

Lowton West Primary School



Safer Eating and Safe Sleeping Policy

Policy reviewed by N. Gould

Date policy reviewed: July 2026

Ratified by Governing Body: September 2026

Dr G Merrett (Chair of Governors)

Lowton West Primary School

Safer Eating and Safe Sleeping Policy

Aiming High Together



School Vision

To inspire, achieve and succeed, we will aim high and build dreams and futures together.

Mission Statement

Providing the highest quality education, care and support for the whole school community.

Our mission statement is based on RESPECT:

R = Recognising the needs of the individual child

E = Ensuring a unique and engaging curriculum

S = Supporting each other to learn and achieve

P = Passionate about providing the highest quality education

E = Encouraging creativity, self – expression and imagination

C = Creating confident, resilient, life – long learners

T = The voice of everybody is heard

All the above statements help us to understand how we can all make a positive contribution to the school and the wider community.

We will do this through our core values:

- Respect
- Resilience
- Kindness
- Confidence

We also, at Lowton West Primary School, strive to develop and uphold British Values. The five British values that the Government has identified for schools to focus on are:

- Democracy
- The Rule of Law
- Individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

- Developing personal and social responsibility
- Respect for British Institutions

There are more details on how our school demonstrates and develops these British Values in our British Values Policy and on our website.

Policy Statement

Our school is committed to providing a safe, healthy and nurturing environment where all children can eat and rest safely. We recognise that mealtimes and sleep or rest periods are important opportunities to promote children's health, wellbeing, independence and social development, for our youngest children within our school setting.

All staff will follow current safeguarding guidance, the EYFS Statutory Framework, NHS recommendations and school procedures to minimise risks associated with eating and sleeping.

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.

2. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Promote children's health and wellbeing.
- Reduce the risk of choking during meals and snacks.
- Ensure children with allergies or medical conditions are kept safe.
- Provide safe sleep and rest arrangements for children who require them.
- Ensure all staff understand their responsibilities.
- Meet statutory safeguarding requirements.
- 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 school by parents and carers on the school's 'Registration Form' when a child starts at the school. It should then be reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

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.

We ask that parents inform school and update the school records, held in the school office, if records need to be updated during the school year.

Staff are informed of any children with a food allergy or food intolerance, and the school kitchen is notified of any tolerances or allergies for pupils accessing school dinners. Staff must ensure appropriate precautions are taken, including avoiding allergens in meals and snacks.

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.

Communication: We will ensure that all staff are aware of the allergy needs of the children in their care. Parents are encouraged to provide emergency medication where applicable.

Prohibited Foods: Nuts, nut products.

3. Safer Eating Procedures

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

Before Eating

Staff will:

- Wash hands with children before meals and snacks.
- Clean tables before food or snack is served.
- Check allergy information before serving food.
- Ensure drinking water is always available.
- Encourage children to sit calmly before food is provided.

During Meals

Children will:

- Remain seated while eating.
- Eat at an appropriate pace.
- Be encouraged to chew food thoroughly.
- Be supervised at all times.
- Be supported to develop independent eating skills where appropriate.

Staff will:

- Sit with children where possible.
- Maintain active supervision.
- Never leave children eating without adult supervision.
- Encourage conversation without allowing running, walking or playing while eating.
- Cut food appropriately according to children's age and ability.

Choking Prevention

Choking Hazards: Staff will be vigilant to ensure foods sent in for snacks and packed lunches have been prepared safely. Firm, spherical foods like grapes and cherry tomatoes must be sliced into quarters or segments for pupils under 5.

Cylindrical foods such as cucumber, carrots and cocktail sausages must be cut lengthways into thin batons. This guidance on food safety for young children – [https://help-for-early-years-providers.education.gov.uk/safeguarding-and-welfare/food safety](https://help-for-early-years-providers.education.gov.uk/safeguarding-and-welfare/food%20safety) includes advice on food and drink to avoid, how to reduce the risk of choking and links to other useful resources for early years settings.

If a child experiences a choking incident that requires intervention, staff will record details of where and how the child choked and parents and/or carers made aware. The records will be reviewed and risk assessed alongside other accidents / incidents at school by a Senior Leader and will be reported through the Wigan LA online incident reporting tool where required. Appropriate action will be taken to address any identified concerns.

Age-Appropriate Food Types: Foods will be served in a manner suitable for the child's developmental stage (e.g., food will be cut into small, manageable pieces for younger children or older children with medical needs, where health care plans outline the need to prepare food to reduce the risk of choking).

Popcorn, marshmallows, jelly cubes and hard sweets are never permitted for children under 5.

Mealtime Environment: Children will sit down and remain seated while eating and be given time to chew and swallow their food properly. Children are discouraged from talking loudly at mealtimes / snack time. Other distractions such as toys at the meal table are, wherever possible, discouraged. Food sharing is not allowed.

The school will:

Avoid serving foods that present an unnecessary choking risk unless appropriately prepared.

Examples include:

- Whole grapes (must be cut lengthways into quarters)
- Cherry tomatoes (cut into quarters)
- Whole cherries (stones removed and cut)
- Large blueberries (cut if appropriate)
- Popcorn
- Hard sweets
- Marshmallows

Staff will know how to respond if choking occurs and appropriate first aiders will be available.

4. Allergies and Medical Needs

The school will:

- Maintain an up-to-date allergy register.
- Display allergy information discreetly where staff prepare or serve food.
- Follow individual healthcare plans.

- Ensure prescribed emergency medication is easily accessible.
- Never allow food sharing between children where allergies are present.
- Inform parents immediately if any allergic reaction occurs.
- Staff will receive allergy awareness training.

Healthy Eating and Nutrition

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

Snack Time: We will always encourage the children to eat healthily. Children are provided with a fruit or vegetable snack from school or can bring their own healthy snack from home.

Packed Lunches: Parents are advised about safe storage of packed lunches and given information about providing healthy packed lunches during each child's induction to school. For the purposes of student safety, the use of flasks containing warmed food or drink in school for pupils is prohibited.

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

Support: Staff will have regard for children's food intake and work with parents / carers to provide healthy food options.

5. Food Hygiene

Staff will:

- Follow food hygiene procedures.
- Wash hands before handling food.
- Wear protective clothing where appropriate.
- Store food safely.
- Check expiry dates.
- Report any food safety concerns immediately.

6. Safe Sleeping and Rest

Some children in EYFS may require a sleep or rest period during the school day.

The school will:

- Work with parents to understand individual sleep routines.
- Obtain written parental consent where regular sleeping is required.
- Respect children's individual sleep needs.

Children who no longer require sleep may be offered quiet rest activities when tired or dysregulated.

7. Safe Sleep Environment

Children sleeping in school will:

- Sleep in a clean, quiet and well-ventilated room.
- Be placed on an appropriate sleep mat suitable for their age.
- Sleep on their back unless medical advice states otherwise.
- Have clear airways throughout sleep.
- Wear suitable clothing appropriate to room temperature.

The school will not:

- Cover children's faces.
- Leave sleeping children unsupervised.

8. Supervision During Sleep

Sleeping children will:

- Remain within sight or hearing of a member of staff.
- Be checked regularly.
- Be checked to ensure they do not overheat.
- Have their breathing, colour and general wellbeing observed.
- Be gently roused if staff have any concerns.

Checks will be recorded where required by school procedures.

9. Illness During Sleep

If a child becomes:

- unusually difficult to wake,
- has breathing difficulties,
- develops a high temperature,
- becomes pale or blue,
- shows signs of distress,

staff will:

- Follow first aid procedures.
- Call emergency services if required.
- Inform parents immediately.
- Record the incident.

10. Staff Responsibilities

All staff must:

- Follow this policy and related policies.
- Complete safeguarding training.
- Read statutory guidance and school policies in relation to safe sleeping, eating and safeguarding.
- Complete paediatric first aid training where required.
- Understand choking prevention procedures.
- Know children's allergy information and adhere to school's policy and procedure.
- Report concerns immediately.

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 as a minimum.

11. Parents and Carers

Parents are asked to:

- Inform the school of allergies and medical conditions.
- Update emergency contact details.
- Inform staff of changes to sleep routines where relevant.
- Provide required medication.
- Follow school guidance regarding packed lunches and healthy eating.

12. Monitoring

The Headteacher and EYFS Lead will monitor:

- Mealtime supervision.
 - Allergy management.
 - Sleep arrangements.
 - Staff training.
 - Accident and incident records.
 - Compliance with this policy.
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13. Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding, Child Protection and Early Help Policy
- Health and Safety Policy and first aid procedures
- Administration of Medicines Policy
- Food Hygiene Procedures
- Intimate Care Policy
- Relationship and Behaviour Policy

14. Legislative and Guidance References

This policy is informed by:

Department for Education: Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage
Working Together to Safeguard Children
Keeping Children Safe in Education
Food Standards Agency Guidance
NHS Choking Prevention Guidance
Lullaby Trust Safe Sleep Guidance
Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
Food Safety Act 1990
Food Hygiene Regulations