



Baby Weaning Policy

INTRODUCTION

At Grove Villa Childcare we are committed to supporting babies and families through the weaning journey. We work in partnership with parents and carers to ensure each child experiences a safe, positive and individual approach to introducing solid foods while continuing to meet their nutritional needs.

Aim

We aim to support parents chosen weaning approach, whether traditional spoon-feeding, baby led weaning or a combination of both.

We will encourage healthy eating habits and independence; we will also support parents with learning about reducing the risk of choking through safe food preparation and close supervision.

We will ensure all staff understand safe weaning practices.

Parents looking to start weaning

Weaning will only begin in the nursery once parents have confirmed that their baby has started weaning at home, the nursery will not introduce weaning until the parents have started this journey at home.

Babies usually are ready to begin weaning at around 6 months of age unless otherwise advised by a health care professional.

Parents must complete a weaning information form detailing;

- Foods already introduced.
- Allergies or intolerances
- Preferred feeding method
- Texture stage
- Foods not yet introduced.

There are 3 clear signs, which, when they appear together from around 6 months of age, show that a baby is ready for their first solid foods, alongside milk.



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Signs a baby may be ready to start weaning:

- Ability to stay in a sitting position unaided and hold their head steady.
- Ability to co-ordinate their eyes, hands, and mouth, so they can look at their food, pick it up and put it in their mouth.
- Ability to swallow food (rather than spit it back out).

It is important to wait until a baby is around six months of age before beginning the weaning process. Reasons for this include:

- A baby's digestive system needs to mature enough to tolerate solid foods.
- A baby needs to have lost their 'tongue-thrust' reflex (a reflex which means they instinctively push out anything on their tongue, to protect against choking).
- A baby needs to have mastered new tongue skills, including how to push food from the front of their mouth to the back, and then swallow.
- A baby needs to be able to sit up unaided.
- A baby needs to be able to pick up food and move it to their mouth.
- Milk is enough. Research shows that babies can get all their nutritional needs from breast milk or formula milk for the first 6 months of their life.

First foods

Infants' first foods can include a range of foods from the different food groups, and can be provided blended, mashed or as a 'finger food'. A few examples of first foods:

- soft cooked vegetables such as parsnip, butternut squash, carrot, broccoli, cauliflower
- fruit (soft, or cooked without adding sugar) such as apple, pear, peach, melon, banana
- dairy products made from whole milk, such as yoghurt, fromage fraise, custard
- meat such as chicken



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- fish without bones such as tinned tuna
- starchy foods such as potato, sweet potato, pasta, noodles, rice
- hard-boiled eggs
- pulses such as peas, beans, and lentils

It is important to introduce and offer vegetables that aren't so sweet, such as broccoli, cauliflower, and spinach. This will help a baby get used to a range of flavours (rather than just the sweeter ones like carrots and sweet potato) and can help prevent them being fussy eaters as they grow up. Remember, babies do not need any salt or sugar added to their food. Babies should NOT eat salty foods, as it can cause serious damage to their kidneys, and excess sugar can cause tooth decay.

Partnership with parents

Parents will be kept informed daily about:

- Foods offered
- Amount eaten
- Any concerns or reactions observed

Meal times and supervision

Children will not be left unattended whilst eating and will have supervision at all times.

Babies aged from 6-12 months will be placed in appropriate highchairs and we will encourage self-feeding where developmentally appropriate.

Food will be prepared according to the safer food guidance; foods will be mashed to ensure they are soft enough for babies to eat and to reduce the risk of choking. We will also follow the safer food guidance with not providing foods such as grapes, whole raisins, cherry tomatoes, marshmallows, nuts.

Allergens

It's important to introduce allergen foods one at a time, and in very small amounts, so that any potential allergic reactions can be identified. See the allergy policy for more information regarding allergens. Allergen foods should be introduced from around 6 months as part of a baby's diet, just like all other foods. Once an allergen food has been introduced and is tolerated, it should be continually offered as part of that baby's usual diet (to minimise the risk



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of allergy). If a staff member thinks that a baby has a food allergy, the manager should be notified immediately – the manager and baby's key person will address their concerns to the baby's parent(s)/carer(s)

This Baby weaning policy is effective from: **22.07.2026** until further notice

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for the next policy review
22.07.2026	L Wolstenholme	22.07.2027