



**BOWERHAM PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL**

**&**

**BABY UNIT**



## **Food, Nutrition and Food Hygiene Policy and Procedures**

**DATE: September 2026**

**Review date: July 2026**

**Stand tall, reach high, love learning**

*The Bowerham School community is proud to nurture aspiration, inspire love for life-long learning and prepare children for a changing society.*

**At Bowerham School we:**

- Ensure all children have access to a fun and engaging, ambitious and creative curriculum that widens their life experiences
- Develop confident and independent learners with motivation, curiosity and a love of learning
- Ensure all children learn about and demonstrate the British Values of: tolerance, mutual respect, individual liberty, democracy and rule of law, while respecting differences including gender, ethnicity, religion and ability.
- Nurture, develop and challenge children to be aspirational and secure within themselves in order to prepare them for their future

### **Introduction**

Staff are committed to ensuring that safe and healthy practices around the storage, preparation, and service of food are maintained throughout the setting. All staff handling food are appropriately trained and we make use of guidance published by the Food Standards Agency (FSA).

From **September 2025**, the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework requires providers to have regard to the new **EYFS Nutrition Guidance**, ensuring all food and drink offered is healthy, balanced, and nutritious. At Bowerham, we fully align with this guidance to safeguard and promote children's health.

Our aim is to meet dietary and cultural requirements, and to provide children with a range of nutritious, healthy, and well-balanced snacks and meals, which promote growth and development.

## **Food Safety Hazards**

Staff at Bowerham Primary and Nursery School and Baby Unit are aware of potential food safety hazards and procedures are in place to ensure all potential risks are well managed. Food safety hazards include:

- Physical hazards: glass fragments, dust, pests
- Chemical: cleaning products, insecticides
- Biological: poor personal hygiene, poor storage
- Allergenic risk: cross-contamination

## **Good Food Hygiene**

At Bowerham Primary and Nursery School and Baby Unit we adopt a number of practices to ensure we maintain good food hygiene. These practices can be categorised under the 'four c's':

### **Cross-contamination**

To prevent cross-contamination of produce we:

- Always wash hands with anti-bacterial soap and hot water before and after handling food, using the toilet or changing nappies.
- Wash all surfaces and chopping boards with disinfectant
- Use clean cloths in accordance with the school hygiene policy and procedures (green)
- Store food correctly (see additional notes on food storage)
- Do not participate in food preparation if unwell
- Wear correct clothing eg. aprons, gloves
- Make sure all fruit and vegetables are washed before being served.
- Avoid wearing jewellery, especially rings, watches and bracelets
- Cover any cuts, spots or sores on the hands and arms with a waterproof dressing
- Making regular checks to ensure there is no evidence of pests or an insect infestation

### **Cleaning**

It is crucial for the health and safety of all children and adults that the nursery and baby rooms are cleaned regularly and to a high standard. Healthy practices are also put in place, these include:

- All hands must be washed before and after handling food
- Children are to wash their hands before and after eating
- All surfaces, chopping boards and equipment are washed before and after use to kill bacteria
- Ensuring all storage units, kitchen drawers, the fridge and freezer are cleaned regularly

### **Chilling**

Storing food properly helps stop harmful bacteria from growing. At Bowerham Primary and Nursery School and Baby Unit we adopt a range of systems to ensure our food is stored safely and ready for consumption. These include:

- Putting food in the correct storage place immediately eg. fridge, freezer, cupboard

- Storing food correctly in the fridge and in cupboards
- Checking the daily temperature of the fridge in the internal kitchen area (must remain below 5 degrees)

## **Cooking**

In order to ensure food is safe for consumption it must be cooked properly. This helps kill harmful bacteria. See appendix 1.

- Consistently check the use by dates on all products
- Consistently check the cooking instructions and ensure they are maintained
- Ensure food is cooked through properly before serving

## **Food Storage**

Inadequate storage can result in cross-contamination, food spoilage and the build-up of potentially harmful bacteria. All food must be examined carefully to ensure that it is ready for consumption before being prepared, cooked and served. At Bowerham Primary and Nursery School and Baby Unit we adopt a range of practices to ensure food is stored safely. These include:

- Ensuring the storage area is well ventilated and well lit
- Ensuring food items are well rotated, so older items are eaten first
- Storing non-perishables together eg. cereals, dry pasta, bread, biscuits
- Ensuring the fridge temperature is consistently below 5 degrees
  - The fridge temperature is checked and recorded on a daily basis to ensure the correct temperature is being upheld. See appendix 2.
  - All children's food will be labelled with their full name and date
  - Fridges will be emptied on a daily basis.
  - Fridges emptied daily

