

FOOD AND DRINK POLICY.

Statement of Intent

Sharing snack/meal times together is an important part in the social life at our playgroup. The time spent at snack/meals times reinforces the children's awareness of healthy eating, it encourages them to try different foods if those around them are, it develops their fine motor skills, control and self-esteem by allowing them to spread and pour, it helps develop a sense of responsibility and pride by being asked to hand out plates, cups, fetch jugs of milk and water, it encourages good table manners, sharing, compromise and allows a relaxed flow of conversation.

Aim

To promote healthy eating by providing a choice of fresh, nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs. These foods include fresh fruit and vegetables along with bread sticks, cream crackers, cheese, and rice cakes. To educate children of the effects that foods and drinks have on our bodies and support them in making healthy choices.

To encourage those parents whose children stay to lunch club to pack a healthy nutritious lunch.

Procedures

Food is stored and prepared in the upstairs kitchen in a safe and hygienic environment.

Staff receive food hygiene training.

We have food management procedures in place to control any hazards that could arise when providing food & drink. Special care is taken with food that can cause choking such as

- stones and pips are removed from fruit before serving
- small round foods, like grapes, strawberries and cherry tomatoes, are cut lengthways and into quarters
- Cheese is cut into strips rather than chunks

Box Pre-School Playgroup
Food and Drink Policy

- large fruits like melon, and hard fruit or vegetables like raw apple and carrot into slices instead of small chunks
- We do not give whole nuts and seeds to children under five years old
- We do not give popcorn as a snack
- We do not give marshmallows or jelly cubes from a packet either to eat or as part of messy play activities as they can get stuck in the throat
- We do not give children hard sweets.

These procedures are reviewed regularly to ensure they are effective.

Before a child starts at Pre-school, we find out from parents their child's dietary needs, including any allergies.

We record information about each child's dietary needs and produce a poster, which is displayed in the eating area and food hygiene diary showing details of the child and their specific dietary requirements so all staff, and volunteers are aware.

- We require staff to show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. Staff 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.
- Children wash their hands before eating or drinking.
- Children are always supervised when eating.
- Snack times and lunch times are social occasions in which children and staff participate.
- At the meal times children are encouraged and supported to develop independence through making choices.
- Only milk and water are served at snack time and lunch time.
- 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 session.

Lunch

- Children who attend lunch club should be provided with a healthy packed lunch and guidelines are given to parents regarding this.
- The children all sit together & staff ensure lunch club is a social occasion in which children & staff participate.
- Food contained within the packed lunch should be cold (we do not have the facilities to heat food).
- During warm weather we recommend that freezer packs are used to keep the packed lunch cool.
- Foods such as grapes, cherry tomatoes & cocktail sausages **MUST** be cut by parents in half lengthwise and quartered to avoid being a choking hazard.
- Sweets are a treat & should not be part of a child's lunch.
- Staff will encourage children to eat all their lunch starting with healthy choices, but staff will respect the child's wish to finish their lunch if they are full.
- All uneaten food & empty packages will be returned in the lunch box so parents/carers can monitor their child's food consumption.
- We communicate information about children's severe allergies in a sensitive manner and with regard to our confidentiality policy.

If 2 or more children that are looked after on the premises are affected by food poisoning we inform Ofsted within 14 days of the incident occurring.