

Food and Drink Policy

Statement of intent

The pre-school regards snack and meal times as an important part of the Pre-school day. Snack and lunch times are social opportunities for children and help to develop appropriate table manners and promote healthy lifestyles and well being.

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. We request that parents supply healthy snacks for our snack cafe and inform parents of the pre-school packed lunch requirements.

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. (*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 meal times 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.
- 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.
- We ask that **no nuts** are put in lunch boxes and **no peanut butter** used in sandwiches.
- 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.
- We use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and feeding themselves.

Policies and Procedures

Sept 07, Sept 08, Feb 09, Oct 10, Oct 11, Sept 13, July 16, July 19

play-to-learn

MONTESSORI NURSERIES AND PRE-SCHOOLS

- 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.
- We inform parents who provide food for their children about the storage facilities available in the setting.
- We give parents who provide food for their children information about suitable containers for food.
- 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.
- Parents can provide alternative milk e.g. soya/goats as required.
- For each child under two, we provide parents with daily written information about feeding routines and intake.

Food Hygiene

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

Snack Time

As children may be hungry at different times, by providing a rolling snack café, 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.
- For snack time, we ask that parents donated an item of fruit, vegetables or carbohydrates e.g. bread sticks.
- The snack bar has an opening and closing times 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 bar is about to close.

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- 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 participates 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.
- Parents can supply alternative milk should their child require it

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.

Healthy Snack Ideas

Wholemeal Bread/Rolls, Pitta Bread, Bagels, Bread
Crackers
Cheese
Seasonal Fruit and Vegetables

Packed Lunches

All lunch boxes, food containers and drinks containers should be clearly labelled with the child's full name.

- We inform parents of our policy on Food and Drink.
- We encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit, and milk based deserts such as yoghurt.

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- We discourage sweet drinks and can provide children with water at lunchtimes.
- 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 provide children who bring packed lunches with plates, cups and cutlery
- At lunch time children sit with a member of staff to encourage a positive eating experience and table manners.
- Parents are advised to pack children's packed lunches in insulated bags with freezer blocks, where possible.
- The Pre-school will work with parents to ensure that packed lunches abide by the standards listed below-

Packed lunches should include:

- At least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetable
- Meat, fish or other source of non-dairy protein every day
- Oily fish, at least once every three weeks
- A starchy food such as any type of bread, pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes or other cereal
- Dairy food such as milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais or custard
- Only water, fruit juice, milk, yogurt/milk drinks or smoothies

Packed lunches should aim not to include:

- Processed foods e.g. Snacks such as crisps, cheese strings, dairy/lea lunchables, pepperami,
- Chocolate biscuits or cakes, instead include fruit, raisins, plain rich teas biscuits
- Ready made drinks such as fruit shoot, drink cartons etc instead include a made up child's drinking bottle of diluted sugar free squash or diluted fresh juice.

Please note

As a pre-school we also recognise that some pupils may require special diets that do not allow for the standards to be met exactly. In this case parents are urged to be responsible in ensuring that packed lunches are as healthy as possible.

Assessment, evaluation and reviewing packed lunch content

- Packed lunches will be regularly reviewed by the Pre-school leader and each child's key person.
- Parents are encouraged to adhere to the Pre-school's Food and Drink Policy, if at any point the key worker is concerned about the contents of the packed lunch the parent/carer will be spoken to.

Please note: children with special diets will be given due consideration.

Involvement of parents/carers

- Parents are encouraged to conform to the Food and Drink Policy.
- In turn we would like any feedback the parents/carers which to give and will take this feedback into consideration when reviewing the policy.

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Policy Review

- We will include guidance for parents in our prospectus.
- The policy is available on the school website and in the school handbook.
- We will use opportunities such as newsletters, emails & parent's evenings and school trips, to promote this policy as part of a whole pre-school 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:

Preschool Policies

- Allergy
- Health & Safety
- Risk Assessment

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 – *Section 3- The Safeguarding and Welfare requirements- Food and Drink.*

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