



Food safety and nutrition

3.1 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 a varied source of resources and materials. At snack, we aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs and we encourage parents to provide a varied nutritional packed lunch for their children to enjoy at lunch time.

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.
- 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.
- 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 snack and lunch 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 ask parents to provide a drinks bottle for their child to contain water and staff inform the children about where to obtain the water bottles throughout the day and that they can ask for water refills at any time during the day.

- 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 and methods to keep cool and fresh.
- 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 whole pasteurised milk.

Packed lunches

Children are required to bring packed lunches, we:

- ensure perishable contents of packed lunches contain an ice pack to keep food cool;
- Lunch box trolley is stored in a cool place.
- 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 fraiche, where we can only provide cold food from home.
- 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;

Legal framework

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

Further guidance

- Sugar Smart 2023
- Safer Food, Better Business (Food Standards Agency 2011)
- Healthy and Active Lifestyles for the Early Years (Pre-school Learning Alliance 2012)

This policy was adopted by

Sunnybank pre-school

Adopted on

24/11/2021

Date reviewed

17/05/2023

Date for next review

17/05/2024

Signed on behalf of the provider

Name of signatory

Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)
