

Food and Drink Policy

Rationale

In the Pre-School Centre we believe it is important to provide our children with a positive healthy eating experience in order to promote their wellbeing. We also encourage children to look at the long-term effects of a healthy and balanced diet.

We respect the different dietary, cultural and health needs of all our children.

We recognise we are a valuable role model to children and their families regarding food and healthy eating patterns.

Through effective leadership, the nursery ethos and the curriculum, the staff bring together all elements of the nursery day to create an environment which supports a healthy lifestyle.

The Pre-school Centre will:

- Ensure children's individual medical or dietary requirements are respected. Parents should discuss any special requirements with the managers at registration or as and when they arise.
- Staff who prepare and handle food receive appropriate training and understand and comply with, food safety and hygiene regulations.
- All members of staff, including students and volunteers, receive copies of the Food and Drink Policy and this is discussed with them during their induction meeting.
- All staff, students and volunteers are made fully aware of individual children's dietary needs and requirements.
- The Food and Drink Policy is made available to all parent and carers.
- Records are kept of menus and the food intake of babies and children under 2 and recorded on our Parents Zone app.
- To ensure that we are giving consistent messages about food and health.
- To give our children the information they need to make healthy choices.
- To promote health awareness.
- To contribute to the healthy physical development of all members of our community.
- To encourage all children to take part in the NHS Change4Life for Early Years Providers incentive.

Availability of water

- We have fresh drinking water and suitable cups or water bottles readily available for children and staff at all times.
- We encourage the children to help themselves to water, either with support or independently.
- We support the children in recognising that they need to drink water when they are thirsty, hot or tired, or feeling unwell.
- We monitor the amounts children drink.

Meals

- All our hot meals are provided by the University's Hospitality department, we offer a variety of meals on a 4-weekly menu to provide a range of cultural and nutritious choices for the children.

All food is temperature probed on arrival to ensure the correct temperatures are met and these are recorded.

All food is separate on arrival and contained a hot box.

- Meals and snacks offered at our Centre will all be nutritionally balanced and in-line with the child's appropriate portion sizes.
- Healthy eating policy.

Dietary requirements

- Staff respect and make arrangements for children's cultural and religious needs.
- Food across the Curriculum.
- In the Centre, there are ongoing opportunities for children to develop knowledge and understanding of health, including healthy eating patterns and practical skills that are needed to understand where food comes from such as shopping, preparing and cooking. food. Staff act as excellent role models to the children.

Special dietary needs and food allergies

- We use sensitivity in catering for children with specific dietary needs.
- We update records of children's specific dietary requirements regularly and keep these in a prominent place.
- Ongoing reviews with parents will take place to assess all children's dietary needs.

Snacks

- We provide toast in the morning and a healthy fruit snack in the afternoon in line with our healthy eating policy.
- We offer a choice of milk or water at snack time.
- We offer a rolling snack time to enable children to eat when they have finished their play experiences.
- We encourage the children to take turns, share and be polite.
- We encourage common courtesies such as saying 'please' and 'thank you'.

Social aspects

- We make every effort to involve parents and children in planning, preparing and serving snacks.
- Partnership with parents/carers.
- The partnership of home and nursery is critical in shaping how children and young people adopt healthy practices; therefore, each must reinforce the other. We appreciate this is not always easy but we must strive to lead by example.
- The Social aspect of mealtimes is emphasised, with staff sitting at the tables with children in small groups in order to encourage conversation, and to assist when the children are of an age where they can start to self-select their meals. The sharing of refreshments plays an important part in the social life of children.
- Wherever possible we 'harvest' our own fruit and vegetables which are grown on-site in the Veg Garden.

Storage of food (including lunch-boxes, if needed)

- Food is stored in hygienic and clean airtight containers.
- Food that needs to be kept chilled is put on the appropriate shelf in a fridge.
- Food is always eaten by its sell-by date.
- Appropriate safe and hygienic arrangements will be made for storing lunch-boxes.

All food waste is disposed of safely and daily.

All food is purchased from supermarkets and is checked before being stored.

Babies and children under 2

To meet the specific needs of babies and children under 2:

- We label and store individual bottles and baby foods hygienically and appropriately.
- We check that bottles are always made up to the correct proportions and quantities, and follow the NHS guidelines.
- We ensure that parental wishes are carried out diligently.
- We encourage babies and toddlers to eat independently in a way that is appropriate for their stage of development.

Reviewed 16.02.2024 by Lisa Best/Saskia Gregory

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