



Food and drink, incorporating food hygiene

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.
- We record information about each child's dietary needs in the Registration Form and parents sign the form to signify that it is correct.
- Dietary requirements/ preferences are logged on EYmanage.
- We regularly consult with parents to ensure that our records of their children's dietary needs – including any allergies - are up-to-date. If any changes occur parents are asked to sign an updated record to signify that it is correct.
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs in the kitchen, 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.
- All children with allergies will have snack in a red bowl.
- We provide nutritious food for all snacks, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives, and colourings.
- We include a variety of foods:
 - Dairy foods (eg. cheese and milk)
 - Grains, cereals (eg. Crackers, corncakes, oat biscuits and bread)
 - Fruits 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 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.
- We ask that children bring in a named bottle of water each day.
- 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

- Children bring their own pack lunches to the setting.
- We recommend parents include a cool pack;
- We inform parents of our policy on healthy eating;
- We request foods that may present a choking hazard, such as grapes, cherry tomatoes and cocktail sausages are cut into bite size pieces. Where they are not we cut them before allowing them to be presented to the children. Fruit with stones are discouraged.
- We encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit, and milk based deserts, such as yoghurt or crème fraiche, we discourage sugary drinks.
- We 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;
- We ensure that adults sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.

- We do lunch on a rolling basis having small groups of children at a time and bringing other children to the table once a friend has finished.

Food Hygiene

We provide and/or serve food for children on the following basis:

- Snacks.
- Baking/ cooked items that children have made with staff
- Packed lunches provided by parents.

We maintain the highest possible food hygiene standards with regard to the purchase, storage, preparation and serving of food.

We are registered as a food provider with the local authority Environmental Health Department. Our current food hygiene rating is 5.

Procedures

- All our staff who are involved in the preparation and handling of food have received training in food hygiene.
- We use reliable suppliers for the food we purchase.
- Food is stored at correct temperatures and is checked to ensure it is in-date and not subject to contamination by pests, rodents or mould.
- Food preparation areas are cleaned before and after use.
- There are separate facilities for hand-washing and for washing-up.
- All surfaces are clean and non-porous.
- All utensils, crockery etc. are clean and stored appropriately.
- Waste food is disposed of daily.
- Cleaning materials and other dangerous materials are stored out of children's reach.
- When children take part in cooking activities, they:
 - are supervised at all times;
 - understand the importance of hand-washing and simple hygiene rules;
 - are kept away from hot surfaces and hot water; and
 - Do not have unsupervised access to electrical equipment, such as blenders etc.

Reporting of food poisoning

Food poisoning can occur for a number of reasons; not all cases of sickness or diarrhoea are as a result of food poisoning and not all cases of sickness or diarrhoea are reportable.

- Where children and/or adults have been diagnosed by a GP or hospital doctor to be suffering from food poisoning and where it seems possible that the source of the outbreak is within our setting, the manager will contact the Environmental Health Department to report the outbreak and will comply with any investigation.
- We notify Ofsted as soon as reasonably practicable of any confirmed cases of food poisoning affecting two or more children looked after on the premises, and always within 14 days of the incident.

This policy was reviewed October 2024.

This policy is to be reviewed annually unless legislation requires before.