



Early Years Mealtimes Policy & Risk Management

POLICY STATEMENT

The British School of Tenerife is committed to ensuring that all meal and snack times within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are safe, inclusive, and developmentally appropriate.

Mealtimes are recognised as part of safeguarding practice and as essential to children's health, wellbeing and social development.

Robust risk management systems are implemented to minimise risks including choking, allergic reaction, food contamination, burns, and slips.

This policy applies to all staff working with children aged 18 months to 5 years.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The Academic Director and EYFS Lead will:

- Ensure this policy is implemented consistently.
- Monitor compliance through termly audits.
- Ensure staff training remains current.
- Review incident reports and near-miss data.

All Staff will:

- Actively supervise children during mealtimes.
- Follow individual care and feeding plans.
- Implement hygiene and allergen control procedures.
- Report concerns immediately.

SAFE MEALTIME PROCEDURES

- Children are seated upright while eating.
- Children do not walk, run or play with food.
- Staff position themselves to observe all children.
- Statutory staff-to-child ratios are maintained.
- Food is prepared according to developmental stage.

Mealtimes promote:

- Independence (where appropriate)
- Social communication
- Positive eating behaviours

RISK MANAGEMENT OVERVIEW

Key risks identified:

Risk Area	Control Measures
Choking	Safe food preparation, supervision, trained staff
Allergic reaction	Healthcare plans, accessible medication, training
Food contamination	Hygiene procedures, safe storage
Burns	Food cooled before serving
Slips	Immediate cleaning of spills

Dynamic risk assessment is carried out during every meal period.

ALLERGY & MEDICAL NEEDS MANAGEMENT

- Allergy information collected at enrolment.
- Individual Healthcare Plans in place.
- Clear internal identification systems used.
- Emergency medication accessible and in date.
- Staff trained in recognising allergic reactions.

A zero-tolerance approach to unmanaged allergen risk is maintained.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN NEW TO SOLID FOODS

The British School of Tenerife recognises that some children may begin attending without experience of solid foods.

Procedures include:

- Written information obtained from parents regarding current feeding stage.
- Gradual texture progression.
- Close observation for swallowing or gagging concerns.
- Adapted food textures where required.
- Ongoing parent communication.

Children are never forced to eat.

HYGIENE & FOOD SAFETY PROCEDURES

- Mandatory handwashing before and after eating.
- Surfaces cleaned and disinfected.
- Food stored at appropriate temperatures.
- Cross-contamination controls in place.
- Food brought from home monitored in line with school procedures.

INCIDENT REPORTING & MONITORING

The EYFS Lead reviews:

- Choking incidents and near misses
- Allergy-related incidents
- Hygiene concerns
- Patterns of repeated risk

Findings inform:

- Policy updates
- Staff training
- Risk assessment revisions

All incidents are recorded in line with safeguarding procedures.

MEALTIME COMPLIANCE AUDIT TOOL

(To be completed termly)

Area	Yes	No	Action Required	Date
First aid training in date	☐	☐		
Allergy list updated	☐	☐		
Healthcare plans current	☐	☐		
Food sizes age-appropriate	☐	☐		
High-risk foods modified	☐	☐		
Children seated while eating	☐	☐		
Active supervision observed	☐	☐		
Handwashing procedures followed	☐	☐		
Cleaning procedures completed	☐	☐		
Medication accessible & in date	☐	☐		

STAFF TRAINING

Paediatric First Aid

Allergy Awareness

Food Hygiene

Safeguarding

Written by:	Jenni Garnett		
Agreed Date:	October 2025		
Board of Governors			
	Print Name:	Signed:	Date:
Academic Director:			
	Print Name:	Signed:	Date:
Review Date:	October 2026		