

HARPOLE PRE-SCHOOL

"Kind Hands, Kind Hearts, Fun Learning"



3.3 Meeting Dietary Requirements Policy & Procedure

Harpole Preschool has adopted the Preschool Learning Alliance (PLA) policy Children's rights and entitlements. The PLA ensure that their policies adhere to statutory guidance and legislative procedure and they provide the preschool with any updates. All policies and procedures are ratified by the Preschool Trustees on a rolling programme. The preschool staff, led by Sharon Matthews, ensure that their practice is in line with the policies and procedures outlined in the PLA guidance.

Policy statement

Snack and lunch times are an important part of the day at Harpole Preschool. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating. We aim to encourage nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs and preferences.

Harpole preschool provide a healthy, balanced snack during all sessions (9 per week). The weekly menu is shared with parents/carers. Parents will be made aware that sometimes there is a need to alter a planned snack due to circumstances within the setting, however these will be subject to our normal menu planning and allergy requirements.

Children at Harpole Preschool are required to bring in their own cold lunch, in a lunch box with a cool pack to keep them cold (No lunch boxes can be stored in fridges within the setting). We at Harpole Preschool encourage parents/carers to provide a healthy lunch, covering the recommended food groups and limiting sugary treats to a minimum.

- Staff discuss and record children's dietary needs, allergies and any ethnic or cultural food preferences with their parents/carers. A child's special dietary requirements are recorded on registration to the setting and information is shared with all staff. ***This continues as an ongoing dialogue with all parents throughout their time at Harpole Preschool.***
- If a child has a known food allergy, procedure 3.6 Allergies and food intolerance is followed.
- Staff record information about each child's dietary needs in the individual child's registration form; parents/carers sign the form to signify that it is correct.
- Up-to-date information about individual children's dietary needs is displayed so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed.
- Staff ensure that children receive only food and drink that is consistent with their dietary needs and cultural or ethnic preferences, as well as their parent/carer's wishes. At each mealtime, a member of staff is responsible for checking that the food provided meets the dietary requirements for each child.
- The menus of snacks are shared with our parents/carers to view and discuss if necessary (also for those supplying their own snack so that similar items can be provided if wanted). Foods that contain any food allergens are identified.

- Staff aim to include food diets from children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones.
- Through on-going discussion with parents/carers and research by staff, staff obtain information about the dietary rules of religious groups to which children and their parents belong, and of vegetarians and vegans, as well as food allergies. Staff take account of this information when providing food and drink.
- When Harpole Preschool is providing a meal (ie: on party days), staff provide a vegetarian alternative when meat or fish are offered and make every effort to ensure Halal meat or Kosher food is available to children who require it.
- Where it is not possible to source and provide Halal meat or Kosher food, a vegetarian option is available; this will be discussed and agreed with parents at the time of the child's registration.
- All staff show sensitivity in providing for children's diets, allergies and cultural or ethnic food preferences. A child's diet or allergy is never used as a label for the child, they are not made to feel 'singled out' because of their diet, allergy or cultural/ethnic food preferences.
- Fresh drinking water is available throughout the day. Staff inform children how to obtain the drinking water and that they can ask for water at any time during the day.
- Children's drinks bottles are also available to children throughout each session.
- Meal and snack times are organised as social occasions.

Packed lunches

The setting does not provide cooked meals or packed lunches, we ask that where children are required to bring packed lunches we inform parents of the following:

- Ensure perishable contents of packed lunches are refrigerated or contain an ice pack to keep food cool;
- Inform parents of our policy on healthy eating;
- Encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit, and milk-based deserts, such as yoghurt or crème fraîche. We discourage sweet drinks and can provide children with water or milk.
- 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;
- Remind parents of the recommended portion size for the age of their children.
- Ensure that adults sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion
- Ensure children eat their own lunches and do not touch other children or adult's lunch.

Fussy/faddy eating

- Children who are showing signs of 'strong food preferences, or aversions to food ' are not forced to eat anything they do not want to.
- Staff recognise the signs that a child has had enough and remove uneaten food without comment.

- Children are not made to stay at the table after others have left if they refuse to eat certain items of food.
- Staff work in partnership with parents/carers to support them with children who are showing signs of 'food preference or aversion' and sign post them to further advice, for example, How to Manage Simple Faddy Eating in Toddlers (Infant & Toddler Forum) <https://infantandtoddlerforum.org/health-and-childcare-professionals/factsheets/>

Further advice and information:

The Eatwell Guide

This policy was adopted by	Harpole Pre-school	<i>(Name of provider)</i>
On		<i>(date)</i>
Date to be reviewed		<i>(date)</i>
Signed on behalf of the provider		
Name of signatory		
Role of signatory		