



**LEASOWES EXTRA**  
**Early Years Food and Nutrition Policy**

<b>Date approved: September 2025</b>	<b>Written by: J.Caven</b> <b>Business Manager</b>
<b>Date to be Reviewed: September 2027</b>	<b>Approved by: G.Bettany</b> <b>Chair of Trustees</b>

### 1. Statement of Intent

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework sets the standards that early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn, develop well and are kept healthy and safe. As part of the safeguarding and welfare requirements, the EYFS statutory framework states: *'Where children are provided with meals, snacks and drinks, these must be healthy, balanced and nutritious'*.

Leasowes Extra is committed to promoting the health and well-being of all children in our care. Although we do not provide meals, we support healthy eating habits through the provision of nutritious snacks and drinks, and by working in partnership with families to encourage healthy, balanced packed lunches. This policy is informed by national guidance and statutory requirements to ensure children receive consistent messages about food and nutrition.

### 2. Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to the following:

- Childcare Act 2006
- DfE 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage' (2025)
- Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance (2025)
- School Food Standards (2025)

This policy is intended to be used in conjunction with the following setting policies and procedures:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Equality, Information and Objectives Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Health and Wellbeing Policy

### 3. Aims

Through the implementation of this policy, we aim to:

- Promote healthy eating habits and positive attitudes toward food.
- Ensure all food and drink provided is safe, nutritious, and appropriate for young children.
- Support parents and carers in providing healthy packed lunches.
- Create a safe, inclusive, and enjoyable mealtime environment.

- Comply with the EYFS statutory framework, School Food Standards, and national nutrition guidance.

#### 4. Food and drink Provision

##### Packed Lunches

As meals are not provided by the setting, any children who are in Nursery over lunchtime need to bring a packed lunch.

Parents are encouraged to follow the advice on **Appendix A**, 'A Healthy Packed Lunch' to ensure they provide their child with a balanced and nutritious diet. This should include:

- At least one portion of fruit and/or vegetables.
- A portion of starchy food (e.g. bread, pasta, rice).
- A portion of protein (e.g. meat, fish, eggs, beans).
- A portion of dairy or dairy alternative.

Please ensure:

- Any food items that pose a choking risk are halved or quartered e.g. grapes and cherry tomatoes.
- If your child is unable to peel their own fruit or prefers to eat it peeled and sliced e.g. an apple or orange, this should be done in advance and sent in a tub/sealed bag in your child's lunch box.
- You do not send any nuts or items containing nuts in your child's lunch box – we are a nut free school.
- Please do not include popcorn (high risk of choking) or any food on skewers in your child's lunch.
- Only water is provided to drink - no juice cartons, smoothies or fruit shoots please. As long as your child has a water bottle with them each day, this can be used at lunch time and refilled throughout the day and so no other drinks are needed.
- Clearly write your child's name on the outside of their lunch bag to ensure that the contents are not eaten by another child.

Children will eat their lunch 3-4 hours after arriving at the setting. As there are no facilities in the setting to refrigerate your child's lunch, please pack perishable items that should be kept cool, in insulated sealed bags with ice packs. If ice packs are unavailable, the '4-hour rule' can be applied. This rule allows food to be stored outside of chilled conditions for up to 4 hours, but this should only be done once. Alternatively, pack foods that can safely be kept at room temperature.

The Food Standards Agency provides advice on Listeria which has examples of ready-to-eat foods that should be eaten within 4 hours of removing them from the fridge.

Any hot food items must be sent in a thermos or container to keep them warm until lunchtime. The setting does not have facilities to reheat food.

##### Snacks

During wrap around provision we provide healthy snacks that:

- Are low in salt, sugar and saturated fat.
- Are based on fresh fruit, vegetables, and plain starchy foods (e.g. crumpets, bagels).
- Are portion-appropriate and varied throughout the week.

##### Drinks

Only fresh drinking water and semi-skimmed milk are offered in the setting.

- Fresh water is available throughout the day.
- A carton of semi-skimmed milk is offered to all Nursery children during each session they attend the setting

## 5. Mealtime Environment

Mealtimes are treated as social, learning opportunities.  
Children are encouraged to eat together and develop independence.  
Staff model positive eating behaviours and support children without pressure.

