



Food and drink

Policy statement

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 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 ask their parents about their dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies. (See the Managing Children who are Sick, Infectious or with Allergies Policy.)
- We record information about each child's dietary needs in the Registration 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 snacks, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- 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.
- We require staff to 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 snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and feeding themselves.
- 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 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.
- For young children who drink milk, we provide semi-skimmed milk

Packed lunches

When children bring in packed lunches, we:

- ensure perishable contents of packed lunches are refrigerated or contain an ice pack to keep food cool;
- 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; and
- ensure that staff sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.

Legal framework

- Regulation (EC) 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Hygiene of Foodstuffs.

Further guidance

- Safer Food, Better Business (Food Standards Agency 2011)

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	Tansor Playgroup Committee
Held on	25 th June 2008
Signed on behalf of Tansor Playgroup Committee	Nicola Clayton-Bailey
Role of signatory	Chair of Playgroup Committee
This policy was reviewed and updated on	19 th January 2010
Reviewed on behalf of Tansor Playgroup Committee	Faye Betts
Role of reviewer	Chair of Playgroup Committee
This policy was reviewed and updated on	1 st September 2012
Reviewed on behalf of Tansor Playgroup Committee	Adrian Smith
Role of reviewer	Chair of Playgroup Committee
This policy was reviewed and updated on	18 th January 2017
Reviewed on behalf of Tansor Playgroup Committee	Sue Bradley
Role of reviewer	Co-Chair of Playgroup Committee

Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications

- Nutritional Guidance for the Under Fives (Ed. 2010)
- The Early Years Essential Cookbook (2009)
- Healthy and Active Lifestyles for the Early Years (2012)