

03 Food safety and nutrition procedures

03.03 Milk and baby food preparation and storage

Purchasing and storing food

- Where parents/carers provide infant formula to be made up at the setting, this is checked to make sure it is in date and that the seal is not broken, then labelled with the child's name.
- Parents/carers must not send in bottles containing pre-boiled and cooled water ready for formula to be added. They should instead send in empty, sterilised bottles in accordance with current NHS guidance on the preparation of formula milk.
- If parents/carers are providing formula milk already made up at home, or breast milk, it should already be made up into sterilised bottles and clearly labelled with the child's name.
- Parents/carers are advised to follow the manufacturer's guidance and to transport the prepared feeds or breast milk in a cool bag. On arrival, feeds are taken out of the cool bag and put straight into the fridge.
- Made up feeds or breast milk is always used on the same day.
- In line with current Food Standards Agency guidance, parents are advised not to give toddlers and young children (ages 1 – 4.5 years) rice drinks as a substitute for breast milk, infant formula or cow's milk. Parents/carers should speak to their child's health visitor for further guidance if their child has a milk intolerance and needs an alternative.
- If parents/carers provide weaning cereals, these need to be checked to make sure they are in date and should be in unopened packets. These are labelled with the child's name. Unused foods will be given to parents/carers to take home at the end of the session.
- Parents/carers are informed that they should not bring in food that contains nuts. Staff check packets to make sure they do not contain nuts or nut products.

Preparation

- Members of staff wash hands before preparing milk.
- Preparation of feeds and weaning food is restricted to the designated/trained staff members who are clear about the requirements for each child.
- Scoops of milk are levelled off with a knife to make sure they are the correct amount.
- All water is boiled first before making milk feed, mixing food or preparing a drink should be allowed to cool for no more than 30 minutes. Water that has already been boiled once should not be boiled again.
- Bottles are cooled under cold running water and the temperature checked on the inside of an adult's wrist to ensure that it is body temperature, which means it should feel warm or cool but not hot.
- Only sterilised bottles, spoons, plates are used.
- Vinyl gloves are used to prepare milk feeds or weaning food.

Updated September 2025

Further guidance on making up bottles in advance for use at the setting can be found at:

www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/breastfeeding-and-bottle-feeding/bottle-feeding/formula-milk-questions/

Guidance for the storage of breast milk is available from: www.nhs.uk/start4life/baby/feeding-your-baby/breastfeeding/expressing-your-breast-milk/storing-breast-milk/