



Food and drink policy

Statement of intent

This setting regards snack and meal times as an important part of the setting's session/day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating.

Aim

At snack and meal times, we aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs.

Methods

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we find out from parents their children's dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies.
- We record information about each child's dietary needs in her/his registration record and parents sign the record 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 put in writing if their child allergy or intolerance changes.
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed about them. This information is kept on display within the kitchens in 2-5's area and Baby area.
- 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.
- An allergens poster is provided on both parents boards in the Baby room and 2-5's room.
- We plan menus in advance, involving children and parents in the planning.
- We display the menus of meals/snacks for the information of parents.
- We provide nutritious food at all meals and snacks, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- We include a variety of foods from the four main food groups:
 - meat, fish and protein alternatives;
 - dairy foods;
 - grains, cereals and starch vegetables; and

- Fruit and vegetables.
- We include foods from the diet of each of the children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones.
- We take care not to provide food containing nuts or nut products and are especially vigilant where we have a child who has a known allergy to nuts. Parents are advised of not supplying any nut products for lunch boxes even where an allergy is not identified
- Through discussion with parents and research reading by staff, we obtain information about the dietary rules of the religious groups, to which children and their parents belong, and of vegetarians and vegans, and about food allergies. We take account of this information in the provision of food and drinks.
- We provide a vegetarian alternative on days when meat or fish are offered and make every effort to ensure Halal meat or Kosher food is available for children who require it.
- We require staff to show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. Staff 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 organise meal and snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate.
- We use meal and 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 session/day.
- In accordance with parents' wishes, we offer children - an appropriate meal or snack. These are in the form of the morning snack (Fresh fruit, cereal, milk and water), afternoon snack – (Vegetable sticks, bread sticks or fruit and water) and afternoon tea (See setting menus)
- We inform parents who provide food for their children about the storage facilities available in the 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 have rules about children sharing and swapping their food with one another.
- For children who drink milk, we provide whole pasteurised milk.
- For each child under two, we provide parents with daily written information about feeding routines, intake and preferences. Also if having any of our food is inappropriate and they are still weaning, for tea we will provide them with a food pouch containing fruits or vegetables.

Packed lunches

Where settings cannot provide cooked meals and children are required to bring packed lunches, we:

- ensure perishable contents of packed lunches are kept cool by an ice pack kept in the child's lunch box
- Inform parents of our policy on healthy eating, this is within the Nursery parent agreement forms.
- inform parents we have facilities to microwave cooked food brought from home and it is to be heated up to 83.0 to minimise the risk of bacteria.
- We will not re-heat rice due to the high bacteria risk.
- encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy fillings, fruit, and milk based deserts such as yoghurt or crème fresh (petit filous) 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 bringing packed lunches with plates and cups and cutlery;
- We advise parents to cut up food appropriately e.g. grapes etc
- We also ask parents to not pack whole nuts, nut items or any ground down nuts in foods as our nursery setting is a nut free zone.

Food Handling:

Only staff who has completed the Food Hygiene Level 2 course will be dealing with the preparation of food.

- Food is prepared at a minimum temperature of 83 degrees Celsius in accordance with environmental health guidelines.
- All food provided is nutritionally balanced. All special dietary requirements are catered for at all times.
- Children will experience cooking on a regular basis as part of their curriculum activities with added emphasis on promoting a healthier lifestyle.
- All bottle feeds are stored in the kitchen fridge area. Bottles are clearly labelled. Milk powder must be clearly labelled too.
- Children's bottles are to be warmed up in the microwave / bottle warmer
- Feeds are to be warmed once only, never re-heat any milk.