



03 Food safety and nutrition procedures

03.2 Food for play and cooking activities

Some parents and staff may have strong views about food being used for play. It is important to be sensitive to these issues. For example, children who are Muslim, Jewish, Rastafarian, or who are vegetarian, should not be given any food to play with that contains animal products (Gelatine). Parents' views should be sought on this. In some cases, it is not appropriate to use food for play at all, particularly in times of austerity.

- ❖ Food for play may include dough, corn flour, pasta, rice, food colourings/flavourings.
- ❖ Jelly (including jelly cubes) is not used for play.
- ❖ Food for play is risk assessed against the 14 allergens referred to and is included in the written risk assessment undertaken for children with specific allergies.
- ❖ Staff are constantly alert to the potential hazards of food play, in particular choking hazards and signs of previously undetected allergies.
- ❖ Pulses are not recommended as they can be poisonous when raw or may choke.
- ❖ The use of raw vegetables for printing is discouraged.
- ❖ Dried food that is used for play should be kept away from food used for cooking.
- ❖ Foods that are cooked and used for play, such as dough, have a limited shelf life.
- ❖ Cornflour is always mixed with water before being given for play.
- ❖ Cornflower and cooked pasta are discarded after an activity; high risk of bacteria forming.
- ❖ Utensils used for play food are washed thoroughly after use.

Children's cooking activities

- ❖ Before undertaking any cooking activity with children, members of staff should check for allergies and intolerances by checking children's records.
- ❖ Children are taught basic hygiene skills such as the need to wash hands thoroughly before handling food, and again after going to the toilet, blowing their nose or coughing.
- ❖ The area to be used for cooking is cleaned; a plastic tablecloth is advised.
- ❖ Children are supervised at all times.
- ❖ Children are kept away from hot surfaces and hot water.
- ❖ Children do not have unsupervised access to electrical equipment such as blenders etc.

- ❖ Children should wear aprons that are used just for cooking.
- ❖ Utensils provided are for children to use only when cooking, including chopping/rolling boards, bowls, wooden spoons, jugs, and are stored in the kitchen.
- ❖ Members of staff encourage children to handle food in a hygienic manner.
- ❖ Food ready for cooking or cooling is not left uncovered.
- ❖ Cooked food to go home is put in a paper food bag and refrigerated until home time.
- ❖ Food play activities are suspended during outbreaks of illness.

This policy was adopted by

Abinger Common Nursery

On

March 2024

Date to be reviewed

March 2025

Signed on behalf of the provider



Name of signatory

Mrs Emma Powell

Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)

Nursery Chair Person