muddy boots
DAY NURSERY

Healthy Eating Policy

Monitoring and updating	
Date Policy was reviewed:	September 2025
Signed by (Printed name and signature):	Hannah Chapman (Unit Leader)
Date of next review:	September 2026

Policy Statements

This policy and procedure is in line with the requirements of:

- The Food Safety Act 1990
- The EYFS Safeguarding and Welfare requirements
- The Nutritional Guidelines for Early Years.

Muddy Boots Day Nursery aims to provide children in our care with freshly prepared and nutritionally balanced meals, snacks and drinks and we will encourage children to try a variety of foods and flavours.

Special provision will be made for children who have specific intolerances or allergies, in certain cases help may be sought from parents to provide any necessary alternatives. In addition, children with allergies will also have a medical action plan in case of allergic reactions.

Food prepared on site is done so under strict adherence to health and hygiene standards by appropriately qualified personal.

A record of how children have eaten is taken as a matter of course; specific monitoring can be arranged if required in discussion between parents and the child's key person.

Withholding food will never be used as a form of discipline

Muddy Boots works continuously to develop our healthy nutritious menu whilst taking into account the DFE guidance, food hygiene standards and children's interests. We will liaise with parents/carers, staff and children over all individual needs and menu ideas.

Snacks and main meals

Muddy Boots Day Nursery has a strict NO NUTS policy.

Before a child starts, we will collect information from the parent/cares about their child's dietary needs and preferences (which include their: allergies; intolerances; religious faiths and beliefs; additional support needs and other special medical diets.) This information will be stored securely and shared with staff on a need-to-know basis.

We are mindful of the allergens list when creating a food menu (see poster attached) Meals are included as part of session bookings that cover lunch (12-1pm) and teatime (4-5pm). Breakfast is provided for children if required (8-8:45am). All children in morning sessions will have a balanced snack which consists of a selection of fruits followed by a light carb and protein combo (e.g. cracker with cream cheese / hummus and pitta bread / rice cake and cream cheese etc), with a drink of milk (or substitute) as part of their morning routine.

For children in the ladybird unit, parents are asked to inform their key person as to the specific requirements for their child. A fridge is available for parents to leave the appropriate milk and bottles needed for their booked sessions. Children who have been, or are in the process of being, weaned will be offered the main meal at lunch time. This can be blended or coarsely chopped as appropriate.

Menu:

At Muddy Boots we aim to write our menu in advance and have a 7-week rotation to ensure the nutritionally balanced foods are balanced equally so as to not overlap too much. The food provided will be nutritionally balanced across these 4 food groups:

-Fruit and vegetables
-Starchy carbohydrates
-Dairy or dairy alternatives
-Proteins

Drinks:

-Only water is served throughout the day (no squash/fruit juice unless clearly reasoned and supplied by parents for individual and specific reasons.)
-Drinking water will always be available and easily accessible. In BusyBees in a water trolley at their heights and children are made aware of how to access this at any point of the day. Hydration and hunger levels for children in Ladybirds are monitored regularly by staff and milk/drinks offered when required.

Baby Feeding guidance:

0 – 12 months
At Muddy Boots we will both follow the EYFS and work with parents to find out their baby's current pattern of feeding and only introduce different stages of feeding when parents let us know. This is to ensure consistency and remove the chance of a choking hazard.

Meals and Snacks

In Muddy Boots mealtimes will be planned and organized so that they are a relaxing and social occasion for the children.

- Children will be supported to develop their independence through making healthy choices, serving food/drinks and feeding themselves
- We take mealtimes as a way for children to have the opportunity to try and explore new tastes and textures whilst also being a very important time for them to develop their communication skills.
- Children will not be rushed to eat their food, and they will be encouraged sensitively by staff to try something on their plate.
- There will always be a staff member present and facing the children when they are having their meals and staff are trained to seek potential signs of choking or allergic reactions.
- Parents/carers will be notified either at the door at handover or on the online Parenta app if their child is not eating well.

- All structure; equipment and facilities will be in good, clean and safe repair to prevent the spread of bacteria and dirt whilst also being safe for children to sit on.

Management of food allergies and dietary needs

- We will ensure/ require a health care to be in place, with the relevant medication needed and shared with the appropriate staff members
- The menu is planned to meet the current child's food requirements whilst also meeting the nutritional guidance standards.
- The info sheet where all staff can find children's allergens/intolerances/preferences are found in three locations in the building: the kitchen, the BusyBees room and the Ladybirds room.
- At Muddy Boots staff are trained in noticing signs of allergens and communicating with other relevant staff to seek further guidance.
- Staff at Muddy Boots will avoid cross contamination by:
  -washing hands
  -using colour coded equipment and utensils
  -ensuring all children wash their hands regularly (at mealtimes/ after every toilet visit/ after messy activities etc)
  -having clear guidelines on what can be brought in externally

Celebrations and special occasions

At Muddy Boots we enjoy and encourage celebrations of birthdays or any other special occasions in collaborations with parents/carers. We do however ask that if any food items are being brought that they are met with our food guideline and if not that a non-edible item could be brough tin instead (e.g. stickers). If any food is brough tin for the celebration, staff will be checking them for potential allergens. Staff also have a duty to inform parents of what their child has eaten from the celebration.

