

5.2 Nutrition and Mealtimes Policy

Our commitment to early years' nutrition

We want parents to feel confident that we at Wonderland Day Nursery are committed to providing healthy and nutritious food, drink and the appropriate environment for good nutrition. We made a commitment to healthy eating in our nursery by taking part in the Early Years Nutrition Partnership programme, an independent social enterprise working to improve the future health outcomes of young children. The programme is now completed, and we will continue to follow the principles and ethos set out by the programme.

We provide the children with a balanced and nutritious diet and encourage the children to try a wide variety of foods. We understand that adequate and nutritious food and drink are essential for children's well-being and work in partnership with parents to meet children's individual needs. We also ensure cultural diversity is reflected in the meals available. The nursery provides parents with daily records of feeding routines for all children under the age of two.

Child sized portions are served, and children are able to ask for more if required. Special diets are carefully managed to ensure that children are not given food contrary to their cultural, religious or health needs. Healthy eating is promoted within the nursery by providing the children with a varied menu that includes all five food groups. We have a four-week rotating menu, and these are on display for parents near the two entrances and recipes which include allergens and suitable substitutes are available for parents. We also have up to date menus on the website as well as being sent out in the weekly newsletters.

Food is hygienically prepared by our nursery catering team who follow the guidelines in 'Safer Food Better Business', we are annually inspected by the local environmental health inspector and achieved the highest 5-star rating again in 2025.

We offer the children a choice of full fat cow's milk (or suitable alternative if this is not appropriate) or water at morning and afternoon snacks. Water is offered with lunch or tea and is freely available throughout the day with the older children able to self-serve themselves from the water cooler or from the sink in the garden. We encourage and support children as they transition from bottles to free-flowing cups with lids at around six months and then to open cups by the age of twelve months. Information for parents and carers about this stage of development is included in our bottle making procedure, settling in packs and via newsletters and the website.

Children are not rushed when eating and sit with their groups, if they require an alternative food or drink to meet their individual needs then this will be provided by the nursery. We give parents feedback about how their child is eating and will work in partnership with parents to resolve any individual issues. Children's independence is supported as older children can serve their own vegetables, scrape their own plates when finished, and pour their own drinks. We encourage good table manners, the use of age-appropriate cutlery and would never withhold food as a form of punishment.

Our responsibilities

- To ensure that information is obtained from parents about any special dietary requirements, preferences, and allergies that the child has before they start at nursery.
- To ensure staff show careful consideration to seating to avoid cross contamination of food from child to child. Where appropriate age/stages discussions will also take place with all children about allergies and potential risks to make them aware of the dangers of sharing foods.
- To show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. They do not use a child's diet or allergies as a label for the child, or make a child feel singled out because of his/her diet or allergy.
- To provide healthy, balanced, and nutritious snacks, meals, and drinks to meet individual needs.
- To ensure that those responsible for the handling of food are competent to do so and that all kitchen staff have undergone food hygiene training.
- To ensure that fresh drinking water is always available and accessible to the children.
- To notify Ofsted and any relevant health agencies and follow advice given in the event of any food poisoning affecting two or more children looked after on the premises.
- To ensure that any food brought into nursery for example in a child's packed lunch is nut free and is stored as appropriate for the contents.
- To follow our bottle making procedure to hygienically make baby's bottles as needed and for keycarer to cuddle baby while giving them their bottle.
- To ensure that baby's bottles are rinsed and returned to parents for sterilisation and that cup lids and spoons for young babies are sterilised using the equipment provided.
- To record what food was served including special diets and the amount eaten and drunk by each child.
- Quantities offered take account of the ages of the children being catered for in line with recommended portion sizes for babies and young children.

- No child is ever left alone when eating/drinking to minimise the risk of choking.

