

Nutrition, Meals and Healthy Eating Policy:

At snack and meal times we aim to provide nutritious food which meets the children's individual dietary needs. The food we provide has been assessed to ensure that all essential food groups are covered as part of a balanced diet throughout the day. We aim to meet the full requirements of the Ofsted Care Standards on Food and Drink (Standard 8) and the EYFS Welfare Requirements.

- Before a child attends the nursery we find out from parents about their child/ren's dietary needs including any allergies. We record information about each child's dietary needs in her/his registration record and parents sign the record to signify that it is correct. We regularly consult with parents to ensure that our records of their child/ren'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 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 their parents' wishes.
- We plan menus in advance involving children, staff and at times parents in the planning. We display the menus of meals/snacks for the information of parents. Menus include at least 3 servings of fresh fruit and vegetables per day.
- We provide nutritious food at all meals and snacks avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings. We include protein and calcium for growth as well as essential minerals and vitamins in meals that are offered.
- We include some cultural foods providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones. Through discussion with parents and research reading by staff we obtain information about the dietary rules of the religious groups to which children and their parents belong and of vegetarians and vegans, and about food allergies. We take account of this information in the provision of food and drinks.
- Staff show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. Staff will 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.

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- We organise meal and snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate. 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 which are appropriate for their ages and stages of development and which take account of the eating practices in their cultures.
- We have rules about children sharing and swapping their food with one another in order to protect children with food allergies. Drinks
- Access to drinking water throughout the day is available for all children in labeled water bottles. Bottles are either labeled with a child's name or photograph and for younger children (0-2 years) staff support is available where required. All drinks are kept at a point that is easy to access by all children in each room.
- For children who drink milk we provide whole and pasteurised milk. We provide milk for children and offer alternatives for children with milk allergies. Allergy requirements are discussed with parents and carers and a suitable alternative is found and provided as necessary. Meals and Snacks
- We source and purchase food from well known reputable companies. We ensure that food is delivered by appropriate means e.g. frozen goods remain frozen in transit.
- Snack times and meal times are part of the daily routine and we have set times for these. This ensures that all children sit down to eat together and promotes a relaxed social time where children can develop their PSED skills.
- Children are encouraged to help themselves to cold foods like sandwiches and fruit plus some hot foods that are safe for the preschool children to handle. For younger children hot food is provided by the staff to ensure the safety of the children at all times.

When children are reluctant to eat practitioners will accept the child's wishes and provide only positive encouragement. Children will not be made to eat what they do not want and depending on individual circumstances an alternative may be offered. This information will be shared with parents to try to identify any underlying problems and develop solutions which may be incorporated into the child's next session.

- If a child misses a meal because he/she is asleep or arrives late then the meal will be stored in appropriate storage conditions until such a time that the child is ready to eat. If the food on offer is no longer safe to eat i.e. if it cannot be re-heated then an alternative meal will be offered.

Parents and Carers

- For each child under two we provide parents with daily written information about feeding routines, intake and preferences.
- We also provide recipes of our most popular dishes for parents to take home and try with the rest of the family.
- We inform parents who provide food for their children about the storage facilities available in the nursery and provide information about suitable containers for food.
Parents and Carers Providing Meals/Snacks
- In the event of a parent/carer wishing to provide a packed lunch for their child a discussion will take place about the types of foods which will be appropriate for them to provide in the nursery. This is to ensure that children still have access to healthy foods whilst at the nursery and that children who are eating at the same table as the child with a packed lunch do not get conflicting messages about what constitutes healthy food.
- Packed lunches will be clearly labeled with the child's name and stored in the fridge when requested.
- If a parent/carer forgets to provide a packed lunch as discussed we will contact the parents to seek clarification about what they would like us to provide their child on that day. Birthdays and Celebrations Children's birthdays are celebrated in accordance with individual children's cultures and beliefs. If parents wish to bring a birthday cake in to share with the children this is permitted but must be bought not homemade. However children are only provided with a small piece of cake at snack or mealtime along with the regular fruit they receive.

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Dietary needs

- Children's dietary needs are displayed in each room to ensure that all staff, volunteers and students are aware of individual children's dietary needs.
- Copies of these lists are also kept in the kitchen to inform the cook of any changes which may be necessary to adhere to these requirements.
- The nursery takes into account individual families' cultural and religious practices and we work with parents to ensure that the meals we offer are in accordance with their wishes.
- We encourage all children to eat together and share their own likes and dislikes with peers. However staff encourage all children to be sensitive to other children's individual dietary needs and eating habits and demonstrate to children the appropriate behaviour and responses whilst at the table. Meal time procedures A child-centered, happy and relaxed atmosphere should extend throughout the day and accordingly at all meal times. Children are provided with food and drink at regular intervals in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink are properly prepared, nutritious and comply with dietary and religious requirements as necessary. Practitioners should:
 - Make meal and snack times a positive experience for all children by not rushing meal times.
 - Encourage children to feed themselves to develop their independence and fine motor skills.
 - Encourage children's table manners.
 - Respect children's and adult's cultural differences that are different from their own. Practitioners will sit and eat with the children making positive comments and having a positive approach to healthy eating. Staff meals and snacks
 - Staff are encouraged to sit and eat with the children at lunch times.

Meals are offered to all staff for a nominal daily price.

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- If staff choose to bring their own lunches they are asked to store and eat these in the staff room. Whilst we recognise every individual's right to choose their own foods we also work in an environment where it is of the utmost importance to promote healthy eating within the rooms. It is therefore inappropriate for staff to consume unhealthy food near the children as this may not support our healthy eating ethos. No canned drinks, sweets or crisps are to be kept or consumed in the nursery rooms.
- Fresh drinking water is available for staff however in the interest of safety; hot drinks must not be taken into the areas where children are present unless they are in a sealed screw top thermos cup. This includes public corridors and outdoor areas.