



Rockwood Nursery School

Food and Nutrition Policy

Written November 2025

At Rockwood Nursery School we are committed to promoting healthy eating habits and ensuring that all children receive a nutritious and balanced meal while in our care whilst also ensuring that healthy eating is part of our curriculum.

In accordance with the updated Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) nutrition guidance released in May 2025 and alongside our Allergy Policy (Nov 2025), we ask parents and carers to provide a safe and healthy packed lunch.

We ensure snack times/lunchtimes are a calm and positive part of our day. While we never pressure children to eat, we gently encourage them to try a range of foods and celebrate safe and healthy choices.

What We Provide

We provide healthy snacks during the day, such as fruit, vegetables, breadsticks, and milk or water. Parents are responsible for providing their child's packed lunch on days they attend over lunchtime.

Some rooms do 'spreading Wednesday' where children learn to spread cheese spread using a knife on bread/crackers.

Packed Lunch Expectations

We will check all packed lunches at the start of lunchtime. We kindly ask that packed lunches include:

- **A portion of starchy food** (e.g. bread, pasta, rice, bagel, couscous, malt loaf or wraps).
- **At least one portion of fruit** (cucumber, carrot, tomatoes, peppers, sweetcorn, mixed salad **or vegetables** (apple, pear, banana, satsuma, strawberries, grapes (cut up), melon, raisins, mango or pineapple).
- **A source of protein** (e.g. meat, eggs, beans, lentils, or fish).
- **A dairy item** (e.g. cheese, yoghurt, rice pudding, fromage frais or a suitable alternative).
- **A drink** to help with hydration and concentration (water only please).

We ask that the following items are avoided:

- Confectionery such as sweets, chocolate bars or cakes.
- Sugary fizzy drinks or high-sugar squash – water is the best drink for children with food.
- Foods high in salt or saturated fat (e.g. crisps, sausage rolls) should be limited.
- Marshmallows, popcorn, boiled sweets and jelly cubes (all of which are choking hazards).

Practical tips for healthy, safe and tasty packed lunches:

1. Food Safety and Storage

Please note that we **do not have the facilities to reheat or refrigerate food**. To keep packed lunches safe and fresh:

- Use an **insulated lunch bag or box**, clearly labelled with your child's name.
- Include **ice packs** to keep perishable items cool.
- If sending a warm meal, please use a **child-friendly food flask** designed to retain heat.

2. Allergies and Dietary Needs

To ensure the safety of all children:

- Please do not include any food items containing **nuts**, as we are a **nut-free setting**.
- Inform us of any **dietary needs or allergies** your child has (this information is requested on a child's registration form however we must be notified of any changes to your child's dietary needs or allergies. This also includes cultural preferences).

3. Choosing foods

- Vary lunchbox contents for a good balance of nutrients

- Seasonal fruits and veg add vitamins, colour, texture and are often cheaper and tastier
- Read food labels, look out for the colour coded nutrition information on the front of packets, the 'more green' the healthier the choice.
- Include children in shopping, choosing and preparing their own lunchboxes.
- Wash fruit and veg and remove stones, cut small fruits and tomatoes into quarters to help prevent choking
- Keep contents fresh, rinse sliced apples with lemon juice to stop them going brown.

Mealtimes are a calm and social part of our day. We are a packed lunch setting and this in itself can introduce children to a new range of foods that they see other children and staff are enjoying.

Staff sit with children during snack/lunchtime to model cutting, eating, behaviour and to support with opening containers etc. We provide gentle encouragement for children to try new foods in a pressure-free way.

Staff supervising snack/lunch times have all completed 12-hour paediatric first aid training and have food hygiene certificates.

Celebrations

As a setting we value children's birthdays and hold birthday parties to celebrate these special occasions. Families are unable to bring in a birthday cake/food treats (the Nursery Food Allergy Policy refers), but we are happy to celebrate by families bringing in a non-edible option such as bubbles or stickers.

Cooking and learning about Food

Cooking and learning about food is a key part of our curriculum. We teach children about both healthy and fatty foods and encourage them to make good choices.

We also make our own compost from fruit peelings teaching children about sustainability.

When cooking with children we make sure we are cooking with a range of different foods.

Food safety and Hygiene

We ensure that all staff complete food hygiene and allergy training and are made aware of children's individual dietary needs which are also recorded on both the register and in the kitchen. All EpiPens are clearly labelled and stored in the medication cabinet – we take them with us during outdoor play.


Sustainability

We have grown our own fruit and vegetables and use this for both snacks and for learning about different fruit and vegetables. We also make our own compost using fruit peelings. Try to use containers and cutlery that can be washed and used again.

Appendix 1 – Packed lunch example




Healthy Lunches





Sandwich or a wrap/pitta



Please provide your child's lunch in a box or in a bag, clearly labelled with their name.

A named, reusable bottle for water.
This will be filled up in Nursery.



What should I put into my child's packed lunch?


Cheese/Yoghurt



Vegetable sticks or small pieces of fruit.



1 small sweet treat. NOT SWEETS!



Things to keep in mind

VARIETY IS KEY – something different each day/week

FUN – make it enjoyable, cut sandwiches into shapes using shaped cutters.

Try to get your child involved so they know what to expect in their lunch.

DON'T overfill your child's lunch box, children need much smaller portions than adults.

REMEMBER your child has access to milk or water throughout their session too.

IMPORTANT -We are a **NOT FREE** School. Please make sure all foods are free from nuts and traces of nuts.

Or why not try an alternative, soup, pasta, beans warmed up at home and put into an insulated flask to keep it warm till lunch time.

Please note we **CAN NOT WARM FOOD** THOUGH AT NURSERY.

If you have any concerns or worries about lunches, please speak to Kathryn (our Oral Health Champion) or your child's keyworker.

Appendix 2 – Additional packed lunch ideas

Here are some ideas for packed lunches:

Key: **DF** =dairy free; **EF**=egg free; **GF**=gluten free; **V**=suitable for vegetarians; **VV**=suitable for vegans

- Boiled egg, cheese cubes, toast slices and broccoli spears, and raisins **V**
- Cheese and cucumber sandwiches, green beans and pepper, and rice pudding with raisins **V EF**
- Chicken, pasta, red pepper, lettuce, kiwi and milk drink **EF**
- Dahl, chapatti, rice and tomato, and soya yoghurt with grapes **V VV EF DF**
- Egg roll, cucumber and tomato, and yoghurt and blueberries **V**
- Mixed beans, pitta bread, houmous and cucumber, and apple sauce and custard **V EF**
- Pitta bread with houmous and carrot, banana and soya milk drink **V VV EF DF**
- Pizza, carrot sticks, yellow pepper, dates and milk drink **V EF**
- Rice and peas, jerk chicken, sweetcorn, tomatoes and mango **EF DF GF**
- Roast vegetable couscous and chickpeas, with soya yoghurt and strawberries **V VV EF DF**
- Sardine sandwiches, tomatoes, peas and banana, and milk drink **EF**
- Tuna and sweetcorn pasta, red pepper, celery, malt loaf and melon **EF**

The recipes and photos of all the suggestions above and lots more packed lunch information including packed lunch examples can be found on First Steps Nutrition website in the eating well: packed lunch or 1-4 year olds resource <https://www.firststepsnutrition.org/eating-well-early-years>

