

Healthy Nutrition Policy

play-to-learn

MONTESSORI NURSERIES AND PRE-SCHOOLS



Statement of Intent

This policy has been written in line with the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the [Early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework](#). The setting is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of its service delivery. It provides a framework for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children who attend our setting.

The setting regards snack and mealtimes as an important opportunity to promote positive social interactions and healthy lifestyles and well-being to the children in our care and help them to develop appropriate social manners. Nutrition is about **eating a healthy and balanced diet** with food and drink providing the energy and nutrients you need to be healthy.

We aim to meet the requirements of [Early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework](#) in providing healthy, balanced, varied and nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary and religious needs. We request that parents supply healthy and nutritious food snacks, and we keep parents informed about healthy packed lunch requirements.

Updated Sept 07, Sept 08, Feb 09, Oct 10, Oct 11, Sept 13, July 16, July 19, March 22

Next Review date: September 2022

Healthy Nutrition Policy

We promote a 'whole-setting' approach to our policy covering all aspects of the approach to food and drink which is shared and regularly reviewed by staff, families and children.

Food Hygiene

Food Hygiene is considered of the utmost importance and all staff who serve, or handle food receive Food Hygiene and Safety training, during the staff induction programme and as part of their Continuous Professional Development.

Healthy Nutrition

Procedure

- Before a child starts attending the setting, we find out from parents their child's dietary needs and preferences, including allergies. In the case of food allergies, a separate Food Allergy healthcare form should be completed and signed by the parent/carer detailing the child's needs and medication requirements.
- 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 information about individual children's needs for snack and mealtimes so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed about which foods or drinks children are unable to consume. This information is stored in the snack/lunch area, accessible only to staff and volunteers
- 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. 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 drink.
- 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 use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and feeding themselves. We organise meal and snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff

participate. Children are encouraged to try new foods and there is an agreed approach to managing fussy eating.

- We provide children with utensils that are appropriate for their ages and stages of development.
- 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 and we provide information about suitable containers for food storage and hygiene.
- 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 /carers 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 food/milk intake.

Snack Time

As children will 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, incorporating many of the transferable Montessori skills.

We organise snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate and by sharing, helping each other and taking turns, especially when new to the group, the children will learn and improve their social skills. 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 primary school.

We have a designated snack area with a daily opening and closing time 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.

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 maintain a dietary/allergy list which is checked before each session and those foods removed from the snack area by staff. We cannot guarantee that snacks provided by parents will be given to their child or used that day due to other children's allergy/dietary requirements.

For snack time, we kindly ask that parents donate an item of fruit, vegetables or carbohydrates. Parents can supply alternative milk should their child require it

For children who drink milk, we provide whole pasteurised milk.

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.

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 and tidy
- 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 soapy 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.

School lunches

We provide hot lunches through the main primary school catering services and at Westwood Day care through our setting kitchen. Meals and snacks are planned using evidence-based age-appropriate national best practice food and drink guidelines and the menus for meals and snacks are planned for a week or more to include different tastes, colours and textures, are seasonal, sustainable and minimise impact on the environment.

Menus are shared (e.g., notice boards, website, face book) to ensure parents/carers know what is provided.

Packed Lunches

All lunch boxes, food containers and drinks containers should be clearly labelled with the child's full name. Food and drink brought from home are appropriately labelled and stored. Parents are advised to pack children's packed lunches in insulated bags with freezer blocks. Healthy eating advice is given to parents on the types of food and drink brought in from home.

We encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit, and milk-based desserts such as yoghurt and discourage sweet drinks and packed lunch contents that consist largely of crisps, processed foods, and sweet products such as cakes or biscuits. We reserve the right to return this food to the parent as a last resort., if the lunchbox persistently contains unhealthy sugary processed food.

We provide children who bring packed lunches with plates, cups and cutlery to use at lunchtimes and at mealtimes children sit with a member of staff to encourage a positive eating experience and appropriate table manners.

The setting 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

Packed lunches should not include:

- Processed foods e.g., Snacks such as crisps, cheese strings, dairylea lunchables, pepperami,
- Chocolate biscuits or cakes, instead include fruit, plain biscuits
- Ready-made drinks such as fruit shoot, drink cartons

Please note

We recognise that some children may require specialised 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 setting manager and each child's key person.
- Parents are encouraged to adhere to the setting Healthy Nutrition policy, if at any point the child's key person is concerned about the contents of the packed lunch the parent/carer will be spoken to.

Involvement of parents/carers

- Parents are encouraged to adhere to the Healthy Nutrition policy.
- We encourage feedback from the parents/carers which will be taken into consideration when reviewing the policy.

Policy Review

- We will include guidance for parents in our prospectus.
- The policy is available on the setting website and in the setting handbook.
- We will use opportunities such as cultural celebrations, mealtimes, online record keeping, parent emails, parent's evenings and outings, to promote healthy nutrition as part of a whole setting 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:**Setting Policies**

- Allergy
- Health & Safety
- Risk Assessment

