

## Food and Drink

*September 2023*

### **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. 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.
- 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 provide nutritious food for all snacks, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- 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 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.
- Children bring a water bottle with them and we encourage drinking throughout the day. Where no water bottle is brought we have spare ones that can be provided. Staff fill up water bottles as required to ensure that children have access to water at all times.
- In order to protect children with food allergies, we discourage children from sharing and swapping their food with one another.

### **Packed lunches**

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

- inform parents of our policy on healthy eating;
- inform parents that we can't heat/microwave cooked food brought from home;
- encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit, and milk based deserts, such as yoghurt or crème fraiche. 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;
- ensure that adults sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.

### **Legal framework**

- Regulation (EC) 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Hygiene of Foodstuffs.

### **Further guidance**

- Safer Food, Better Business (Food Standards Agency 2011)
- Nutritional Guidance for the Under Fives (Pre-school Learning Alliance 2009)
- Healthy and Active Lifestyles for the Early Years (Pre-school Learning Alliance 2012)

<b>Version</b>	<b>Changes made</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Review Date</b>
1.0	Baseline version	H Clarke	20 <sup>th</sup> June 2020	September 2020
1.1	Review – no changes	H Clarke	20 <sup>th</sup> September 2020	September 2021
1.2	Review – no changes	H Clarke	22 <sup>nd</sup> November 2021	September 2022
1.3	New Logo	H Clarke	9 <sup>th</sup> September 2022	September 2023
1.4	Amended to include water bottles.	H Clarke	4 <sup>th</sup> October 2023	September 2024