

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Health

Where children are provided with meals, snacks and drinks, they must be healthy, balanced and nutritious.

Food and drink



Policy statement

Our provision regards snack and meal 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 relating to current government advice. At snack and meal times, we aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs.

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 are requested to inform us of any changes in writing.
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed about them as well as details in the kitchen allergy folder and folders within each room.
- 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, this is as follows;
 - Children with allergies/dietary requirements will be given red plates, bowls, cups, bibs (age appropriate) and mats to be used every time they eat in the setting. Their Mat will have their name on the front and details of their allergies/dietary requirements on the front, children also have separate mats for pudding and all mats must be given to the cook before lunch time service.
 - Children with special dietary requirements must be served their meals first to ensure they do not get accidentally given the wrong food mid-way through food service.
 - Staff should sit themselves next to children with allergens/dietary requirements at mealtimes to ensure they do not reach out for other children's food and when there is a lot of children with food requirements, they can be sat together but no child should be singled out if they are the only one.
 - Any cases where children are given the wrong food or "near miss" situations must be reported to management immediately so we can investigate how it happened and whether further action needs to take place.
 - The allergy folder kept in the kitchen has thorough details of what main 14 allergens the dishes served to children have in them and should be used as a point of reference, however, staff must also be vigilant in checking the ingredients on food packets as companies may change the

ingredients they put in their foods or a different variety may have been supplied as a substituted product in the shopping.

- If parents inform staff of any changes to dietary requirement then they must tell parents we need this information sent to us in detail in writing, the easiest form is for them to send us an e-mail. The staff member who took the message must then ensure they clearly inform other staff and that a message is passed on to the cook.
- We plan menus in advance.
- We display the menus of meals/snacks for parents to view, they are also available on our website and in our registration pack.
- We provide nutritious food for 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.
- There should always be a first aid trained staff member sat with the children when they are eating and children must be encouraged to be sat down to eat or drink. This is to reduce the risk of choking and to ensure that staff are focused on the children to be alert to the first signs of choking and take first aid action as required. As a preventative we will not provide sausages, grapes, cherry tomatoes or small hard items (such as mini eggs) that are well known for being a choking risk to children. If children bring these items in their own packed lunch then staff must ensure they are cut up to a suitable safe size before allowing the children to eat it and must keep a closer eye on them whilst eating these foods.
- 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, as well as 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 day.

- We inform parents who provide food for their children about the storage facilities available in the setting.
- 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 whole pasteurised milk. Although we slowly introduce semi-skimmed milk from the age of two years, firstly into meals and dishes, such as on cereal or in white sauces, before being offered as a drink, so that the transition is gradual.
- For each child under two, we provide parents with daily written information about feeding routines, intake and preferences unless the parent requests they do not have this.

Packed lunches

Where we cannot provide cooked meals and 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 of our policy on healthy eating;
- inform parents of whether we have facilities to microwave cooked food brought from home;
- encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit, and milk-based deserts, such as yoghurt or fromage frais, 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, cups, and cutlery; and
- ensure staff sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of

Ladybirds Day Nursery

Held on

1/11/20

Date to be reviewed

1/11/21

Signed on behalf of the provider

Name of signatory

Janine Lissack

Role of signatory

Owner