

Razzy's Daycare & Nursery



Razzy's Daycare & Nursery
Est. 2025

Nutrition and Mealtimes Policy

Date of Issue: December 2025

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Introduction

Razzy's Daycare & Nursery recognises that good nutrition is fundamental to children's health, wellbeing, growth, and development. Mealtimes are an important part of the nursery day and provide valuable opportunities for social interaction, communication, learning, and the development of independence. We believe that mealtimes should be calm, enjoyable, and inclusive experiences where children feel relaxed, supported, and encouraged to make healthy choices. This policy outlines how we provide nutritious food and create positive mealtime environments while ensuring children's individual dietary needs, cultural backgrounds, and safety are respected at all times.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Allergies and Allergic Reactions Policy, Food Safety and Hygiene Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Intimate Care Policy, and Inclusion Policy.

Legal and Regulatory Framework

This policy is informed by the following legislation and guidance:

- The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework 2025
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Food Information Regulations (FIR) 2014
- The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- Public Health England and Department for Education healthy eating guidance
- The Ofsted Early Years Inspection Handbook 2025

These frameworks require early years providers to meet children's nutritional needs safely, promote healthy lifestyles, and safeguard children during eating and drinking.

Aims of the Policy

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all children receive healthy, balanced meals and snacks that support their growth and development, while also promoting positive attitudes towards food. We seek to encourage children to enjoy a varied diet, develop independence during mealtimes and learn about healthy eating in a way that is appropriate for their age and stage of development. At all times, children's safety, dignity, and individual needs remain central to our approach.

Provision of Food and Drink

The Nursery provides a balanced breakfast, a cooked midday meal, a light tea, and two nutritious snacks for children attending full day sessions. Menus are planned in advance in line with Department for Education guidance and recommended nutritional standards for babies and young children. Menus are rotated regularly to provide variety, reflect seasonal produce, and ensure children are exposed to a wide range of foods and flavours. Meals incorporate fresh fruit and vegetables daily and limit foods high in sugar, salt, unhealthy fats, artificial additives, preservatives, and colourings.

Menus are clearly displayed for parents and carers and are shared through the nursery's communication systems. Any of the 14 recognised allergens present in meals are identified in line with the Food Information Regulations (FIR) 2014 to support informed decision-making and allergy management.

Drinks and Hydration

Fresh drinking water is available and accessible to children at all times throughout the day. Staff regularly encourage children to drink water, particularly during warm weather or periods of increased physical activity, to support hydration. Milk and water are the only drinks routinely provided during meal and snack times in order to promote good oral health. Intake is monitored, especially for younger children and babies, to ensure they are drinking adequate amounts.

Individual Dietary Needs and Allergies

The nursery is dedicated to meeting the individual dietary needs of every child. Information regarding dietary requirements, cultural or religious preferences, food allergies, intolerances, and medical needs is gathered from parents prior to a child starting the nursery and updated whenever changes occur. Where a child has a diagnosed allergy or complex dietary requirement, the nursery completes a risk assessment and an individual dietary or health care plan in partnership with parents. These plans are shared with relevant staff and reviewed regularly.

Care is taken to avoid cross-contamination during food preparation and serving, and seating arrangements are considered carefully to minimise risks during mealtimes. Where appropriate, an adult sits with children during meals to provide support, supervision, and reassurance. Staff discuss food safety and allergies with children at an age-appropriate level to help them understand why sharing food may not always be safe.

Inclusive and Respectful Practice

The nursery respects and values cultural diversity and seeks, wherever possible, to reflect children's cultural backgrounds within menu planning. Cultural and religious dietary requirements are accommodated, and families are encouraged to share information about foods that are familiar or significant to their home life. Staff are sensitive in the way they support children's diets and allergies and ensure that no child is labelled, singled out, or made to feel different due to their dietary needs.

Mealtime Environment and Learning Opportunities

Mealtimes at Razy's Daycare & Nursery are organised as social occasions where children and staff eat together in small groups. Staff act as positive role models by demonstrating good table manners, healthy eating habits, and respectful behaviour. Conversation is encouraged, and mealtimes are used as opportunities to develop communication skills, social interaction, and a sense of belonging.

Children are encouraged to develop independence through making choices, serving food when appropriate, feeding themselves, and using age-appropriate utensils. Staff support children patiently and sensitively, allowing them to eat at their own pace without rushing.

Children are offered a variety of foods and encouraged to try new items, but they are never forced to eat. If a child shows distress or strong dislike for a particular food, this is handled calmly and without pressure. Children who refuse food at a mealtime are offered food later in the day to ensure their nutritional needs are met.

Packed Lunches

While lunch is provided by the nursery, we do allow children to bring packed lunches where appropriate. Parents are provided with guidance on nutritious packed lunch content and are signposted to [NHS healthier lunchbox resources](#). Packed lunches are stored safely in allocated refrigeration units to maintain food safety standards. Before food is served, staff check lunchbox contents to identify potential allergen risks or choking hazards. Food sharing is not permitted. If unsuitable items are identified, staff manage the situation sensitively and in line with safeguarding and allergy procedures.

Health, Safety, and Supervision

Children are always supervised while eating or drinking to minimise the risk of choking. Staff are trained to recognise choking risks and respond appropriately. Clean, age-appropriate utensils are provided for all children, and eating practices respect children's developmental abilities and cultural customs. All staff involved in preparing or handling food receive food hygiene training, which is refreshed at least every three years.

Celebrations and Special Occasions

The nursery recognises children's birthdays and cultural celebrations in a positive and inclusive manner. To ensure the safety of all children and to effectively manage food allergies, choking risks, and dietary requirements, families are discouraged from bringing food or edible treats into the nursery. Instead, celebrations focus on inclusive, non-food-based experiences such as special activities, stories, songs, stickers, certificates, or being a helper for the day. Where food is provided as part of a celebration, this will be planned and prepared by the nursery in line with healthy eating guidance, food safety procedures, and allergen management processes.

Food Safety and Illness

In the unlikely event that two or more children experience suspected food poisoning while attending the nursery, the management team will notify Ofsted as soon as reasonably practicable and in all cases within 14 days. The nursery will also inform the relevant environmental health and public health agencies and will follow all advice provided. Accurate records will be kept, and any necessary actions will be implemented promptly to protect children's health and safety.

Monitoring and Review

The Nursery Manager is responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy and ensuring that nutrition and mealtime practices remain consistent, safe, and high quality. Practices are monitored through supervision, observation, and regular review of menus and procedures. This policy is reviewed annually or sooner in response to changes in legislation, guidance, or the needs of the nursery community.

Razzy's Daycare & Nursery is committed to promoting healthy lifestyles from an early age. By providing nutritious food, positive role models, and supportive mealtime environments, we aim to help children develop a healthy relationship with food that supports their physical wellbeing, emotional development, and lifelong habits.