ST.ANNE'S COPP CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL, GREAT ECCLESTON

SAFER EATING PRACTICES POLICY



"Let us love, not in word, but in truth and action." (1 John 3:18)

September 2026

Approved by GB: September 2026
Next review due: September 2027

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In building solid foundations for every unique individual and putting God's love at the centre of all we do, our children learn to embrace our diverse world. We encourage our children to learn universally in order to understand our heritage and roots as a village, town, region and nation. Through strong community links, our children grow in compassion and understanding, promote justice and possess commitment and aspire to make a positive difference. We offer an ambitious curriculum that ignites curiosity along with high personal expectations that fosters resilience and which enables them to flourish. Our children are easily distinguished by the courage they show when making brave choices and understand the importance of becoming the very best versions of themselves.

1. Policy Statement

At our setting, we are committed to ensuring that all children are supported to eat and drink safely. We recognise that eating and drinking are essential life skills and that young children require supervision, guidance, and appropriate food preparation to reduce the risk of choking.

2. Aims

- To minimise the risk of choking incidents.
- To promote safe eating habits from an early age.
- To ensure all staff understand their roles and responsibilities in supervising children during mealtimes.
- To meet statutory safeguarding and welfare requirements within the EYFS framework.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Staff

- Must supervise children at all times during eating and drinking.
- Must be aware of foods that pose a choking risk.
- Must ensure children are seated appropriately while eating.
- Must model safe eating behaviours (e.g. chewing, not overfilling mouths).
- Must hold up-to-date paediatric first aid training.

Management

- Ensure staff receive training on safer eating practices.
- Carry out regular risk assessments of mealtimes.
- Ensure policies are reviewed annually or after incidents.
- Put in place individual risk assessments where required and communicate this to staff

4. Safe Eating Practices

- Children must always sit down while eating or drinking.
- Food must be cut into appropriate sizes based on age and developmental stage.
- Round foods (e.g. grapes, cherry tomatoes) must be cut lengthways.
- Hard foods (e.g. raw carrots, apples) should be grated, cooked, or cut into thin slices for younger children.
- Avoid foods that pose a high choking risk unless prepared safely (e.g. whole nuts should not be given to under 5s).
- Children must not walk, run, or lie down while eating.

5. Supervision

- Staff must remain within close proximity to children during meals and snacks.
- Ratios must be maintained at all times.
- Staff should actively engage with children, monitoring chewing and swallowing.

6. Food Preparation Guidelines

- All food must be prepared hygienically following food safety standards (see Nutrition and Safer Eating Policy)
- Staff must check food temperature before serving.
- Consider individual dietary needs, allergies, and cultural preferences.
- Ensure consistency of food is appropriate for the child.

7. Supporting Children's Development

- Encourage children to chew thoroughly and eat slowly.
- Promote independence while ensuring safety.
- Teach children about safe eating habits (e.g. "small bites", "chew well").

8. Managing Choking Incidents

- All staff must know the signs of choking:
    - Difficulty breathing
    - Silent coughing
    - Blue or pale skin
- Staff must respond immediately following paediatric first aid procedures.
- Emergency services must be called if required.
- All incidents must be recorded and reported to management and parents.

9. Working with Parents

- Parents will be informed about our safer eating practices.
- We will share guidance on suitable packed lunches (if applicable).
- Any concerns regarding a child's eating ability will be discussed with parents.

10. Monitoring and Review

- This policy will be reviewed annually or after any serious incident.
- Staff practice will be monitored through observations and supervision.

11. Related Policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Health and Safety
- Nutrition and Safer Eating
- EYFS
- First Aid