

Healthy Eating Policy

(EYFS 3.47-3.49)

We believe that mealtimes should be happy, social occasions for children and staff alike and we promote shared, enjoyable positive interactions at these times. Meal and snack times are organised so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate in small groups. Practitioners set a good example and eat with the children, modelling good table manners. During meals and snack times children are encouraged to use their manners and say 'please' and 'thank you' and conversation is encouraged. No child is ever left alone when eating/drinking to minimise the risk of choking.

We use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink, and feeding themselves. Practitioners support children to make healthy choices and understand the need for healthy eating. We provide foods from the diet of each of the children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones. We promote positive attitudes to healthy eating through play opportunities and discussions.

Snack

We are committed to offering children healthy, nutritious snacks which meet individual needs and requirements. A balanced and healthy two daily snacks are provided for children attending a full day at preschool. Nutritious food is provided at all snack times, avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar, salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings. Menus are planned in advance, rotated regularly and reflect cultural diversity and variation. These are displayed for children and parents to view on our website.

Lunch

For those children staying for lunch, we provide hot, fresh, award-winning healthy lunches, delivered and supplied by Little Tums Children's Catering Company. Meals will be of the 4 main food groups (carbohydrate, protein, dairy and fruit and vegetables), whilst also being low in unnecessary fats, salt, sugar and preservatives. Menus are planned in advance, rotated regularly and reflect cultural diversity and variation. These will be provided by a specialised outside caterer. We encourage all parents to take up the hot meals.

Parents who choose to send in a packed lunch from home are asked to remember the above mentioned 4 food groups when preparing these meals. We respectfully request no chocolate or concentrated fruit substitutes, replacing with healthier options such as fresh fruit and yoghurt.

Any child who shows signs of distress at being faced with a meal they do not like, will have the food removed without any fuss. If a child does not finish their first course, they will still

be given a helping of dessert. Children who refuse to eat at the mealtime are offered food later in the day

Children are given time to eat at their own pace and not rushed. Quantities offered take account of the ages of the children being catered for in line with recommended portion sizes for young children

Drink

We provide each child with a labelled water bottle so that fresh drinking water is available and accessible for children to drink at all times. It is frequently offered to children and intake is monitored. In hot weather staff will encourage children to drink more water to keep them hydrated. Milk, oat milk or water are offered to the children at meal times.

Individual dietary requirements/allergies

Before a child starts at preschool, we obtain information about any special dietary requirements, preferences and food allergies the child may have. This information is displayed clearly in our snack/lunch area so that all staff members are aware of them. Individual dietary requirements and cultural differences in eating habits are respected. Where appropriate, we will carry out a risk assessment in the case of allergies and work alongside parents to put into place an individual dietary plan for their child. Children not on special diets are encouraged to eat a small piece of everything

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 their diet or allergy.

We give careful consideration to seating to avoid cross contamination of food from child to child and use a colour coded plate system for easier identification. Where appropriate, an adult will sit with children during meals to ensure safety and minimise risks. Age-appropriate discussions will also take place with all children about allergies and potential risks to make them aware of the dangers of sharing certain foods.

Special occasions

We will sometimes celebrate special occasions such as end of term parties with the occasional treat of foods such as cake, sweets or biscuits. These will be given at mealtimes to prevent tooth decay. We do allow parents to bring in cakes/sweets on special occasions. We ensure that all food brought in from parents meets the above and health and safety requirements and ingredients that are listed within the Food Information for Consumers (FIR) 2014 and detailed in the allergens policy and procedure. These will be handed out at the end of the day and not consumed during the session.

Food handling

All staff involved in preparing and handling food are trained every three years in food

hygiene and certificates are held in personnel files and copies in the snack/lunch files.

All areas of the kitchen used in preparation of food and drink or in any cooking activity are cleaned using hot soapy water, dried with paper towels and then sterilised using Milton solution. This includes the snack and dinner tables. All staff complete the Food Standards Agency daily record. Cups, plates and utensils will be washed by hand and air dried where possible and stored in a dust free place. Any tea towels used will be washed at the end of each session.

Staff handling food – see Health Policy

Ofsted

In the very unlikely event of any food poisoning affecting two or more children on the premises, whether or not this may arise from food offered at the nursery, we will inform Ofsted as soon as reasonably practical and in all cases within 14 days. We will also inform the relevant health agencies and follow any advice given.

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