Food hygiene and awareness training

All staff who are involved in the preparation and handling of food in Muddy Boots, which include nay cooking activities with children, will have access to appropriate supervision and training in food hygiene. This is aimed to be completed within 3 months of employment and then renewed when necessary. The training is done online via a basic food hygiene course.

Temperature control

- All perishable food (milk, dairy products, hummus, fruit, vegetables, spread etc) will be kept in the refrigerator which is managed at the degrees between 0-5.
- The fridge has a thermometer that shows the temperature inside the fridge and it is checked and recorded daily.

Stock rotation

All stock will be rotated; this is to prevent spoilage and products staying beyond their shelf life. Each product has a use-by date that is recorded and removed once the date has surpassed. At the end of every week, all food is checked and any food that is past their use -by date is discarded so that only in-date food is used.

Additional aims

- The weekly menu follows a 7-week rotation that is available for all parents/carers to access and see a minimum repetition in meals for their child.
- Water is available in Busy Bees and children are made aware of how to access this at any point during the day. Hydration and hunger levels for children in Ladybirds are monitored by staff and milk/drinks offered when required.
- Children will be offered desert even if they have refused their main course
- Home-made cakes / treats will occasionally be served unless it is a child's birthday and they have brought in their own cake (parents will be made aware of cake being brought in for that day's dessert).
- Parents or guardians will be advised if their children are not eating well (either verbally or on the online Parents Portal)
- Nursery staff and volunteers will sit with children and aid them during mealtimes; children are encouraged to be as autonomous as possible in feeding themselves
- Children will be encouraged to develop good eating habits and table manners and will be given plenty of time within which to eat
- In keeping with the ethos of Trinity College and Muddy Boots Day Nursery all children and lunchtime helpers are encouraged to participate in a 'grace' song at the start of each meal.
- As part of our nutrition policy, we encourage healthy activity within the nursery day; playing outside is therefore a key aspect of this both for the exercise provided and the nutritional benefit of exposure to sunlight

Appendix 1

The Menu is designed to cater for all allergy and dietary needs of individual children.

