



Healthy Eating Policy

To ensure that all aspects of food and nutrition in our setting promote the health and well-being of children, staff and visitors to our nursery and that our children learn lifelong skills in healthy eating as part of a healthy lifestyle. We aim to ensure parents/carers are involved wherever possible.

We think it is important for children to enjoy their nursery mealtimes, and to understand the impact of nutrition on concentration and energy levels.

Objectives

Every child has access to safe, tasty and nutritious food and a safe, easily available water supply throughout the day.

- To improve the health of all babies, children, staff and the whole nursery community by helping to influence eating habits through increasing knowledge and awareness of food issues including what constitutes a healthy diet.
- To develop key partnerships to provide extended opportunities for food awareness e.g., establishing a gardening project, cooking activities and an understanding of foods from different cultures.
- To ensure that food provision in the nursery acknowledges the ethical and medical requirements of staff and children e.g., religious, vegetarian, medical and allergenic needs.
- To introduce children to new tastes and encourage them to be adventurous in their choices of fresh fruit and vegetables.
- To promote fruit and water
- To continue a dialogue with parents/carers on healthy eating, menus are sent to parents/carers and displayed in the setting.
- To give the children an understanding of how food is prepared, and an opportunity to cook.

Management of Eating at Nursery

Staffs wear aprons and gloves when sharing or serving food. Water is available throughout the day for children to drink as and when they become thirsty. Babies are asked to provide a cup and bottle from home. Baby water is boiled before it is used and babies either drink their home provided formula milk, or, if above 12 months, full fat milk. Fruit is provided with the children's milk at snack.

Fizzy/soft drinks, juice, chewing gum, chocolate bars, nuts and sweets are not allowed in nursery. Salt is not provided on tables.

No child is made to finish their food; however, we do actively encourage the children to 'try a little' if they can ensure that they are not hungry later in the day. Dessert is not given if the child does not try some of their meal. Parents and carers will be advised if their child is not eating well.

We will not provide nuts to any of the children and the eating of nuts is strictly prohibited in the premises. Children will be encouraged to develop good eating skills and table manners at lunch time, including:

- Demonstrating good manners saying "please" and "thank you" to staff and children serving the food
- Sitting nicely
- Conversing whilst eating, but being encouraged not to talk with food inside the mouth
- Using cutlery
- Using tongs and spoons to self-serve.



Allergies, cultural sensitivities and personal preferences

A list of medical conditions including food allergies and intolerances are kept in the children's profiles and all staff are made aware of these. The information is also displayed in the nursery kitchen and on the main floor where the children eat their meals.

The Traffic Light system safeguards children during lunchtimes to ensure all staff are made aware of allergies, intolerances and parental preferences or religious beliefs. The nursery promotes all cultural and religious practices in relation to food, customs and celebratory events. We offer vegetarian and vegan choices upon request.

Treats

Birthdays and special events such as Christmas parties and Graduation in nursery are times where food contributes to a sense of celebration and sharing. On these occasions, different snacks may be available, but the staff will remind the children that this is an 'occasional treat' and not 'everyday food'. Children will also be allowed watered down juice during these events. Parents can still opt for us to not give juice and treats during these experiences.

This policy was reviewed on: 26.06.24

Date of next review: 26.06.25