Senior Manager & Nominated Individual: Miss C Bates

Initial Policy date	February 2025	Next scheduled review	October 2026
Resource and Nursery Governor approved	September 2025	Key person/people	NI & Rotherly Manager
Model policy		Model localised	

Food Safety and Nutrition Policy

Food safety policy

Rotherly Day Nursery is committed to ensuring that safe and healthy practices around the storage, preparation and service of food are maintained throughout the setting.

For the safety of all the nursery's children, colleagues and visitors, all colleagues are Paediatric First Aid trained. Whilst children are eating there will always be a member of staff in the room with a valid paediatric first aid certificate.

Children are supervised at all times during mealtimes and food is adequately cut up to reduce choking. The use of food as a play material is discouraged. However, as we understand that learning experiences are provided through exploring different malleable materials the following may be used. These are risk assessed and presented differently to the way it would be presented for eating e.g. in trays,

- Playdough
- Cornflour
- Dried pasta, rice and pulses.

Food items may also be incorporated into the role play area to enrich the learning experiences for children, e.g. fruits and vegetables. Children should be fully supervised during these activities.

Cleaning of food preparation areas

Effective handwashing is essential to get rid of harmful bacteria, viruses and allergens, to stop them spreading to food. Colleagues must use a new or clean cloth to clean work surfaces before preparing foods. Colleagues need to be aware that it is important to thoroughly clean and disinfect surfaces and equipment that will come into contact with food.

Colleagues should not wear watches or jewellery when preparing food. Colleagues must make sure clothes are clean and wear an apron when preparing food. Food

must not be prepared if a colleague has diarrhoea and / or vomiting. Cuts and sores should be completely covered with a waterproof dressing, ideally a brightly coloured one. The kitchen should keep a good supply blue plaster for colleagues to use.

Colleagues must regularly clean and disinfect all the items people touch frequently, such as worktops, sinks, taps, handles, switches and highchairs. Cleaning needs to be carried out in two stages: first use a cleaning product to remove visible dirt from surfaces and equipment, and rinse, then disinfect the surface following the manufacturer's instructions and rinse with fresh clean water. A clean cloth must be used to wipe worktops, equipment, or utensils. Ideally, disposable kitchen towel should be used wherever possible.

Food preparation areas

Colleagues should always wash their hands properly before preparing and handling food, touching ready-to-eat food for example, sandwiches and when preparing an allergen free meal to avoid cross contamination.

Fruit, vegetables and salad ingredients should be washed thoroughly by rubbing vigorously in a colander or container under running water. Cooked and other ready-to-eat food should be covered until it is ready to be eaten. Unwashed fruit and vegetables should also be kept separate from ready-to-eat food and above raw meat. Food that contains allergens should be kept separate from other food.

Temperature control

Fridges and chilled display equipment should be set at 5°C or below. This is to make sure that chilled food is kept at 8°C or below.

Certain foods must be stored in the fridge to keep them safe. for example, foods with a 'use by' date, and food that states, 'keep refrigerated'.

A disinfected temperature probe should be used to prove the thickest part of the food is cooked to a safe temperature. Temperatures must be recorded in the morning by the person responsible in the kitchen and at the end of the day of the fridges and freezers. This must be recorded on the temperature sheet.

Food preparation for babies

If parents / carers bring made-up bottles of formula, colleagues must put them in the fridge straight away. This must be kept in the fridge until ready to for use and used within 24 hours. All bottles should be cleaned and sterilised before use.

Expressed breast milk should be stored in the fridge and used within 24 hours.

Colleagues must follow the Food Standard Agency document for the correct sizing that food items must be cut, for babies and young children to prevent any risk of chocking.

Food Nutrition

To maintain healthy development and growth, children need to eat a nutritionally well-balanced diet. At Rotherly Day Nursery we can contribute significantly to improving the health and well-being of your child by promoting healthy eating habits from an early age. Good nutrition in early childhood can help to prevent a variety of health problems, both in the short term and later in life.

Mealtimes

Our food provider, Hungry Monsters, offers hot lunch and afternoon tea, exposing children to new flavours and textures, and supporting school readiness. This menu has been developed in collaboration with Southampton Early Years' Independent Child Nutritionist and meets the nutritional standards based on the Eat Well Plate Model, to promote a well-balanced diet. All meals comply with updated government guidelines for balanced and optimal nutrition for children under the age of five. The food menu is shared on our parents' information board.

Children are provided with a morning snack, lunch and a high afternoon tea. We ensure that children are seated when eating all their meals, and practitioners are sat with the children. Mealtimes is an important part of the day for interaction, extending children's vocabulary, and modelling good manners and eating behaviours.

Breastfeeding and formula

Breastmilk is the ideal source of nutrition for infants for at least the first year of life. We have refrigerated storage space for expressed breastmilk which is clearly labelled with name and date. Mothers are welcome to breastfeed, and a space will be provided for this. Parents must provide infant formula if they are not exclusively breastfeeding.

Weaning

Introducing solid foods helps babies to learn new skills such as chewing and biting. It also introduces them to new foods, flavours and textures. Weaning should start at 6 months of age, alongside breastmilk or formula milk. Ongoing discussions will be had with parents about when you child is developmentally ready to be introduced to solid foods.

Allergies and Special occasions

The nursery team endeavour to undertake relevant training such as auto-injector administration for allergies. However, nursery colleagues are not medically trained,

and we provide treatment as directed or, in case of emergency, as considered necessary by medical professionals.

Parents must make the setting aware if their child has any dietary requirements, preferences, food allergies and intolerances, and any special health requirements before the child is admitted to the setting. An Individual Care Plan form must be completed before the child starts at the setting. Parents must make the setting aware of any changes to their child's health or allergy requirements.

Our food reflects the ethnicity, culture and allergy needs of all children attending our setting. We ask parents to share all information about allergies or food preferences during the induction process.

Those children with food allergies are served their meal on red plates, or bowls for easy recognition of food allergies.

We promote activities and non-food treats, such as craft projects, stickers and balloons, as alternatives to birthday sweets.