

## **Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Health**

Where children are provided with meals, snacks and drinks, they must be healthy, balanced and nutritious.

### **6.5 Healthy Food Policy**

#### **Policy statement**

Our provision regards 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 using resources and materials from the Early Years Alliance. At snack times we aim to provide nutritious food that represents the time of day eg, AM breakfast : cereals or toast and a choice of fruit. PM a variety of snacks that meets the children's individual dietary needs. We promote healthy lunch boxes for lunch time.

#### **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.)
- The parents 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. Parents sign the up-dated record to signify that it is correct.
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs and display it in the kitchen so that all 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 display the list of snack for parents to view each session and send home the termly menu at the beginning of each term.
- We provide nutritious food for all snacks, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- We include drinks and a variety of snacks
  - fruit and vegetables,
  - meat, fish, and protein alternatives
  - dairy options,
  - starchy options such as cereals, breads, crackers and bread sticks,
  - milk,
  - water- water station which is available all day for the children to access.

- 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 are especially vigilant where we have a child who has a known allergy to nuts.
- From the guidance, Infant Toddler Forum all staff monitor portion sizes
- Through discussion with parents and research reading, we obtain information about the dietary rules groups to which children and their parents belong and of vegetarians and vegans, as well about food allergies. We take account of this information in the provision of food and drinks.
  
- We provide a vegetarian alternative on days when meat or fish are offered and make every effort to ensure Halal meat or Kosher food is available for children who require it.
- 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.
- In accordance with parents wishes, we offer children arriving in the morning, and /or staying late, an appropriate snack.
- We organise snack and lunch times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate.
- We use snack and lunch 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 available for the children at our water station, which is available all day. We inform the children about how to obtain the water and help where necessary.
- We inform parents who provide food for their children about the storage facilities available in the 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.
- We provide semi-skimmed milk for the children.

### *Packed lunches*

Where we cannot provide cooked meals and children are required to bring packed lunches, we:

- ensure perishable contents of packed lunches are refrigerated or contain an ice pack to keep food cool;
- inform parents of whether we have facilities to microwave cooked food brought from home;
- encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit and milk based deserts, such as yoghurt or crème fraîche. We discourage sweet drinks and can provide children with water or milk;
- we ask for no fizzy drinks or chocolate bars or sweets and only 1 treat either biscuit, crisps or a cake, we reserve the right to return this food to the parent as a last resort ;
- we provide children bringing packed lunches with plates, cups and cutlery ;
- ensure staff sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.

## 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 at a meeting of \_\_\_\_\_ *(name of provider)*

Held 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) \_\_\_\_\_

## 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)