## **Fridge Organisation**

It is essential that food is stored correctly in the fridge to prevent cross-contamination. Food should be stored in the following way as much as possible:

- Top shelf: ready to eat foods (dairy)
- Middle shelf: cooked meats
- Bottom shelf: raw meat
- Drawers: fruit and salad

## **Packed Lunches**

If parents choose to provide a packed lunch for their child they will be informed of the following:

- Lunches should be in line with nutritional guidance and include foods from the four healthy groups – starchy foods, fruit/veg, protein and dairy.
- They must avoid sending in: sweets, chocolate, fizzy drinks, squash, ultra-processed meats, snacks with a high salt content and foods containing nuts.
- Advice will be given on foods that contain a choking risk. These foods will not be permitted: whole grapes, cherry tomatoes, cheese cubes, popcorn, whole nuts.

- Information and ideas for healthy lunch boxes and portion sizes will also be provided. See appendix 3 and 4.
- If we have concerns about a lunchbox, we will always discuss this with the parent privately and respectfully – never in front of the child.

### **Hot school Meals**

Our hot school meals are prepared daily on site by our catering team for children from aged 2 years onwards. If a child has a hot school meal, it will include a healthy balance of the main food groups: starchy foods, fruit and vegetables, protein, and dairy. Drinks are limited to healthy options, which means water or milk only. Sugary treats such as sweets, chocolate, and fizzy or sugary drinks are not permitted, and desserts will be limited to fruit or plain yoghurt/fromage frais.

### **Snacks**

Children in nursery and reception class will be offered a morning and afternoon snack which will consist of a selection of seasonal fruit and/or vegetables. Children will also be offered milk or water only. Children have continuous access to fresh water throughout the day. Children in our baby room have all snacks provided by parents. These snacks should be healthy in line with nutritional guidance. Staff will work closely with parents to ensure these are healthy.

### **Breakfast and After School Club snacks**

Breakfast and After School Club snacks for our nursery aged children will be in line with nutritional guidance and will include a balance of foods from the four healthy groups – starchy foods, fruit/veg, protein and dairy. Drinks are limited to healthy options, which means water or milk only.

### **Birthdays**

Instead of cakes or sweets, we celebrate with non-food fun such as songs, games, a birthday crown, or a special activity. This ensures all children feel safe and included.

### **Celebrations & Cultural Foods**

At Bowerham Primary and Nursery School and Baby Unit, we believe in inclusive and safe celebrations:

We celebrate and respect food traditions from all cultures. Families are encouraged to share ideas, recipes, or experiences (e.g., cooking activities, stories, photos, or music) that reflect their heritage. Where food is involved, we ensure it is prepared and served safely, considering any allergies.

### **Dietary Requirements**

At Bowerham Primary and Nursery School and Baby Unit we will maintain strong relationships with parents and children to ensure all dietary requirements are met. These may include choices based on:

- Food preferences

- Age of child
- Stage of child
- Religion
- Culture
- Food related conditions

### **Allergies and Intolerances**

At Bowerham Primary and Nursery School and Baby Unit we cater for all children's specific dietary needs. These are established at registration and include allergies and/or food intolerances. Staff are made aware of children's specialist requirements and some children may require individual care plans to keep them healthy and safe. To help us manage the risks associated with food allergies or intolerances the nursery and baby unit will;

- Gather information from parents at registration
- Establish the level of risk associated with the allergy/intolerance eg. low, moderate, severe
- Ensure all allergies and intolerances are known to all staff by displaying these in the kitchen area. Each child will have a picture board documenting any allergies and/or intolerances.
- Maintain excellent food hygiene practices
- If necessary provide children with individual placemats detailing which food related conditions they have.
- Zero tolerance policy: no nuts are permitted on site as we are a nut free school.

### **Feeding Babies**

**Parents of children who attend the baby room provide all foods and drinks for their babies. Close communication with parents and staff ensures that foods that are provided are safe and meet nutrition guidelines.**

The introduction of solid foods should only start once a baby can:

- stay in a sitting position and support their own head
- coordinate their eyes, hands and mouth so they can look at their food, pick it up and put it in their mouth
- swallow food (rather than spit it back out).

