

Food and Drink Policy

Policy Statement

This setting regards snack and meal times as an important part of the setting's session. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating.

Aim

At snack and meal times, we ask parents to provide healthy, nutritious, safe food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs. As storage facilities are limited, we ask parents to provide a suitable container, such as a cool box. We aim to meet the full requirements of The National Standards for Day Care on Food and Drink (Standard 8).

Procedures

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we find out from parents their children's dietary needs, including any allergies.
- We record information about each child's dietary needs in her/his registration record and parents sign the record 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 up-dated record to signify that it is correct.
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all 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 take care not to provide food containing nuts or nut products and 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 the 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 organise meal and snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate.

- We use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and feeding themselves.
- 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 session/day.
- We inform parents about the storage facilities available in the setting.
- We give parents information about suitable containers for food.
- In order to protect children with food allergies, we have rules about children sharing and swapping their food with one another.
- For children who drink milk, we provide fresh pasteurised milk.

Snacks/Packed Lunches

Children bring in their own snacks and packed lunches, and we:

- ensure perishable contents are refrigerated or contain an ice pack to keep food cool;
- inform parents of our policy on healthy eating;
- encourage parents to provide healthy food and drinks;
- discourage packed lunch contents that consist largely of crisps, processed foods, sweet drinks and sweet products such as cakes or biscuits; and
- ensure staff sit with children to eat their snack 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:
www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/regulation/hygleg/hyglegresources/sfbb/

Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications

- Nutritional Guidance for the Under Fives (2009)

- The Essential Early Years Cookbook (2009)

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