**Food and nutrition policy.**

## **Ruardean Acorns Pre-School statement of intent**

This policy is for all children attending Ruardean Acorns –

We have a statutory duty as part of The Early Years Foundation stage safeguarding and welfare requirements to ensure that the snacks and drinks we provide are healthy, balanced and nutritious.

This policy has been written using information, advice and guidance from The Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition guidance April 2025.

We do not provide meals at Ruardean Acorns therefore it is the responsibility of the parent to provide meals for their children e.g. a packed lunch or additionally ordering a hot school dinner from the school we share a site with. Any cultural or dietary preferences can be catered for by parents. To keep all children and staff safe and ask parents to inform us if any of the main allergens.

Below are things that are present in the food which are sent in:

**Main allergens**

• celery

• cereals containing gluten (such as wheat, barley and oats and some flours)

• crustaceans (such as prawns, crabs and lobsters)

• eggs

• fish

• lupin (such as bread made using lupin seeds)

• milk

• molluscs (such as mussels and oysters)

• mustard

• peanuts

• sesame

• soybeans

• sulphur dioxide and sulphites (sometimes found in dried fruits and fruit juices)

• tree nuts (such as almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, Brazil nuts, cashews, pecans,

pistachios and macadamia nuts).

Staff will obtain information from parents/carers to whether their child has any allergies or intolerances before the child starts the setting (also written on registration forms). Parents are asked to keep staff updated on any changes to their child’s dietary needs.

We ask that parents follow our policy when they are sending in food for their child. It is our aim to educate parents and support them in providing their child with a nutritious diet. We expose children to different foods via cooking with them, trying new and different foods and discussing where the food comes from. This is done considering children’s allergies, intolerances and cultural preferences.

Parents are asked to think about perishable items that should be kept cool. They can be packed in insulated sealed bags with ice packs to maintain their freshness. If ice packs are unavailable, the ‘4-hour rule’ can be applied, food can be stored outside of chilled conditions for up to 4 hours.

We **do not** permit the following for children:

Fizzy drinks, sweets, nuts, chocolate spread or peanut butter

*Eating area*- There is designated area where children will eat, where there are minimal distractions. Children and staff will eat together as we recognise that mealtimes are important social interactions. Staff will face children so that they can quickly spot any allergic reactions or choking.

*Allergies* -If a child has a known allergy, then parents will be required to complete an allergy action plan from The British Society for Allergy & Clinical Immunology with the child’s key person before they start at the setting or as soon as the allergy is confirmed. This information will be displayed in the kitchen and shared with all staff across the setting.

All staff have received information about allergies and the symptoms to be aware of and treatment of Anaphylaxis from the NHS guidance which can be found here:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/anaphylaxis/>

The child’s key person will be responsible for checking each child’s food and that it meets their dietary requirements. In the event of the key persons absence the Manager or Deputy Manager will be responsible for this.

*Choking* – All staff, as part of their Paediatric first aid training, know what to do in the event of a child choking. In addition to this staff are refreshed yearly with information with regards to the response and treatment of a choking child. Any incidents of choking are recorded and shared with parents. Such records are reviewed after the event and periodically to address any preventable issues.

Snacks are provided by Ruardean Acorns and are prepared by staff who have completed food hygiene training (refreshed every 3 years). Snacks include toast, cereal, fruit, vegetables, rice cakes and breadsticks. Water and semi skimmed cow’s milk is provided for children by Ruardean Acorns. (2-week snack menu)

Staff will follow the Food Standards agency guidance on ‘How to prepare food safely’ which is available here.

<https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/Early%20Years%20Choking%20Hazards%20Poster_English.pdf>

Birthdays and celebrations -If parents would like to send in food items to celebrate, we do ask that they check with staff first so that we can ensure any allergies, intolerances and dietary requirements are still met. We would welcome food alternatives such as stickers, bubbles etc where possible.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Ruardean Acorns held on 1st September 2025

Signed on behalf of Ruardean Acorns...........................................................

Review date: August 2026