



Gidea Park

PREPARATORY SCHOOL AND NURSERY

Food and Drink Policy (Nursery)

June 2026

At Gidea Park Preparatory and Nursery we believe children should be offered healthy, balanced and nutritious meals and snacks. Our snack and mealtimes are an important part of the children's day, as eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating.

During AM and PM snacks, Nursery children will be offered a range of snacks using roll in snack. Fruits and dry snacks will be available for the children throughout the day with staff at the snack table to closely supervise. If the child is able, they will attempt to cut their own fruit. However, a staff member will be on hand to help and assist if needed. Children are requested and reminded to wash their hands before and after snack and lunch times. At lunch time preschool children will be seated in the main hall for lunch together, Toddlers and babies will have mealtimes in their room. The children will then wait for the food to be placed on their tables.

The School has a fully working kitchen where hot meals can be prepared and served to the children. All our members of staff have regular food hygiene training and are made aware of the children's individual dietary requirements through photo cards and lunch/meal lists. Our School menus are on a rolling 3-week rota and are nutritious, healthy and balanced for the children, these menus are prepared by our very experienced in house chef.

We ensure all our food is low in saturated fat, by cooking all the food from scratch and rarely using processed food. The puddings provided are made with very low sugar content. We ensure children with dietary requirements are offered the same nutritional value foods as all the other children.

To ensure all staff, volunteers and students are fully aware of individual children's dietary requirements, before the child starts and is left at the setting without their parent/carers we require the parent/carers to complete an 'All About Me' form which details if the child has any dietary requirements, including allergies, intolerance's, religious needs, or special health requirements. This information is then added to the Special Requirements forms that are displayed in each room, the kitchen, office and all members of staff, volunteers and students are made aware of children's individual requirements. We ask the parent/carers to update their child's individual information every 6 months as a minimum and this will be updated in the child's individual folder and on the Special Requirements form, should there be any changes. We also discuss with parent/carers the importance of informing us should any changes to their child's dietary needs happen. This is to ensure there are no occasions where the child can be given the wrong food. In the event the parent informs us the child does not have a dietary requirement any longer, we would require the parent/carer to inform us in writing that a child can have the food they were not allowed previously. The letter will be copied and given to the staff in the child's room. The information on the Special Requirements form will be updated also.

Food preparation areas are checked daily by the chef/person preparing the food and are cleaned on a daily basis after the afternoon snack time has been completed. Our kitchen is checked yearly by the environmental health and any recommendations for improvement are completed in the time set out in the action plan produced.

All staff members that are involved in food preparation will have completed a Level 2 food hygiene certificate training, which is updated every 3 years. These certificates are displayed in the kitchen, so it is clear to see who is food hygiene trained and able to prepare the food for the children.

To ensure our parent/carers are aware of the possible food allergens provided in the food we use, we display a food allergen information chart. Parent/carers are then aware of what their

23/06/2026 Krissi Ganesathas – *Nursery Manager*

children are being fed and how we are avoiding a potential risk of their child being given the wrong food. A practitioner will be at each table supervising the children on that table until each child has finished eating, in line with the statutory guidance.

Children eating at the nursery know that they must not share or swap food with each other and the supervising staff will be aware to look for children doing this. Any child who does have an allergy will sit at the same table as all the other children and we will discuss with the children about how certain foods can make certain children poorly, this allows the children to gain a further understanding of the differences of each other and also allows the children to feel included in school. The babies are seated in individual high chairs to allow no room for food grabbing, staff members will closely supervise mealtimes to alleviate this also

We also operate a **NUT FREE** school, whereby we do not allow any nuts into the school and do not cook with ANY nut products. All of the food labels are checked, and parent/carers are informed of all ingredients used.

Throughout the day, the parents will be notified what their child has eaten using our Family app.

Birthday treats will be given at the end of the session for the parent/carer to decide if their child is allowed the treat. We **DO NOT accept any products with NUTS**.

Alternative Options for Celebrations

We understand that birthdays and special occasions are important to families, and we want to support you in marking these moments. If parents or carers wish to share a treat with the nursery community, the following guidelines must be strictly followed:

1. Individually Wrapped Treats Only

- Any treats provided must be commercially manufactured and individually wrapped.
- Homemade items are not permitted under this policy.

2. Clear Ingredient Labelling

- All items must display a full list of ingredients and allergens.
- Items without clear labelling will not be distributed.

Distribution to Parents/Carers Only

- Treats will not be given to children during the nursery day.
- Any approved items will be handed to the child's parent or carer at the end of the session.
- It will be the parent or carer's choice whether or not to share the treat with their child.

3. Non-Food Alternatives Encouraged

- Families are welcome to consider non-food alternatives such as stickers, small toys, or birthday books for the nursery to enjoy.

Behaviour at mealtimes

Teachers must always be looking and listening for positive behaviour and giving praise as and when it happens. For example: "Jack well done, you ate most of your potatoes."

Children are aware of behavioural expectations set by the School during meal times, this will be reinforced by staff eating with the children to encourage positive behaviour.

Drinks

Fresh drinking water is available for the children throughout the session at the water station and children are able to refill their water bottles and get refills from staff members when they are empty. On hot days and after lots of physical exercise/garden time children will be encouraged to drink plenty of water and the bottles will be always taken to the garden to ensure children still have the opportunity to drink fresh water whilst playing outside. Children are reminded to take a drink regularly.