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## Food and Drink Policy

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### Statement of Intent

The nursery regards snack and mealtimes as an important part of the day. Breakfast, snack, lunch and tea times are social opportunities for children and help to develop appropriate table manners and promote healthy lifestyles and wellbeing.

### Aim

We aim to meet the full requirements of Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and to provide healthy, balanced, varied and nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary and religious needs.

### Method

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we find out from parents their children's dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies. In the case of food allergies, a separate healthcare form should be completed and signed by the parent/carer detailing the child's needs with supporting evidence from the child's GP. (*please see separate Allergy Policy*).
- Parents/carers record information about each child's dietary needs on her/his enrolment form and 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 and appropriate forms are signed.
- We record current information, on a dietary sheet, about individual children's needs for snack and mealtimes so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed about which foods or drinks children are unable to consume.
- We have systems in place to ensure that children receive only food and drink that is consistent with their dietary needs and preferences as well as their parents' wishes, and advice from the child's GP. Within each classroom, staff check their meals are safe for them to eat prior to giving it to the children.
- We ask for evidence/support from the child's GP to gain an understanding of dietary needs when they are 'allergies. It is vital to seek medical advice if you believe your child to have an allergy to specific foods. GPs will have the knowledge and skills to advise on the most appropriate diet limitations and guide you through 'ladder' systems to support allergies.
- We have a strict NO NUTS food policy and 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 by staff, we obtain information about the dietary rules of 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 makes 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.
- The presence of at least one Paediatric first aid (PFA) trained member of staff is always present when children are eating.
- Food is suitably prepared to prevent choking – guidelines from Food Standards Agency is displayed in all food preparation areas within the setting.
- Staff will observe children closely while eating being within eyesight and hearing whilst eating. When possible, they will sit facing the children; this allows for early intervention in the case of choking. It also allows staff to watch out for children swapping food.
- Chocking incidents must be recorded and the parents/carer made aware. These should be reviewed regularly to identify any common issues that need to be addressed.
- Babies and young children should be seated safely in an appropriately sized low chair while eating.
- We have a designated area within the classroom that is an eating space, where distractions are minimised.
- 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 freely available for the children. They can independently serve themselves using the jug and cups available. The jug is refilled as necessary.
- In order to protect children with food allergies, we do not allow children to share and swap their food with one another at lunchtime.
- For children who drink milk, we provide whole pasteurised milk or milk alternatives such as oat milk and soya milk.
- For each child under two, we provide parents with daily written information (via Blossom) about feeding routines and intake throughout the day.
- For children in the toddler and pre-school classes, we provide parents with daily written information (via Blossom) about food consumed and quantity, at lunch and tea.

### Food Hygiene

- Food Hygiene is considered of the upmost important and all staff who serve or handle food are trained in Food Hygiene during their induction and as part of their CPD.

*Updated: Sep 22, Jan 23, Sept 24, August 25*

## Snack Time

As children may be hungry at different times, by providing a rolling snack, the children have a choice of when they would like to eat and snack time becomes an integrated activity within the session.

### Method

- We have a designated quiet area away from the main working areas of the classroom.
- We maintain a dietary/allergy list which is checked before each session and those foods removed from the snack area by staff.
- Rolling snack starts at 9.45am-11am to ensure that children are hungry at lunchtime and while it is important not to interrupt the children's play some children may need a gentle reminder that the snack is about to be packed away.
- We always have a member of staff to help prepare snack with the children (with due care given to hygiene) and provide support for the children with self-service routine and tidying away.
- We organise snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate and by sharing, helping each other and taking turns, especially when new to the group, the children will learn and improve their social skills. As the children's confidence grows, they become independent in preparing their snack.
- The children learn that they take it in turns to come to the snack table often the older children will support the younger children in doing this and help them to serve snacks.
- We use snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and feeding themselves. The social and independence skills the children have learnt will ease their transition to school.
- We have fresh drinking water freely available for the children. They can independently serve themselves using the jug and cups available. The jug is refilled as necessary.
- For children who drink milk, we provide whole pasteurised milk or milk alternatives such as oat milk.

### Snack preparation

It is important to remember usual hygiene precautions:

- Separate cleaning cloths, utensils should be available
- The area of the kitchen where snack is to be prepared should be clean
- The snack table should be cleaned before and after use
- The children should wash their hands before handling food and eating snack
- After snack all cups etc. should be washed in hot water and stored in a clean location.
- Each day all utensils, cutlery, glasses and plates should be washed thoroughly in hot soapy water or in a dishwasher.

### Policy Review

*Updated: Sep 22, Jan 23, Sept 24, August 25*

- The policy is available on the website and in the policy folder in the front entrance.
- We will use opportunities such as newsletters, emails and trips, to promote this policy as part of a whole setting approach to healthier eating.
- All staff are aware of this policy and will support its implementation.

The following procedures and documentation in relation to this policy:

#### Nursery Policies

- Allergy Policy
- Risk Assessment
- Health and Safety Policy
- Packed Lunch Policy
- Healthy Eating and Nutrition Policy

#### National Guidance

This policy was drawn up using a range of national documents including:

- National Food trust and Food policy in schools.
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2017, 2023 – *Section 3- The Safeguarding and Welfare requirements- Food and Drink.*
- Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2025 – *Section – Safer Eating*
- Early Years Nutrition Guidance 2025