## 6. Celebrations

Many families like to celebrate their child's birthday and other special events by bringing sweet treats into the setting for us to hand out on their behalf. We promote healthy celebrations and encourage alternatives to cakes and sweets. This could be in the form of a non-food treat could such as stickers or bubbles.  
Any 'edible treats' brought in to be handed out will be sent home with the children and not consumed in the setting. This will allow parents to decide if or when they are consumed.  
**Please never send lollipops into the setting to be shared out as they pose a high risk of choking in young children and due to this, we will not hand these out for you.**  
Any food items brought into the setting to be shared must be clearly labelled with the ingredients so they can be checked for potential allergens/dietary requirements.

## 7. Food Allergies and Dietary Needs (Including Cultural and Dietary Preferences)

We create a safe and inclusive environment for children to eat in.  
We collect information on dietary needs/preferences, allergies, and intolerances before a child starts and encourage ongoing discussions with parents to update us on their child's dietary needs.  
All children who have an allergy have a care plan in place which details the action to be taken during the onset of an allergic reaction.  
All staff are aware of any children with dietary needs, preferences or allergies.  
A list of all food allergens is displayed in the setting.  
Any food we provide has the relevant allergens clearly labelled against them on the snack lists.  
We take all reasonable steps to prevent cross-contamination.  
Children with food allergies are seated away from other children during lunch time to help prevent the risk of them coming into contact with a food to which they have an allergy but they are still included in lunch time alongside the other children.  
All qualified staff have a paediatric first aid qualification and are trained to manage allergies and respond to emergencies including choking.  
At least one member of staff with a paediatric first aid qualification supervises the children at all times including at lunch times.

## 8. Food Safety and Hygiene

All snacks are prepared and stored in line with food hygiene standards.  
All snacks are prepared in a way to prevent choking.  
Staff involved in food preparation have received appropriate food hygiene training – Level 2 Award in Food Safety – Early Years  
Parents are encouraged to:

- Use insulated lunch bags with ice packs.
- Clearly label lunchboxes with the child's name.
- Avoid sending food that requires reheating.

## 9. Partnership with Parents and Carers

We share this policy with all families and provide guidance on healthy packed lunches (please see Appendix A).  
We welcome feedback and work collaboratively to meet children's dietary and cultural needs.

## 10. Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed bi-annually or in response to changes in statutory guidance or practice.  
Staff receive regular training and updates on food safety, allergies and nutrition.

## A Healthy Packed Lunch

The key to a healthy lunchbox is to include a balance of appropriate foods from the four main food groups:

1. **Fruit and vegetables** (fresh, frozen, tinned or dried fruit and vegetables; pulses such as lentils and beans)
2. **Starchy Carbohydrates** (bread; potatoes, sweet potatoes and other starchy root vegetables; pasta and noodles; rice and other grains; breakfast cereals)
3. **Dairy and plain, fortified plant-based alternatives** milk; cheese; yoghurt and fromage frais)
4. **Proteins** (beans, pulses and nuts; meat and poultry; fish and shellfish; eggs; meat alternatives)

The setting provides facilities for children bringing in packed lunches and we ensure that free, fresh drinking water is readily available at all times. Please remember to send your child to Nursery with a water bottle each day, they do not need any additional drinks in their lunch bag (no drinks cartons or juice boxes please).

As fridge space is not available, parents are advised to bring packed lunches in insulated bags with freezer blocks where possible. **Please do not use glass containers or bottles** to pack your child's lunch.

Please ensure any items which may pose a high risk of choking have been halved or quartered before they are placed in your child's lunch box e.g. cherry tomatoes and grapes.

### **Packed lunches MUST NOT include:**

- nuts – including peanut butter and Nutella – we are a nut free school and we may have children in the setting who have a severe nut allergy
- Popcorn (high risk of choking)
- Any food on skewers – please remove the food from the skewer before putting it in your child's lunch bag

### **Packed lunches SHOULD NOT include:**

- confectionery such as chocolate bars and sweets (fruit strings are also considered to be sweets); cakes and biscuits should only be included occasionally
- drinks other than water - fresh water is available at all times so you do not need to include another drink in your child's packed lunch
- snacks such as crisps or Cheddars, instead, include seeds, vegetables and fruit (with no added salt, sugar or fat), dairy foods are also a good choice



