



## 6.5 Food and drink

### Policy statement

We regard 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 from the Pre-school Learning Alliance. 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 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 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 plan menus in advance, involving children and parents in the planning.
- We display the menus of meals/snacks for parents to view.
- 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 we are especially vigilant where we have a child who has a known allergy to nuts.





- 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 provide a vegetarian alternative on days when meat or fish are offered.
- 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 organise meal and snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and adults 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.
- In accordance with parents' wishes, we offer children arriving early in the morning, and/or staying late, an appropriate meal or snack.
- 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 offering it 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.
- We do not give sweet puddings and only offer fruit and yoghurts.
- Whilst we celebrate a child's birthday we do not do birthday cakes as this does not support our healthy eating and oral health programmes we have in place.

### **Meal time policy**

Before meals while one staff member is setting the tables all children to sit in floor.

When setting tables you need to remember:

- Red table cloth on one table to highlight children with allergies
- Plates\bowls according to





-Allergies

-Parent preference

-Dietary need such as Vegetarian

-Drink cups

-Cutlery

- Staff member to be allocated a table each to sit and ensure the safety of children

- When children are on carpet:

-Coloured coded bibs go on children. Allergy\intolerance are red and this tops wearing a green for vegetarians\intolerance children for example.

-Once colour coded bibs are on then hand washing can start.

-Once hands washed children can start to find place at table or return to carpet to wait to be taken to the table.

- Staff on the individual tables are responsible for ensuring children have the correct meals and giving out pudding at the end of the meal.

- Older children encouraged to scrap away remains food and return to table for pudding.

- All food must be given by permanent and confident practitioners. Bank staff must only be allocated to sit with children with no allergies.

- Students must be sat with long term permanent staff and please remember they are here to learn from practitioners, you are there role model and everything they do is under your guidance. This also is the same for new practitioners.

- Only once room leader is confident new practitioners know the children and allergies\reactions and how to deal with it are they able to serve and be allocated a supervisor role with meal times.

