



Food and Drink Policy

September 2025

Signed (Chair of Trust Board):	
Date:	September 2025
Review:	September 2026

Arbor Academy Trust reviews this policy annually. The Trustees may, however, review the policy earlier than this, if the Government introduces new regulations, or if the Trust receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved. This document is also available in other formats e.g. e-mail and enlarged print version, on request to the School Offices and is displayed on the schools' websites.

POLICY STATEMENT

At Arbor Academy Trust, we are committed to offering children a variety of healthy, balanced and nutritious meals, snacks and drinks that meet their developmental needs. We ensure that food provision supports children's wellbeing, respects cultural and religious preferences, and addresses any specific dietary requirements or allergies.

We follow the EYFS 2025 statutory requirements and the Early Years Nutrition Guidance (April/May 2025), unless there is a clear and documented reason not to. All staff involved in food preparation or service receive appropriate food hygiene training.

SAFE EATING PRACTICES

We ensure that a paediatric first aid trained staff member is present whenever children are eating. Meals and snacks are served in a safe environment, with children seated appropriately and supervised closely to prevent choking. Food is prepared and presented in a way that is suitable for the child's age and stage of development.

Any incidents involving choking or near misses are recorded, reviewed and shared with parents or carers. We work with parents to develop and maintain allergy action plans where required.

ALLERGEN AND DIETARY MANAGEMENT

Before a child starts, we collect detailed information on their dietary needs, preferences, allergies and intolerances. This information is accessible to all relevant staff and is reviewed regularly. We take steps to prevent cross-contamination and ensure that allergen information is shared clearly with parents, including for any off-site visits.

NUTRITION AND MENU PLANNING

Menus are planned to include a variety of foods in line with current government nutrition advice. We encourage children to try new foods and involve them in snack preparation where appropriate, while promoting good hygiene practices. Fresh drinking water is available at all times.

FOOD SAFETY AND HYGIENE

Food is stored, prepared and served in accordance with food safety regulations. Work surfaces and utensils are cleaned and disinfected regularly, and pets are not allowed in food preparation areas. Baby changing facilities are located away from areas where food is handled.

In the event of suspected food poisoning affecting two or more children, we will notify Ofsted within 14 days and keep relevant food purchase records.

- Where parents provide meals for their children, we will provide chilled storage for packed lunches and appropriate storage for other foodstuffs.
- Any food containers brought into the setting will be cleaned with antibacterial wipes and stored in line with government guidance.
- Children will be provided with clean, age-appropriate crockery and utensils; these will not be shared and will be cleaned and disinfected regularly.
- We respect diverse cultural practices around mealtimes (e.g. use of chopsticks) while maintaining good hygiene standards.
- Allergens present in any food we prepare will be detailed in line with the EU Information for Consumers Regulation 2014 and shared with parents/carers.
- Allergen details will also be checked when children eat off-site and included in our risk assessments.
- Baby changing facilities will not be located near food preparation areas.
- All staff, children, and visitors will follow robust handwashing routines.
- Laundry will not be undertaken during food preparation; detergents and soiled clothing will be kept away from food areas.
- If two or more children suffer food poisoning linked to the setting, Ofsted will be notified within 14 days.
- Food receipts will be kept (including those under £10) to enable tracing of purchased items in the event of a food poisoning incident.

POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if required, in consultation with staff and parents. Any updates will be communicated to parents promptly.