

5.4 Packed Lunch

Policy Statement

At Kamelia Kids Nursery, we are committed to promoting healthy lifestyles and ensuring the safety and wellbeing of every child in our care. A balanced and nutritious diet supports children's growth, development, learning, and overall health.

This policy provides guidance for parents and carers who choose to provide a packed lunch for their child. It aims to encourage healthy eating habits while maintaining a safe environment for all children, particularly those with food allergies or dietary requirements.

Policy Aim

The aims of this policy are to:

- Promote healthy and balanced eating habits for all children.
- Ensure food safety, particularly regarding allergies.
- Support children in developing positive relationships with food.
- Encourage nutritious packed lunches that provide sustained energy throughout the day.
- Ensure an inclusive approach that recognises individual dietary needs and preferences.

Nut-Free and Sesame-Free Environment

To protect children with severe allergies, Kamelia Kids nursery operates a strict nut-free policy. Parents and carers must not include nuts or nut-based products in packed lunches. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Sesame
- Peanuts
- Peanut butter
- Nutella or chocolate hazelnut spreads
- Almonds, cashews, pistachios, and other tree nuts
- Foods containing nuts or nut traces where possible

If a nut or sesame product is accidentally brought into the nursery, staff will remove the item and return it home at the end of the day.

Recommended Foods for Packed Lunches

We encourage parents and carers to provide balanced lunches that include a variety of food groups.

Packed lunches should ideally include:

- Fruit and vegetables (at least one portion of each where possible)
- Whole grains or carbohydrates for energy
- Lean proteins to support growth and keep children fuller for longer
- Dairy or dairy alternatives

Wellesley Avenue, Goring by Sea, West Sussex BN12 4PN

Drinks do not need to be provided as part of a packed lunch option. The nursery ensures all children have access to fresh water throughout the day and the children are also offered milk at breakfast and snack times.

Foods That Should Not Be Included

To promote healthy eating and maintain safety, the following items should not be included in packed lunches:

- Nuts or nut-based products
- Sesame
- Hummus
- Pesto
- Tahini
- Sweets or confectionery
- Chocolate bars
- Popcorn
- Sugary snacks
- Fizzy drinks
- Sugary fruit juices
- Foods high in salt or saturated fats (e.g., crisps, sausage rolls, pastries)

Supporting Individual Dietary Needs

We recognise that some children may have specific dietary needs, medical conditions, allergies, or sensory sensitivities that affect the foods they are able to eat.

For example, some children with autism or additional needs may only tolerate certain textures or types of food. At Kamelia Kids Nursery, we are committed to being inclusive and supportive of all children's individual needs. Where specific foods are required for sensory, medical, or dietary reasons, these may be included in lunchboxes even if they fall outside the usual guidelines.

Parents and carers are encouraged to speak with a member of staff so we can ensure these needs are understood and supported appropriately.

Staff Responsibilities

Nursery staff will:

- Promote positive and healthy attitudes towards food.
- Monitor packed lunches for compliance with the nut-free and sesame.
- Support children during mealtimes in a calm, inclusive environment.
- Respect individual dietary requirements and sensory needs.
- Communicate with parents if concerns arise about lunchbox contents.

Wellesley Avenue, Goring by Sea, West Sussex BN12 4PN

Partnership with Parents and Carers

We value our partnership with families and appreciate your support in helping us:

- Promote healthy eating habits.
- Maintain a safe environment for children with allergies.
- Ensure all children feel included and supported at mealtimes.

To reduce the risk of transmission we ask that children avoid eating products containing nuts and sesame before attending nursery.

If you have questions or would like suggestions for healthy lunchbox ideas, please speak to a member of the management team.

Legal framework

Childcare Act 2006 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/21>

Food Safety Act 1990 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/16/contents>

The nursery also recognises its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure an inclusive approach that respects children's medical, cultural, religious and additional dietary needs.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

Guidance

Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition guidance <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-nutrition>

Public Health England and the Department for Education regarding healthy eating for young children, supporting balanced diets that contribute to children's growth, development and lifelong healthy habits.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5bbb790de5274a22415d7fee/Eatwell_guide_colour_edition.pdf