**Packed Lunch Policy***(Aligned with EYFS 2025 Nutrition Guidance)*

**Policy Statement:**  
At Little Acorns preschool, we are committed to supporting children’s health and well-being through nutritious, balanced meals and snacks. This policy outlines our approach to managing packed lunches brought from home, ensuring they align with the latest EYFS 2025 Nutrition Guidance, and promote healthy eating habits from an early age.

Guiding Principles (EYFS 2025 Alignment):

This policy reflects the updated April 2025 guidance set out in the *Nutrition Guidance for Early Years Providers*, which emphasises the importance of:

* Age-appropriate portion sizes
* A balanced and varied diet including all food groups
* Avoiding foods high in salt, sugar, or saturated fat
* Safe and hygienic storage and handling of all food
* Promoting hydration, oral health, and positive food experiences

We work in partnership with parents to ensure children's packed lunches reflect these principles and meet their individual dietary needs.

**What a Healthy Packed Lunch Should Include (Guidance-based):**

Parents are encouraged to provide lunches that include a balance of the following:

1. Starchy foods (e.g. bread, pasta, rice, potatoes, chapati)
2. Protein-rich foods (e.g. beans, lentils, eggs, meat, fish, hummus)
3. Dairy or dairy alternatives (e.g. yoghurt, cheese, milk-based desserts)
4. At least one portion of vegetables (e.g. cucumber, cherry tomatoes, carrots)
5. At least one portion of fruit (e.g. apple slices, bananas, grapes - sliced for safety)

Water will be provided throughout the day.

**Foods to Avoid (as per 2025 Guidance):**

To support the EYFS 2025 nutrition focus, we ask that parents do not include:

* Sugary snacks (e.g. sweets, chocolate bars, fizzy drinks)
* Crisps or other high-fat savoury snacks
* Whole nuts (choking and allergy risk)
* Large or round fruits like whole grapes or cherry tomatoes – these must be sliced lengthways
* Unhealthy processed foods high in salt or saturated fat

We will contact parents if unsuitable food is provided and offer support in making healthy swaps.

**Children of Different Ages:**

* 1–4 Years: Small, manageable portion sizes that encourage independence, with foods cut appropriately to reduce choking risk.
* All age groups: Food items should be easy to handle and not require re-heating. We follow safe storage guidelines, including refrigeration for dairy or protein foods.

**Communication with Parents:**

We will:

* Share examples of healthy lunchbox ideas
* Discuss your child’s eating habits regularly, including portion sizes and preferences
* Offer support and guidance on allergens, portion sizes, and food safety
* Work with families to adapt lunchboxes for cultural, ethical, or medical dietary needs
* Inform parents immediately of any food-related concerns or safety issues

**Food Storage and Safety:**

* All packed lunches are stored safely in a clean, cool location.
* All food is served with clean hands and in a hygienic environment.
* We follow strict protocols for allergy management and choking prevention.

**Alignment with EYFS 2025 Changes:**

This policy fully aligns with the EYFS 2025 reforms, specifically the *Nutrition Guidance for Early Years Providers*, April 2025. Key compliance areas include:

* Supporting balanced, age-appropriate packed lunches
* Working with parents to meet children’s dietary needs
* Applying safe food handling and allergy protocols
* Promoting hydration and oral health
* Encouraging food education and positive mealtime environments

Signed: Chairperson  
Date: Sept 2025