Owner, Manager, Deputy Manager and staff team
Next Review Date: April 2016

Updated June 2016

Next review June 2017

Reviewed and updated: 26th April 2017 by Owner and all Practitioners.

Next Review Date: April 2018.

Reviewed and Updated: 28th March 2018 by Owner and Practitioners

New Review Date: March 2019

Reviewed and Updated 28th February 2019 by Owner, Manager, Deputy & Practitioners at staff meeting.

Next review date February 2020

Updated by Owner, January 6th, 2020.

Next review date January 2021

Reviewed and updated May 4th, 2021, by Director, Managers, Deputy & Practitioners at staff meeting

Next review May 2022

Updated by CW Director March 10th, 2022, to go to staff meeting March 22nd, 2022.

Reviewed & Updated May 2nd, 2022, by Director, Manager, Deputies & Practitioners at staff meeting May 3rd, 2022.

Next review May 2023

Reviewed & Updated March 29th, 2023, by Director, Manager, Deputies & Educators.

Next review date March 2024

Reviewed and updated October 19th, 2023, by Director, manager, Deputies and Educators

Next review date October 2024.

Reviewed and updated January 22nd, 2025, by Director, Room Lead, Deputy and Educators

Next review January 2026.

Reviewed and updated January 28th, 2026, by Director, Deputy Manager and Educators

New review January 2027

Signature: