Evergreen Primary Academy EYFS Food and Nutrition Procedure

1. Introduction and Aims

Evergreen primary academy is determined to enable every child to thrive and recognises that a balanced and nutritious diet underpins a healthy lifestyle. The early years are a crucial time to set the foundations for a lifetime of good nutritional health by helping children to develop positive eating habits, as children's early experiences with food can shape their future diet.

This procedure has been produced in response to the DFE Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance which states that where children are provided with meals, snacks and drinks in school, these must be healthy, balanced and nutritious. This procedures sets out how we will meet the requirements of this guidance within our Early Years provision.

2. Definitions and Scope

The DFE Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance states that children aged one to five need to be fed a healthy balanced diet based on the four main food groups so that they get the essential nutrients to help them grow and develop. These food groups are: fruit and vegetables; potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbohydrates; dairy or dairy alternatives; and beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other protein.

From September 2026, this nutrition guidance is being incorporated into the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the EYFS statutory framework, which is given legal force by regulations made under the Child Care Act 2006 s39(1)(b). This means that we must take this guidance into account and should follow it unless there is good reason not to.

Whilst this procedures and the DFE Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance only applies to children up to the age of five, many of the principles outlined will also be beneficial to pupils who are older.

This EYFS Food and Nutrition Procedures sets out the approaches we are expected to take in order to meet the expectations set out by the DfE in their nutrition guidance.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

This section of the procedures outlines the different responsibilities of staff at Evergreen Primary Academy relating to the implementation of this procedures:

The Academy Council is responsible for approving, reviewing and monitoring this procedures to ensure that Evergreen Primary Academy is compliant with DFE Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance, and for ensuring that the Headteacher enacts this procedure.

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that this procedures is enacted within Evergreen.

SENDCOs and DSLs are responsible for working in tandem to implement individual pupil nutrition plans for those children who may have allergies or any other associated risks.

All Staff are responsible for supervising pupils who are eating in line with their school's arrangements at snack and meal times.

Parents, Carers and Families are responsible for working in partnership with their child's school by:

- Maintaining regular contact about any food allergies or dietary requirements that their child has (both existing and emerging).
- Working in partnership with school by ensuring that any food provided from home meets the requirements outlined within DFE Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance.
- Supporting their child by encouraging them to enjoy the full range of meals and snacks provided by school as part of a healthy balanced diet.
- Informing school about any changes in circumstances that may affect their child's needs.
- Where necessary, engaging productively with staff in the development of and review of any nutrition plan for their child.

4. Menu Planning

At Evergreen Primary Academy, in conjunction with our catering provider, we will plan weekly menus in advance in line with the DFE Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance, which provides guidelines as to different food items that should be provided, limited and avoided. Menus will also be compliant with the expectations set out in the School Food Standards.

We recognise that planning menus in advance helps to ensure that the offer to children provides a varied, balanced and nutritional diet across the week. It also enables active consideration of children who have dietary requirements or food allergies, so that the meals provided meet their needs.

Evergreen will regularly communicate our weekly menus with parents to support them to manage any anxieties their children may have around eating, as well as helping them to balance their child's diet at home.

We will work with our catering provider to vary our menus throughout the academic year, giving children the opportunity to experience different seasonal produce and foods from a range of cultures that reflect the diverse communities of Bristol.

5. Food Brought from Home

5.1 Packed Lunches

Evergreen understands that some families may wish to provide food from home for a variety of reasons. DFE Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance states that food provided from home should align with the healthy options provided within school, so that children receive consistent messages about nutrition. This means that it is a government expectation of all schools to encourage healthy food choices for packed lunches.

We will regularly share this procedure with all parents, so it is clear the expectations around healthy and balanced meals applies to those children who bring their own food to school, as well as those who eat school meals.

In circumstances where children bring packed lunches that are not consistent with the expectations set out in the DFE Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance, we will discuss this with parents to advise them of the importance of a healthy and balanced diet for their children. This is an expectation of us set out within the government guidance. A record of any such conversation will be made on CPOMS so that we can evidence compliance with the EYFS framework.

Where we have pupils with allergies that could be affected by the contents of a packed lunch (e.g. an airborne nut allergy), we will clearly communicate to parents that these items are prohibited from the school site.

5.2 Celebrations and Special Occasions

Evergreen recognises that there are occasions during the school year when children, families and our school community may wish to arrange celebrations. For example, parents may wish for their child's birthday to be celebrated with their classmates, or we may wish to mark religious festivals or hold events for our community.

In relation to whole school or community events, we will take a pragmatic approach in these instances, balancing our obligations to promote healthy eating in line with the guidance, with recognition that food can be a significant element of such celebrations.

In all circumstances, any food brought in from outside school will be checked for potential allergens.

6. Food Safety and Hygiene

Evergreen is compliant with Food Standards Agency requirements in relation to food safety and hygiene management.

Our catering is provided by Innovate. They are fully complainat with the Schools Food Standards. It is the responsibility of the Principal to ensure that the catering provision staff involved in the handling, preparation or serving of food receive adequate training and instruction in relation to food safety and hygiene.

We provide our pupils with the opportunity to eat a healthy, balanced meal and will ensure a range of meals which take into account health needs and religious and ethnic preferences. We ensure the service is consistent with our teaching of healthy eating including the 'at least 5 a day' message and the 'Eatwell Plate'. Alongside the children's school meal, all children have access to a salad bar and a range of healthy, freshly prepared

products.

Food should always be prepared in such a way that minimises the risk of choking hazards as per DfE Food Safety Guidance. The Principal must ensure that all staff involved in the supervision of pupils at snack and meal times are:

- Fully informed of any children with allergies or dietary requirement
- Aware that they must actively prevent pupils from sharing food
- Supervising children that are eating face on wherever possible so they can identify any choking incidents more easily

Evergreen is not able to provide the facilities for packed lunches to be refrigerated, or for food brought in from home to be reheated. Parents should be mindful of this when deciding what to pack for their child. For example, packing items in insulated sealed bags, using ice packs or packing items that can be safely stored at room temperature. Parents should also prepare food in packed lunches in line with the above guidance to minimise the risk of choking hazards.

7. Supporting Individual Pupil Needs

Evergreen is committed to ensuring that all pupils are supported with any individual needs they may have, including dietary requirements. Families should inform school of any allergies or dietary requirements as soon as they emerge, so that appropriate support can be put in place within school.

Where parents provide a packed lunch for their child, it is their responsibility to ensure that it is suitable for their child's individual dietary and nutritional needs.

If Evergreen determines that a packed lunch is not suitable, an alternative meal of jacket potato and beans will be provided to the child. Parents/carers will be informed of the situation and the reasons for this decision.

Any allergies or dietary requirements will be recorded on the school's Management Information System. An individual care plan/risk assessment will also be co-produced with parents detailing:

- The nature of the pupil's allergy or dietary requirement
- The measures to be taken to meet their dietary need
- The measures to be taken in the event of an emergency

This care plan will be stored on the pupil's CPOMS file and shared with the relevant members of staff.

We will keep a collated record of all pupils with food allergies and dietary requirements. This will be available to catering providers at meal times so that they can ensure the dietary needs of all pupils are safely met. At all meal and snack times, there will be a nominated member of staff to oversee this.

8. Food and Nutrition in the Curriculum

Evergreen believes that it is vital for children to learn about nutrition from an early age so that they develop a positive relationship with food and understanding of a healthy diet.

We offer these learning opportunities to pupils in the Early Years as part of their curriculum. Where capacity and facilities allow, cooking with pupils in school ensures that all children have the chance to engage practically. 'Healthy me' is taught through the PSHE curriculum to support children's understand

on healthy food and the impact it has on our bodies.

9. Resources and Signposting for Families

This is a non-exhaustive list of useful resources and information for families about a healthy, balanced and nutritional diet for their children, including recipe ideas:

- DFE List of Common Food Allergens
- NHS Guidance on Food Allergies in Young Children
- NHS Guidance on Responding to an Allergic Reaction to Food
- NHS Guidance on Food Intolerances
- Food Standards Agency Advice on Avoiding Choking Hazards
- Food Standards Agency Guidance on How to Prepare Food Safely
- NHS Guidance for Parents of Fussy Eaters
- Public Health England's Eatwell Guide
- DFE Guidance on the Four Food Groups
- NHS Guidance on Food Labelling
- DFE Guidance on Portion Sizes
- DFE Guidance on Easy Substitutions
- NHS Healthy Start - Get Help to Buy Food and Milk
- NHS Start for Life Recipe and Meal Ideas for Under-5s
- DFE Recipe Cards
- DFE Guidance on Planning Food Activities with Children

10. Links to Guidance and Other Policies

This procedure pays due regard to, and should be read alongside, the following statutory guidance, non-statutory guidance and other policies:

- DFE Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework
- DFE Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance
- DFE Guidance for Early Years Providers on Food Safety
- The School Food Standards