

Diet Policy and Practice

The sharing of refreshments plays an important part in the social life of the Nursery as well as reinforcing children's understanding of the importance of healthy eating. Children's medical and personal dietary requirements are known and respected. This includes, for example, allergies to eggs or nuts. Children's understanding of the importance of healthy eating will be reinforced at Nursery.

The Nursery will ensure that:

- Snacks provided will be nutritious and food containing large quantities of fat, sugar, salt, additives, preservatives and colourings will be avoided
- The dietary rules of religious and cultural groups and also of vegetarians/vegans are known and met in appropriate ways
- Milk provided for children is whole and pasteurised and water is offered as an alternative
- Water is freely available throughout each Nursery session, both indoors and out
- A cake to celebrate birthday is welcome, this can be shop bought or homemade, but must not contain nuts and must be supplied with a list of ingredients
- We discourage sweets to celebrate birthdays
- When cooking with children as an activity, the adults will provide healthy wholesome food, promoting and extending the children's understanding of a healthy diet
- A multi-cultural diet is offered to ensure that children from all backgrounds encounter familiar tastes and that all children have the opportunity to try unfamiliar foods
- The Nursery will observe current legislation regarding food hygiene and obtain training for staff to appropriate levels

Special Dietary Needs Procedure

When a child joins the Nursery, parents are asked to inform the Nursery of all food allergies and dietary, medical or cultural requirements. This information is recorded and circulated to all staff. Information regarding specific individual needs are recorded and kept on a sheet displayed in the Nursery kitchen for staff preparing snack to adhere to. These include children's:

- Allergies
- Strong likes or dislikes
- Cultural or religious requirements

In cases of a severe food allergy the Nursery will make very careful efforts to ensure food screening. The Nursery will not include any unsuitable food in any activity that would exclude the child. We will, if necessary, have an alternative to offer the child where the food cannot be screened.

Meal Times

Lunchtime and snack time are viewed as another learning opportunity for the children. Meal times are social occasions in which children learn to develop their personal and social skills as well as language and communication. Meal times should always be a positive experience and the staff will work hard to develop a structured routine to maintain this, whilst maintaining sensitivity to each child's individual needs. The Nursery staff will endeavour to not allow situations to manifest so that an issue is made out of food and eating.

The Nursery respects different cultures and beliefs and will work with parents to ensure any dietary requirements are adhered to.

At meal times:

- Adults will sit with the children in small groups to promote a family atmosphere
- Children will be encouraged to follow good table manners and hygiene practices
- Wash hands before and after eating
- Wash faces after eating
- Not talk with their mouth full
- Say please and thank you
- Staff will praise and encourage the children to give them a sense of achievement and encouragement
- Children will not be made to eat against their wishes. Children will be encouraged to try their savoury before moving onto their sweet
- Refusal to eat will not be punished
- Parents will be informed of their child's eating habits and staff will work with them to address any issues and develop an appropriate plan for them both to work to, ensuring that there is consistency at home and in the Nursery
- We will aim to accommodate parent's wishes when appropriate for the child's stage of development

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