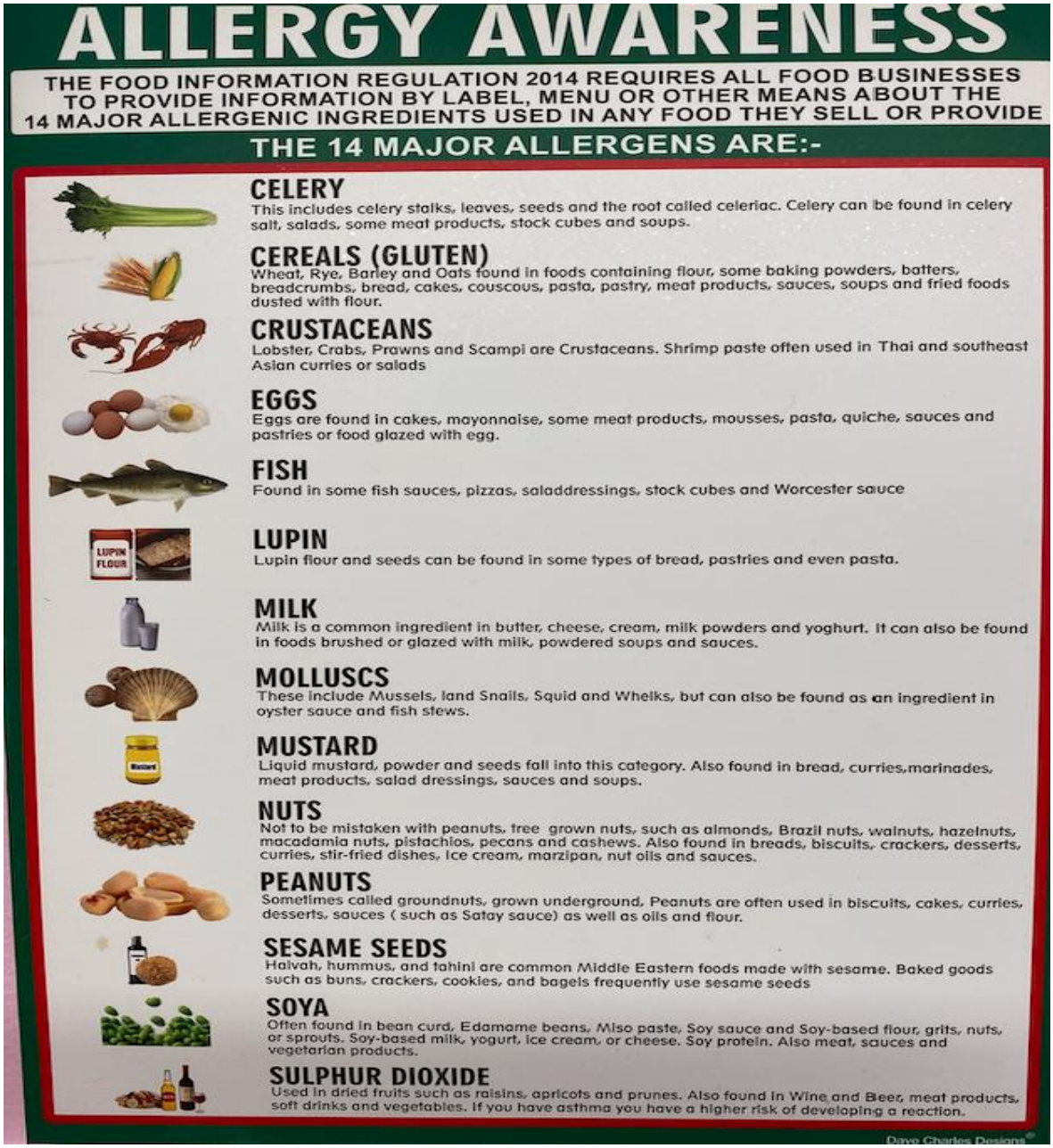
Breakfast Between 8-9am	Wholegrain cereal and milk Water to drink
Snack Between 10-10:30	Minimum 3 types of fruit and vegetables (e.g. Apple, banana, cucumber, cherry tomatoes, apricots, raisins) Milk or water to drink Carbohydrate and protein combo (e.g. cracker and cream cheese / rice cake and hummus / breadstick and hummus)
Lunch Between 11:30 – 12:30	A rotation of meals (see Appendix 2 for 7-week meal rotation) Water to drink
Snack Between 2:30 – 3:30	Carbohydrate and protein combo that is different to the morning (e.g. cracker and cream cheese / rice cake and hummus / breadstick and hummus) Water to drink
Tea Between 4:00-5:00	See Appendix 2 of tea options in the 7-week rotation Selection of fresh fruit Water to drink

Appendix 2

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7
MONDAY							
Lunch:	Spag Bol	Veg Chilli	Baked Potato & Tuna	Mac and Cheese	Curry	Roast veg, Potato and Chicken	Pasta Bake
Tea:	Beans and bread	Scrambled Eggs and Toast	Soup & Bread Rolls	Sandwiches	Beans and bread	Scrambled Eggs and Toast	Soup & Bread Rolls
TUESDAY							
Lunch:	Baked Potato & Tuna	Mac and Cheese	Curry	Roast veg, Potato and Chicken	Pasta Bake	SFNM	Cottage Pie
Tea:	Scrambled Eggs and Toast	Soup & Bread Rolls	Sandwiches	Beans and bread	Scrambled Eggs and Toast	Soup & Bread Rolls	Sandwiches
WEDNESDAY							
Lunch:	Curry	Roast veg, Potato and Chicken	Pasta Bake	SFNM	Cottage Pie	Spag Bol	Veg Chilli
Tea:	Soup & Bread Rolls	Sandwiches	Beans and bread	Scrambled Eggs and Toast	Soup & Bread Rolls	Sandwiches	Beans and bread
THURSDAY							
Lunch:	Pasta Bake	SFNM	Cottage Pie	Spag Bol	Veg Chilli	Baked Potato & Tuna	Mac and Cheese
Tea:	Sandwiches	Beans and bread	Scrambled Eggs and Toast	Soup & Bread Rolls	Sandwiches	Beans and bread	Scrambled Eggs and Toast
FRIDAY							
Lunch:	Cottage Pie	Spag Bol	Veg Chilli	Baked Potato & Tuna	Mac and Cheese	Curry	Roast veg, Potato and Chicken
Tea:	Beans and bread	Scrambled Eggs and Toast	Soup & Bread Rolls	Sandwiches	Beans and bread	Scrambled Eggs and Toast	Soup & Bread Rolls

Puddings range from: Natural yoghurt with blended fruit, home-made cake, fruit platter and home-made crumble with custard.

SFNM = Sausage / fish fingers / nuggets / meatballs

Appendix 3.

Food allergens poster displayed in the kitchen