



Weaning Policy

Policy Statement

At Sandcastle Nursery & Preschool Ltd, we recognise weaning as an important milestone in every baby's development. We are committed to supporting families through this stage, ensuring a smooth and positive transition to solid foods in a safe, nurturing, and personalised way.

This policy outlines our approach to weaning and how we work in partnership with parents and carers to ensure the best outcomes for each child.

Aims

- To follow best practice and current guidance around safe and healthy weaning.
 - To work in partnership with parents and carers, respecting their preferences and choices.
 - To ensure children's individual needs and routines are met during the weaning process.
 - To promote a safe, hygienic, and supportive environment for children learning to eat solid foods.
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Guidance Followed

We follow the **Eat Safe Guidance** and use the **Stage Not Age Trust Cycle**. This six-step approach promotes clear communication and trust between practitioners and families, ensuring weaning is based on each child's readiness rather than age alone.

Procedures

1. Partnership with Parents

- Before starting at the nursery, parents/carers will be asked to complete a **Weaning Information pack** outlining:
 - Their child's current stage of weaning.
 - Any food preferences or intolerances.
 - Known allergies or potential allergens.
 - Any concerns about feeding.
- Parents will be invited to discuss their child's weaning progress at the **'All About Me' settling-in session**.





2. Flexible Weaning Options

- We follow parents' lead in all weaning decisions both at home and in the nursery.
- Options can include:
 - Baby-led weaning.
 - Spoon-fed weaning.
 - Combination of both approaches.
- Practitioners will support feeding in a calm and unhurried environment, respecting children's cues and encouraging independence as they grow.

3. Safety and Food Hygiene

- All practitioners handling food are trained in **Food Hygiene and Safety**.
- All staff working directly with children are **Paediatric First Aid qualified**.
- Strict hygiene procedures are followed, including cleaning of highchairs, bibs, and utensils after every use.
- Potential choking hazards are avoided, and foods are prepared in a developmentally appropriate way (e.g. cut to safe sizes).

4. Allergy Awareness

- Information on children's allergies and intolerances is gathered before they start and recorded in their **Allergy Action Plan**.
- Allergen information is communicated clearly to all staff.
- Any new allergies discovered during weaning will be documented, and care plans updated immediately.

5. Monitoring and Support

- Staff will observe and record children's progress with weaning, sharing updates with parents/carers.
- Concerns around eating difficulties or reactions will be discussed promptly with parents and, where necessary, referred to health professionals.

Review and Evaluation

- The policy will be reviewed annually by management, or sooner if new government guidance is released.
 - Feedback from staff and parents will be used to adapt and improve our weaning support.
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