

Watery Lane Preschool

Food and Drink Policy



Policy statement

At Watery Lane Preschool we regard 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 using resources and materials from the Pre-school Learning Alliance. At snack-times, we aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs.

Procedures

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we ask their parents about their dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies. (See our Managing Children who are Sick, Infectious or with Allergies Policy.)
- We record information about each child's dietary needs in the Admission Form and parents 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. Parents sign the updated record to signify that it is correct.
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all our staff and volunteers are fully informed about them.
- 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 provide nutritious food for all snacks, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings and with reference to the Food Allergens Guide (see appendix).
- We offer a variety of foods at each snack time.
- 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 we are especially vigilant where we have a child who has a known allergy to nuts.
- Through discussion with parents and research reading, we obtain information about the dietary rules of the religious groups to which children and their parents belong, and of vegetarians and vegans, as well as about food allergies. We take account of this information in the provision of food and drinks.

- When appropriate we will 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 show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. We 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 adults 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. We inform the children about how to obtain the water and that they can ask for water at any time during the day.
- We offer children who arrive before 8.20am breakfast which includes a selection of cereals, toast and fresh fruit. Milk and water are freely available and the children are encouraged to drink with their breakfast. Children are supported to clean their teeth after eating breakfast where requested.
- We inform parents who provide food for their children about the storage facilities available in our 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 discourage children from sharing and swapping their food with one another.
- We provide semi-skimmed pasteurised milk.

Packed lunches

- We ensure perishable contents of packed lunches are refrigerated or contain an ice pack to keep food cool;
- We inform parents of our policy on healthy eating;
- We inform parents that we do not have the facilities to reheat cooked food brought in from home.
- We encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit, and milk based deserts, such as yoghurt or crème fraîche, where we can only provide cold food from home. We discourage sweet drinks and can provide children with water.

- We share our Lunch Contract with parents explaining why 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. Healthier options are suggested within the contract document.
- We ensure that adults sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion and staff act as good role models, encouraging good eating habits and table manners. They are also vigilant during snack and lunchtimes with regard to the choking risks and staff on lunch duty **MUST** be within sight **AND** hearing of all children who are eating. There must always be a minimum of 1 member of staff present when children are eating, with a paediatric first aid qualification.
- Parents have the option to order a cooked lunch for their child at a current cost of £2.60 and this is provided and supplied by BET. A member of staff will collect any lunches each day from St. Michael's School. The cooked lunches have been temperature checked prior to being placed into an insulated box which keeps the food at temperature for 3-4 hours to ensure food safety.

Further guidance

- Safer Food, Better Business (Food Standards Agency)
- <http://www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/allergy-guide>
- Eat Better, Start Better guidelines (Actionforchildren.org.uk – 2017)

Links to other policies and legislation

- **Link to: Covid-19 risk assessment and Covid-19 procedures during the coronavirus period**
- The Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 1995/2005 & 2006
- Regulation (EC) 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Hygiene of Foodstuffs.
- Guidance on temperature control legislation - Food Standards Agency
- Food Safety Act 1990
- The **Food Safety and Hygiene** (England) Regulations **2013**
- **Early years foundation stage framework-** September 2025

Please see also our Managing Children who are Sick, Infectious or with Allergies Policy, Induction Procedures, Policy and Procedures for the Notification of Accidents and Incidents, Health and Safety Policy, Children's Admission Forms, Staff Training Certificates, Lunch Contract.

A unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling environments	Learning and development
1.2 Inclusive Practice 1.3 Keeping Safe 1.4 Health and Well-being	2.1 Respecting Each Other 2.2 Parents as Partners	3.4 The Wider Context	

This policy was adopted at a meeting of **Watery Lane Preschool**

Held on _____ Signed on behalf of Management Committee _____

Name of signatory _____ Role of signatory _____

Date to be reviewed _____