



Food Brought in from Home for Celebrations

At Clare House Nursery, we enjoy celebrating the special milestones and achievements in children's lives. We recognise that these occasions are an important part of building a sense of belonging and community. However, the health, safety and wellbeing of all children remain our priority. To ensure that celebrations are safe, inclusive and enjoyable for everyone, the following procedures apply to all food brought into the nursery.

- Homemade food and baked goods will **not** be shared or consumed within the nursery, as we are unable to verify ingredients, preparation methods or the risk of cross-contamination. Families are welcome to enjoy these treats together at home.
- Families wishing to provide food for a celebration should bring **shop-bought products in their original, unopened packaging**, displaying the full ingredients list and allergen information.
- All food brought into the nursery must be checked and approved by a senior member of staff before being offered to children.
- Families are encouraged to consider the dietary needs, allergies and intolerances of all children when choosing celebration foods so that, wherever possible, every child can be included.
- Where a child has a significant allergy, families may be asked not to provide foods containing particular allergens, as identified within the child's Individual Healthcare Plan and Allergy Risk Assessment.
- Sweets, chocolates and confectionery will not be consumed within the nursery. Where these are brought in, they will be sent home with each child to enjoy with their family.
- Families are encouraged to provide healthier alternatives, such as fruit platters or other nutritious snacks.
- Families are also encouraged to consider non-food celebrations, such as donating a favourite book, bubbles, stickers, seeds for planting or a small activity that can be enjoyed by all children.

Allergy Management During Celebrations

All food brought into Clare House Nursery for celebrations is subject to the nursery's **Allergen Management Policy**, Individual Healthcare Plans and Allergy Risk Assessments.

No food will be shared with children unless staff have verified the ingredients and are satisfied that it is safe for every child who may consume it.

Where there is any uncertainty regarding ingredients, allergen information or the potential risk of cross-contamination, the food will not be served within the nursery.

The nursery reserves the right to refuse any food item that does not meet its food safety, healthy eating or allergy management procedures.

Where a child has an allergy, intolerance or medically prescribed dietary requirement, staff will plan celebrations carefully to ensure the child can participate fully without compromising their health or wellbeing. Where necessary, suitable alternative foods or non-food celebration activities will be provided so that every child feels included.

These procedures help to ensure that celebrations remain safe, inclusive and enjoyable for everyone.

Drinks

At Clare House Nursery, we promote healthy hydration and encourage children to develop healthy drinking habits from an early age.

- All drink bottles brought into the nursery must contain **fresh drinking water only**.
- Flavoured water, squash, fruit juice, fizzy drinks and energy drinks must not be brought into the nursery unless required as part of an agreed medical care plan.
- Children's bottles will be refilled with fresh drinking water throughout the day as required.
- Fresh drinking water is freely available in every nursery room, enabling children to access water whenever they are thirsty.
- Practitioners actively monitor children's fluid intake and encourage regular drinking throughout the day, particularly during hot weather, periods of increased physical activity or when a child appears unwell.
- If a child arrives with an unsuitable drink, staff will discuss this sensitively with parents or carers and explain the nursery's Healthy Eating and Drinks Policy.

Preventing Cross-Contamination

Clare House Nursery recognises that preventing cross-contamination is an essential part of protecting children with allergies and food intolerances.

To minimise the risk of accidental exposure to allergens, practitioners will:

- Wash their hands thoroughly before preparing, serving or handling food and between serving different meals where necessary.
- Ensure tables are cleaned and sanitised before and after all meals, snacks and food-related activities.
- Clean and sanitise all utensils, equipment and food preparation surfaces before use.
- Check ingredient labels every time food is prepared or served and never assume recipes or ingredients remain the same.
- Store foods safely to reduce the risk of cross-contamination.
- Use separate utensils, chopping boards and serving equipment where required for children with specific dietary needs.
- Ensure children do not share food, drinks, cups, cutlery, utensils or lunchboxes.
- Carry out visual and verbal checks before serving meals to confirm the correct food is being given to the correct child.
- Where appropriate, use a second member of staff to independently verify meals prepared for children with severe allergies.
- Consider allergens when planning cooking activities, celebrations, sensory play and any activity involving food.

These procedures form part of the nursery's wider safeguarding and food safety arrangements and help ensure that every child can enjoy meals and activities safely and confidently.

Working in Partnership with Families

We recognise that protecting children with allergies is a shared responsibility between the nursery and families. Staff will maintain open, respectful and ongoing communication with parents and carers regarding their child's allergies, intolerances and dietary requirements. Families are asked to notify the nursery immediately of any changes to their child's medical needs, prescribed medication or dietary advice so that Individual Healthcare Plans, Risk Assessments and nursery records can be updated without delay.

Through close partnership working, careful planning and consistent communication, Clare House Nursery aims to create a safe, inclusive environment where every child can participate fully in nursery life while their health, wellbeing and individual needs are protected.

