



Food & Nutrition Policy

1. Purpose

At North Yorkshire Rural Schools Federation, we are committed to supporting children's health and wellbeing by promoting a positive, safe, and consistent approach to food and nutrition.

This policy sets out our approach to:

Meals and snacks

Packed lunches

Birthdays and celebrations

Food safety, allergies, and cultural/religious needs

2. Principles

All children are entitled to a healthy, balanced diet that supports growth, development, and learning.

Mealtimes are social, relaxed, and inclusive.

Food is never used as a reward or punishment.

Staff act as positive role models by modelling healthy choices.

3. Meals & Snacks

We provide healthy snacks (fruit, vegetables, toast, milk, or water).

Drinks are limited to plain water or milk — no squash, juice, or fizzy drinks.

We encourage children to try new foods but never pressure them to eat.

4. Packed Lunches

Parents are encouraged to provide a balanced lunchbox including:

Fruit/vegetables

Starchy food (bread, rice, pasta, potatoes)

Protein (meat, fish, eggs, beans, pulses)

Dairy or alternatives (yoghurt, cheese slices, milk, fortified alternatives)

Foods we ask families to avoid:

Sweets, chocolate bars, sugary yoghurts, biscuits

Fizzy or sweetened drinks

Choking hazards (whole grapes, cherry tomatoes, cheese cubes, popcorn, whole nuts)

If a child's lunch regularly contains unsuitable items, staff will discuss this privately with parents, never in front of children.

5. Birthdays & Celebrations

We celebrate birthdays in fun, inclusive ways (cards, singing, games).

To support healthy eating, we ask families not to send in cakes, sweets, or party bags.

Families are welcome to contribute healthy snacks or non-food items (stickers, a book for the class, bubbles).

Cultural and religious food traditions will be respected and included where safe and appropriate.

6. Allergies & Special Diets

Parents must inform us of all allergies, intolerances, and dietary needs.

All allergy information is shared with staff and displayed in food preparation areas.

We take strict care to avoid cross-contamination.

Staff are trained in allergy awareness and emergency procedures (e.g. use of EpiPens).

7. Safeguarding & Equality

All children have the right to safe, appropriate food that respects their health, culture, and family preferences.

We do not allow food-based teasing or comparisons between lunchboxes.

Staff never comment negatively on a child's food in front of them.

8. Monitoring & Review

This policy will be reviewed annually with input from staff and parents.

We will update it in line with EYFS guidance and public health recommendations.

Together, we will create a positive food culture, supporting children to develop healthy eating habits for life.