

## **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. We promote healthy eating at Pre-school. 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.
- A risk assessment is completed if allergies/intolerances are reported.
- 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 all snacks and meals, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings..
- We include foods from the diet of each of the children's 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 and we are especially vigilant where we have a child who has a known allergy to nuts.
- 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.

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- 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 meal times so that they are social occasions in which children and adults participate.
- We use snack and meal 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 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.

### *Packed lunches*

Children are required to bring packed lunches. We:

- inform parents of our policy on healthy eating;
- encourage parents to provide a healthy packed lunch. 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. We reserve the right to return this food to the parent as a last resort;
- ensure that adults sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.

### *Breakfast and Light Tea*

For parents that opt for wraparound care hours, breakfast and/or a light tea can be provided. We:

- review each child's registration form and record any allergies and dietary requirements.
- Check ingredients for allergens and clearly listed against weekly menu choices.
- Display weekly menus on preschool door and website.
- ensure that adults sit with children to eat so that the mealtime is a social occasion.

## **Legal framework**

- Regulation (EC) 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Hygiene of Foodstuffs.

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- Healthy Eating Guidance

### Further guidance

- Safer Food, Better Business (Food Standards Agency 2022)
- Healthy Eating Guidance

This policy was adopted by	Ashton Keynes Pre School	<i>(name of provider)</i>
On	17 October 2024	<i>(date)</i>
Date to be reviewed	October 2025	<i>(date)</i>
Signed on behalf of the provider		
Name of signatory	Kate Gardiner	
Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)	Chair	

### 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)