Babies are weaned at approximately 6 months old. This begins the process of moving from solely milk, to the consumption of a wide range of nutritious, healthy foods. There are a range of things to consider when feeding a baby:

- Baby's should always sit up while eating
- Baby's should never be left unsupervised
- Baby's food should be blended or mashed to their preferred consistency
- Do not hurry the child when eating—allow plenty of time for meals
- Meal times should be a happy, calm experience
- Only put a small amount of food on the tray at a time
- Avoid round, firm foods and large chunks
- Ensure food is cut and prepared appropriately (see food chart)
- Avoid stringy foods like string beans and celery

- Offer only a few pieces of food at a time
- Cut meat and poultry across the grain, and into tiny fingertip-sized pieces
- Food pieces should be no larger than one-half inch in any direction. If in doubt, cut food into smaller pieces
- Baby's should never be forced to eat any food

### Introducing foods Chart

	From 6 months	From 7 months	From 8 months	From 12 months
<b>Fruit</b>	<p>Most fruit &amp; veg. needs cooking and should be pureed</p> <p>Fruits that don't need cooking include; cucumber, avocado, melon, soft peaches, bananas</p> <p>Frozen veg can be microwaved and blended</p>	<p>Introduce mashed citrus fruits, berries, pineapple and kiwi</p>	<p>Ripe, soft fruit for finger food</p>	<p>All fruits</p>
<b>Vegetables</b>	<p>Pureed root vegetables and sweetcorn</p>	<p>Puree or mash root vegetables</p>	<p>Broccoli and other finger foods</p>	<p>All vegetables</p>
<b>Carbohydrates</b>	<p>Baby rice</p> <p>Pureed potatoes</p>	<p>Puree or mash potatoes and chickpeas</p> <p>Porridge</p>	<p>Whole bread</p> <p>Brown rice</p> <p>Buckwheat noodles</p> <p>Pasta</p>	<p>All carbohydrates</p>
<b>Protein</b>		<p>Yogurts</p> <p>Eggs</p> <p>Cheese</p> <p>Fish</p> <p>Chicken</p>		<p>Cow's milk</p>

		Meat		
Omega 3		Mackerel Salmon Tuna Ground seeds; sunflower, pumpkin		
Other				Honey

### **Safe Food Preparation**

#### **Type of food**

#### **How to prepare for young children**

Grapes

Should always be cut up into quarters

Satsumas

Peeled, the stringy bits should be removed and each segment checked for pips.

Then each segment cut into thirds.

Apples

Skin should be removed for younger children

Mango, pineapple

Should be cut into strips for younger children to hold

### **Drinks to offer from 6 months**

The only drinks that are recommended for babies aged 6-12 months are:

- breast milk
- first infant formula
- water

At Bowerham we avoid giving other milks that are labelled as being suitable for babies aged 6 months and over (for example 'follow on formula'). Research shows that switching to follow-on formula at 6 months has no benefits for the baby who can continue to have first infant formula as their main drink until they are 1 year old. Formula milks marketed for children aged 12 months and over (such as 'growing-up' milks and other 'toddler' milks) are also not necessary. Staff will discuss with parents and/or carers and recommend that these milks should only be used after consulting a qualified health professional for advice. Babies will be offered sips of water during meal times from an open or free-flow cup without a valve. Open cups help babies learn to sip and are better for their teeth.

## **The importance of different textures**

Once babies are comfortable with eating solid foods, it is important to start introducing more mashed and lumpier foods. It's important to introduce different textures as it helps babies to:

- learn to chew and swallow properly, which encourages mouth and muscle development
- get used to different textures, which means they will be less likely to become fussy eaters or develop sensory needs.

Staff are aware that babies take different amounts of time to get used to texture and lumps. Staff will therefore keep offering lumpy textures from around 6 to 7 months (if the child is ready) and will always supervise them closely to make sure they are swallowing it safely.

Staff will ask parents to provide a range of finger foods for babies to try at snack times.

Finger foods are easy to grab and hold, such as thin sticks of cheese or bread, soft-cooked broccoli, cauliflower, carrot or banana cut into thin batons. These sorts of foods can encourage a baby's hand-eye coordination, as well as introducing new textures.

Staff will also encourage babies to touch food with their hands and play with textures, such as portions of cooked spaghetti.

## **Managing Meal Times**

At Bowerham Primary and Nursery School and Baby Unit our core values feed into everything we do. We believe meal times should be part of the enjoyment of the day, providing an opportunity to develop the skills required to feed ourselves and to then use a knife and fork. They offer time to relax and all come together, to be sociable and share our discoveries and learning experiences. Children are sat together, with staff, and enjoy time away from play to delight in the delicious, healthy food, and to build meaningful, caring relationships with each other.