

## 03 Food Safety and Nutrition Procedures

### 03.5 Meeting Dietary Requirements

#### Our Aim

At our nursery, mealtimes are more than food — they are warm, social moments where children learn about healthy eating and enjoy new tastes. We make sure every child receives food that is safe, appropriate, and respectful of their family's cultural or dietary needs.

#### Understanding Your Child's Needs

We work in partnership with parents to make sure we fully understand each child's:

- Food allergies
- Intolerances
- Cultural or religious dietary requirements
- Vegetarian/vegan preferences
- General likes and dislikes

This information is:

- Recorded during registration
- Updated regularly through ongoing conversations
- Stored clearly on your child's Family account
- Shared with all staff caring for your child

If your child has a known allergy, we follow our full 04.4 Allergies and Food Intolerance Procedure.

#### How We Keep Children Safe at Mealtimes

To protect children with dietary needs:

##### ✓ Easy-to-access information

- Each child's diet and allergy notes are displayed clearly on Family.
- The same information is shown on placemats in each room.

✓ Checking food before serving

At every meal or snack:

- A key person, secondary-key person, or room leader checks each child's food to ensure it is safe
- Children only receive food that meets their requirements

✓ Clear, accessible menus

- Menus and what children have eaten for snack is posted on Family
- All major allergens are clearly highlighted

✓ Allergy-safe menu options

- Parents of children with allergies receive a separate Caterlink allergy menu
- Parents can choose safe meals in advance
- The catering company receives the child's full dietary/allergy information

 **Food That Respects Your Child's Culture & Beliefs**

We aim to provide meals that:

- Reflect children's cultural backgrounds
- Respect religious dietary rules
- Offer familiar foods while gently introducing new flavours
- Provide vegetarian alternatives when meat or fish is served

If Halal or Kosher food cannot be provided, a vegetarian alternative is offered following agreement with parents.

Children are never singled out or made to feel different because of their diet, allergy, or cultural needs.

 **Water & Mealtime Atmosphere**

- Fresh drinking water is available at all times
- Children are shown how to access water independently
- Mealtimes are calm, social experiences where children can chat, explore food, and develop independence

 **Fussy or Selective Eating**



Many children go through phases of strong food preferences. We support them gently:

✓ What we do

- Encourage, but never force children to try foods
- Recognise signs they've had enough
- Remove uneaten food without drawing attention

✓ Working with parents/carers

We work in partnership to support children who are selective eaters and can share useful guidance such as:

“How to Manage Simple Faddy Eating in Toddlers” – Infant & Toddler Forum

<https://infantandtoddlerforum.org/health-and-childcare-professionals/factsheets/>