



20- Food and drink Policy (Includes Diet – Policy and Practice)

Policy statement

We regard snack times as an important part of our day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults, and helps children to learn about healthy eating. We promote healthy eating using resources and materials through discussions and activities. At snack times, we aim to provide nutritious snacks, which meet the children's individual dietary needs.

During any pandemics we will follow the government guidelines and will follow the following procedure.

- Where food is provided, in circumstances where there is shortage of food supplies, it may be necessary to ask parents to supply fruit/veg.
- Staff who are eating with children must role-model hygiene best practice.
- Tables are never overcrowded during lunch times. Some social distances is encouraged even though it is acknowledged that children will play in close proximity for the rest of the session.

Procedures

We follow these procedures to promote healthy eating in our setting.

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we ask their parents about their dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies. (See the Managing Children who are Sick, Infectious or with Allergies Policy.)
- We record information about each child's dietary needs in the Registration Form and parents sign the form to signify that it is correct.
- We regularly consult with parents to ensure that our records of their children's dietary needs – including any allergies - are up-to-date. Parents sign the updated record to signify that it is correct.
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all our staff/student and volunteers are fully informed about them.
- We implement systems to ensure that children receive only food and drink that is consistent with their dietary needs and preferences, as well as their parents' wishes.
- We display the snack menu for parents to view.
- We provide fruit and vegetable additives, preservatives and colourings.
- Through discussion with parents and research reading, we obtain information about the dietary rules of the religious groups to which children and their parents belong, and of vegetarians and vegans, as well as about food allergies. We take account of this information in the provision of food and drinks.



- We show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. We do not use a child's diet or allergy as a label for the child, or make a child feel singled out because of her/his diet or allergy.
- We use snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and feeding themselves.
- We provide children with utensils that are appropriate for their ages and stages of development and that take account of the eating practices in their cultures.
- We have fresh drinking water constantly available for the children. We inform the children about how to obtain the water and that they can ask for water at any time during the day.
- We inform parents who provide food for their children about the storage facilities available in our setting.
- We give parents who provide food for their children information about suitable containers for food.
- In order to protect children with food allergies, we discourage children from sharing and swapping their food with one another.
- For young children who drink milk, we provide semi-skimmed milk from the age of two years.

Packed lunches

Children are required to bring packed lunches, we:

- ensure perishable contents of packed lunches are refrigerated or contain an ice pack to keep food cool;
- inform parents that no food should be placed in the packed lunch that may contain nuts.
- inform parents of our policy on healthy eating;
- encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit, and milk based deserts, such as yoghurt or crème fraîche, where We can only provide cold food from home. We discourage sweet drinks and can provide children with water.;
- discourage packed lunch contents that consist largely of crisps, processed foods, sweet drinks and sweet products such as cakes or biscuits. We reserve the right to return this food to the parent as a last resort;
- provide children with plates, cups and cutlery if required; and
- ensure that adults sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.

This policy was agreed at an Under 5s AGM meeting held on 6th...November 2023. (Date)

Signed on behalf of the preschool.....(Chair)