

## **Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Health**

Where children are provided with meals, snacks and drinks, they must be healthy, balanced and nutritious.

### **6.5 Food and drink**



Little 1 Nursery

#### **Policy statement**

Our provision regards 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. We promote 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 find out from parents their children's dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies. (See the Managing Children who are Sick, Infectious or with Allergies policy.)
- 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 plan menus in advance, involving children and parents in the planning.
- We display the menus of snacks for the information of parents at nursery and on our website.
- We provide nutritious food for all meals and snacks, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- We include a variety of foods from the four main food groups:
  - meat, fish and protein alternatives;
  - dairy foods;
  - grains, cereals and starch vegetables; and
  - fruit 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 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 provide a vegetarian alternative on days when meat or fish are offered and make every effort to ensure Halal meat or Kosher food is available for children who require it.
- 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 make 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.
- 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. All children in preschool have water bottles available all day. In the next older children have water bottles and the babies have cups.
- In accordance with parents' wishes, we offer children arriving early in the morning - and/or staying late - an appropriate meal or snack.
- We inform parents who provide food for their children about the storage facilities available in the setting.
- In order to protect children with food allergies, we discourage children from sharing and swapping their food with one another.
- For children who drink milk, we provide semi skimmed pasteurised milk.
- For each child under two, we provide parents with daily written information about feeding routines, intake and preferences.

At our Chandlers Ford Nursery we have a homemade hot cooked lunch, menus available in setting or our web page.

At our Hedge End Preschool we ask parents to bring in a packed lunch.

### *Food Poisoning*

- We notify Ofsted of any food poisoning affecting two or more children looked after on the premises as soon as is reasonably practicable, but in any event within 14 days of the incident.

### **Legal framework**

- Regulation (EC) 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the hygiene of foodstuffs

### **Further guidance**

- Safer Food, Better Business (Food Standards Agency 2008)

### **Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications**

- Healthy and Active Lifestyles for the Early Years (2012)
- Nutritional Guidance for the Under Fives (2009)
- The Early Years Essential Cookbook (2009)