

# Safeguarding

## Food Safety



The EYFS framework requires providers to take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well and you must be confident that those responsible for preparing and handling food in your setting are competent to do so. In group provision, all staff involved in preparing and handling food must receive training in food hygiene. Infants and young children should be seated safely in a highchair or appropriately sized low chair while eating. Infants and young children should never be left alone while they are eating, and staff should be familiar with paediatric first aid advice for children who are choking.

Policies and procedures should be put into place to ensure high levels of supervision and that mealtimes are a safe environment for children to eat in. It is important that we reflect on our practice and ensure that children are not put at any risk.

### Task 1

Here are some tips and reflective questions for you to challenge your own practice.

- Do staff sit and eat with the children to role model and support them?
- It's important to consider the eating environment to ensure children are in a sitting position to allow them to swallow the food safely or spit it out. Do you have enough tables, chairs and table space? Are the chairs appropriate for the age and stage of the children?
- Avoid distractions at mealtimes to support little ones to focus on the texture of the food and to co-ordinate putting it to their mouth to bite or chew and swallow safely. How do you achieve this?

- Textures of food can develop as your little one become a more confident eater. Are you confident in the stage that your children are at, to be able to support this in food preparation.
- It's important to offer encouragement to children at mealtimes to manage foods safely. What strategies and language do you use to support this?
- Babies/toddlers should never be left alone at mealtimes when eating and drinking – it is always important to supervise them. Do you always supervise children whilst eating? How do you do this?
- Ensure babies are ready for the introduction of solid foods. This is usually around the age of 6 months when the following signs are seen together- firstly baby will be able to sit up unaided and hold their head steady, they will be able to coordinate their eyes, hand and mouth meaning they can look at food, pick it up and put it to their mouth and they will be able to swallow food and be less likely to spit the food out. Some spitting out is part of learning and developing the skill, but if they spit everything out, they may not be ready. Are staff knowledgeable in this area? Is further CPD needed?
- How do you support parents in this area? Could you share some of the learning from this card to parents, so that some of the key messages keep children safe in the home?
- Do your policies and procedures reflect the importance of this area?

## Task 2

Use the links below to support you in finding out more information around keeping children safe at mealtimes. They have some great resources to explore and reflect on and increase your knowledge and best practice.

- Resources to share and display from the Food Standards Agency.- [Food safety advice on choking hazards in settings - Foundation Years](#)

- Section from the Help from providers with a focus on food safety-[Food safety - Help for early years providers - GOV.UK \(education.gov.uk\)](#)
  - Taste education has a wealth of activities to support children healthy and safer eating-[EYFS | Taste Education](#)
  - Food preparation video - <https://youtu.be/wCjZLbejZm8>
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