

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 times, we aim to provide nutritious food, taking into account 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 consult with parents to ensure that our records of their children's dietary needs - including any allergies - are up to date.
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed about them and children receive only food and drink that is consistent with their dietary needs and preferences as well as their parents' wishes.
- We aim to provide nutritious snacks at milk time.
- We take care not to provide food containing products known to cause allergies and are especially vigilant where we have a child who has a known allergy.
- Through discussion with parents, 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 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 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.

Packed lunches

We do not provide cooked meals or reheat food and children are required to bring packed lunches.

- We inform parents of our policy on healthy eating.
- We encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit, and milk based deserts such as yoghurt or crème fresh (petit filou).
- We aim to discourage packed lunch contents that consist largely of crisps, processed foods, sweet drinks and sweet products such as cakes or biscuits.
- After having advised parents about healthy eating, we recognise the parent still has the right to choose the contents of their child's lunch box.
- We ensure staff sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.
- Parents are requested to put ice packs inside their child's lunch box all year to keep food safely.
- Parents are advised that should they wish for any item(s) of food inside their child's lunch box to be refrigerated during the session, they must put their child's name on the item and hand it to a member of staff on arrival at nursery.