

Bringing food from home policy

This policy has been created in line with the nutrition guidance for early years settings and the food standards agency.

Parents who have chosen to bring in their own food will be required to follow the below policy in its entirety.

These guidelines are for children aged 0-5 year so may differ between early years settings and a school.

At Bears Hideaway we have a regulatory obligation to provide healthy and nutritional food and when food is brought from home it must also follow and align with the healthy eating guidance and the settings policy.

BHAN will follow the food standards agency safe food storage guidelines.

Expectations for Parents when bringing food from home

If you forget your child's food for the day you will need to return home and bring it to the setting ASAP. There will not be an option to 'purchase' a BHAN meal.

If your child does not eat the food that you provide, an alternative will not be offered by BHAN.

All children have access to water throughout the day and cow's milk is provided by BHAN (as part of the governments free milk scheme) for their breakfast and offered to drink at lunch.

If your child requires an alternative milk (soya / oat) you will need to be provide it as the governments free milk scheme does not cover alternative milks.

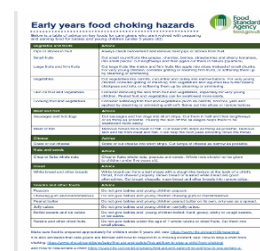
BHAN cannot heat food due to food safety and operational reasons and we cannot refrigerate foods.

Food boxes will need:

1. To be an insulated lunchbox or insulated lunch bag
2. To contain ice blocks to keep food at a safe temperature.
3. A list of the foods contained within the box (**If this is not provided parents will need to write this before they leave the food with the setting**)
4. To be healthy, nutritious and not contain any of the foods listed below.
5. To be suitable for your child's age, developmental and weaning stage and prepared in a way to prevent choking.
6. To have portion sizes that are suitable for your child and in line with healthy eating guidance.

Preparing food to prevent choking

Below is a list of the ways in which food in your child's food box **MUST** be prepared to follow the food safety guidance.



The image is a screenshot of a webpage from the Food Standards Agency (FSA) titled 'Early years food choking hazards'. It provides a detailed list of foods that are not recommended for children under five, categorized by age group (under 1 year, 1-2 years, 2-4 years, and 4-5 years). The table lists various items like whole nuts, seeds, popcorn, hard sweets, and certain fruits and vegetables, along with specific preparation instructions to make them safer for children. For example, it advises to cut grapes into quarters and remove seeds, and to cook vegetables until soft. The page also includes a section on 'Foods to avoid' and a 'References' section at the bottom.

The list is available on the food standards agency website below. www.food.gov.uk

What is not allowed in food boxes:

1. Sweets, chocolate, sugary snacks, biscuits and chocolate bars
2. Nuts or products containing nuts ie peanut butter
3. Crisps including 'melly sticks' and other crisp alternatives such as 'veggie puffs'
4. Foods with excess salt, sugar, or foods that are highly processed.
5. Foods which are not suitable for the age or developmental or weaning stage of the child.
6. Yoghurts
7. Raisins, popcorn, marshmallows, raw jelly cubes, seeds and dried fruits
8. White bread
9. Drinks such as smoothies, fruit juice and fizzy drinks
10. Sandwich spreads such as Nutella, jam, honey, chocolate spread, marmalade, golden syrup
11. Tinned fruit in syrup (tinned fruit in its own natural juice is suitable)

All containers and icepacks **MUST** be named using waterproof child name labels (like the ones used for their cups.)

Any uneaten food will be sent home within the child's lunchbox / lunch bag.

Fruit / vegetables / salad items must be prepared suitable for the child's age and weaning / development stage and be ready to eat – chopped / peeled / de stoned / sliced and inline with choking guidelines.

Hot Food

The nursery **cannot** heat food due to food safety and operational reasons.

If you wish to send hot food, use a child-safe insulated food flask that can keep food warm – you will need to have a good quality one that will keep food hot for either lunch food 5 hours or tea which will be 10 hours.

PARENTS MUST ENSURE FOOD IS HEATED THOROUGHLY BEFORE PLACING THE FOOD IN THE THERMOS HOWEVER IT MUST NOT BE TOO HOT FOR A CHILD TO BE ABLE TO CONSUME STRAIGHT WAY – CHECK WITH A THERMOMETER THAT FOOD IS HIGHER THAN 63OC BUT LOWER THAN 70OC BEFORE CLOSING THE THERMOS LID.

YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO SIGN EACH DAY TO SAY YOU HAVE DONE THIS – TO ENSURE YOU ARE ACCOUNTABLE IF YOU CHILD GETS ILL FROM FOOD UNSATISFACTORILY HEATED.

BEARS HIDEAWAY WILL NOT BE HELD RESPONSIBLE.

Food you will need to be provide for the mealtimes at nursery

Breakfast

Weetabix / cornflakes or shreddies in a named container big enough for milk to be added and a spoon

A portion of fruit

Lunch

Pasta, couscous, sandwiches, wraps, pasta, chicken, boiled egg, hummus, cheese, fruit / vegetables, crackers, rice cakes.

Any food wrappers must already be taken off and food placed in a suitable and named container (no plastic bags)

Afternoon Snack

A portion of fruit

A oat bar which is similar to the healthy flapjack we offer (such as 'organix' oat bar with wrapper removed)

Tea

Food that is safe to consume at room temperature - fruit / vegetables (cucumber sticks), crackers, rice cakes, vegetables muffins, marmite wrap,

Listeria risk

The food standards agency requires parents to be aware of the risk of listeria from foods which are prepackaged and ready to eat when they are kept out of the fridge. These include the list below:

- Cold pre-cooked meats – such as chicken
- Deli meats- such as salami and cold cuts
- Pate
- Smoked and cured fish- including sushi
- Cooked shellfish
- Soft mould-ripened cheeses – such as camembert, brie and blue veined cheeses
- Raw drinking milk (unpasteurised milk)
- Products made from raw milk/unpasteurised milk such as cheese or butter
- Pre-prepared sandwiches and salads
- Pre-cut fruits (for example pre-packed melon slices)

Further information can be found at <https://www.food.gov.uk/listeria>

Reminders

It is very important that this policy and guidelines are adhered to.

We have children in the setting with **allergies / intolerances** that can make them seriously ill.

Forgetting to include a list of foods, adding something that is not allowed or placing other items which can be a choking hazard will result in Parents not being allowed to bring foods from home and having to pay for BHAN food.

Please work with us to keep all children safe.