

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

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, and to develop some independent skills. 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.)
- Parents/Carers record information about their child's dietary needs in the Personal Information Record and sign the form.
- We regularly consult with parents to ensure that our records of their children's dietary needs – including any allergies - are up-to-date.
- 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 meals and snacks, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- We provide snacks from various 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 where we have a child who has a diagnosed 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, as well as about food allergies. We take account of this information in the provision of food and drinks.
- 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 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. We inform the children about how to obtain the water and that they can ask for water at any time during the day.
- We inform parents who provide food for their children about the storage facilities available in our setting.
- We discourage children from sharing and swapping their food with one another.
- For children who drink milk, we provide milk.

Packed lunches

Where children bring packed lunches, we:

- can provide refrigeration for perishable contents of packed lunches or they can 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 fraiche. We discourage sweet drinks and can provide children with water.
- discourage packed lunch contents that consist largely of crisps, processed foods, sweet drinks and sweet products such as cakes or biscuits. We request parents/carers to cut grapes and cherry tomatoes in half to reduce the risk of choking.
- provide children bringing packed lunches with plates, cups and cutlery; and
- ensure that staff are 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 by	<u>CROWMARSH PRE-SCHOOL</u>	<i>(name of provider)</i>
On	<u>14TH NOVEMBER 2016</u>	<i>(date)</i>
Date to be reviewed	<u>NOV. 2018</u>	<i>(date)</i>
Signed on behalf of the provider	<u><i>Reynolds</i></u>	
Name of signatory	<u>MICHELLE REYNOLDS</u>	
Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)	<u>CO-CHAIR</u>	

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)