

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Health

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



6.5 Food and drink

Policy statement

We regard snack and lunch time 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 time, we aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs. Lunch is provided by parents in the form of a packed lunch, healthy choices is always recommended.

Procedures

We follow these procedures to promote healthy eating in setting:

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we ask their parents about their dietary needs, 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 are fully informed about them.
- We implement systems to ensure that children receive only food and drink that is consistent with their dietary needs, as well as their parents' wishes.
- We provide nutritious food for all snacks.
- 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, 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 organise lunch and snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and adults participate.
- We use lunch 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.

- 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 give parents who provide food for their children information about suitable containers for food.
- 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.

Packed lunches

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

- Recommend that packed lunches contain an ice pack to keep food cool;
- inform parents of our policy on healthy eating;
- encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit, and milk based deserts, such as yoghurt or crème fraîche, where we can only provide cold food from home. We discourage sweet drinks and can provide children with water or diluted fresh fruit juice;
- 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.

Pandemic Outbreak

Where food is provided, in circumstances where there is shortage of food supplies, it may be necessary to ask parents to supply a packed lunch. The following procedures must be followed:

- Children's hands will be washed prior to being given food or drink.
- Staff who are eating with the children will role-model hygiene best practice.
- Tables will not be overcrowded during mealtimes. Some social distancing is encouraged even though it is acknowledged that children will play in close proximity for the rest of the session.

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)

This policy was adopted by _____ *(name of provider)*

On _____ *(date)*

Date to be reviewed _____ *(date)*

Signed on behalf of the provider _____

Name of signatory _____

Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner) _____



St. Mary's Pre-School