

## **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. At snack times, we aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs.

We are taking part in the Healthy under 5's programme and we promote health and well being of children and their families throughout the setting.

#### **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.
- 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.
- A snack is provided mid-session (e.g. mid-morning and mid-afternoon) in accordance with the guidelines for early years settings in the Eat Better Start Better guide.
- We plan menus in advance, taking in to account children's preferences and dietary needs.
- We use a three week rolling menu which is amended to incorporate seasonal foods, reduce food wastage and take into account special occasions.
- We display the snack menu for parents to view.
- We provide nutritious food for all snacks, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- To ensure a balanced diet we include a variety of foods from the four main food groups:
  - dairy foods;
  - protein;
  - grains, cereals and starch vegetables; and
  - fruit and vegetables.

- We include foods from different 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 and ask that parents do not put nuts in their child's packed lunches.
- We teach children about healthy eating and oral hygiene and give them opportunities to grow food in our garden and cook food themselves.
- Cooking activities enable children to learn about and try different types of food. We use healthy recipes and help children learn about food hygiene practices.
- Through discussion with parents, 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 meal and snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and adults participate in food preparation, handwashing, setting up and clearing away giving children responsibility.
- 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.
- 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.
- In order to protect children with food allergies, we discourage children from sharing and swapping their food with one another.
- We offer children whole pasteurised milk or water. Water is also available throughout the day.
- There may be rare occasions such as the Christmas party where we allow party food.

### *Packed lunches*

- Children attending the lunch sessions are asked to bring a packed lunch.
- We understand the importance of a balanced and nutritious diet and encourage parents to provide a healthy packed lunch.
- We give out suggestions and advice to parents on how to provide a healthy packed lunch and welcome ideas from parents;
- We discourage sweets and only provide children with water or milk;
- We reserve the right to return food to the parent as a last resort e.g. when the lunch contains nuts etc.
- We ensure that adults sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion and for safety reasons.
- We are unable to refrigerate lunch boxes so parents should use a cool bag or re-usable ice pack to chill foods if necessary.

## Legal framework

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

## Further guidance

- Safer Food, Better Business (Food Standards Agency 2011)

This policy was adopted by

St Nicholas & St Faith Pre-School

On

\_\_\_\_\_ (date)

Date to be reviewed

\_\_\_\_\_ (date)

Signed on behalf of the provider

\_\_\_\_\_

Name of signatory

\_\_\_\_\_

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

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