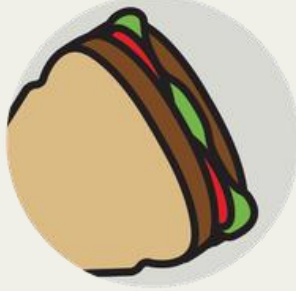
For healthy packed lunch ideas try these links:

[NHS - Lunchbox ideas and recipes](#)

[BBC Good Food - School packed lunch inspiration](#)

[Strong 4 Life - Quick and healthy school lunches](#)

## Lunchbox tips



### **Keep them fuller for longer**

Base the main lunchbox item on foods like bread, rice, pasta and potatoes. Choose wholegrain where you can.



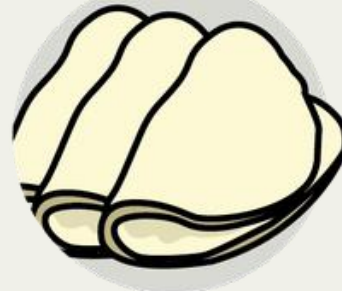
### **Freeze for variety**

Keep a small selection of different types of bread in the freezer so you have a variety of options – like bagels, pittas and wraps, granary, wholemeal and multigrain.



### **DIY lunches**

Wraps and pots of fillings can be more exciting for kids when they get to make them. Dipping foods are also fun and a nice change from a sandwich each day.



### **Cut back on fat**

Pick lower-fat fillings – like lean meats (including chicken or turkey), fish (such as tuna or salmon), lower-fat spread, reduced-fat cream cheese and reduced-fat hard cheese and try to avoid using mayonnaise in sandwiches.

[See more healthier swap ideas](#)



### **Mix your slices**

If your child does not like wholegrain, try making a sandwich from 1 slice of white bread and 1 slice of brown bread.



### **Always add veg**

Cherry tomatoes, or sticks of carrot, cucumber, celery and peppers all count towards their 5 A Day. Adding a small pot of reduced-fat hummus or other dips may help with getting kids to eat vegetables.



### **Ever green**

Always add salad to sandwiches and wraps too – it all counts towards your child's 5 A Day!



### **Cheesy does it...**

Cheese can be high in fat and salt, so choose stronger-tasting ones – and use less of it – or try reduced-fat varieties.



### **Add bite-sized fruit**

Try chopped apple, peeled satsuma segments, strawberries, blueberries, halved grapes or melon slices to make it easier for them to eat. Add a squeeze of lemon juice to stop it from going brown.



### **Tinned fruit counts too**

A small pot of tinned fruit in juice – not syrup – is perfect for a lunchbox and easily stored in the cupboard.



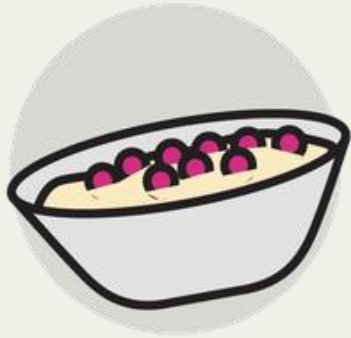
### **Swap the fruit bars**

Dried fruit like raisins, sultanas and dried apricots are not only cheaper than processed fruit bars and snacks but can be healthier too. Just remember to keep dried fruit to mealtimes not snack times as it can be bad for teeth.



### **Switch the sweets**

Swap cakes, chocolate, cereal bars and biscuits for malt loaf, fruited teacakes, fruit breads or fruit (fresh, dried or tinned – in juice not syrup).



### **Yoghurts: go low-fat and lower-sugar**

Pop in low-fat and lower-sugar yoghurts or fromage frais and add your own fruit.



### **Get them involved**

Get your kids involved in preparing and choosing what goes in their lunchbox. They are more likely to eat it if they helped make it.



### **Variety is the spice of lunch!**

Be adventurous and get creative to mix up what goes in their lunchbox. Keeping them guessing with healthier ideas will keep them interested and more open to trying things.



### **Plan to Eatwell**

The following guide shows how much of what we eat overall should come from each food group to achieve a healthy, balanced diet. It can be really useful when thinking about what goes into kids' lunchboxes.

[The Eatwell Guide](#)