

Food and Drink Policy

We provide children with food, drinks and snacks that are healthy, balanced and nutritious and we promote eating 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day.

We obtain and record information on a care plan from parents about their child's dietary requirements before they start at the nursery. We have dietary procedures in place to manage these requirements.

Fresh drinking water is available at all times to all children.

Mealtimes are a social occasion providing children with a variety of learning opportunities. Staff role model good manners, mealtime etiquette, conversation, new vocabulary and encourage children to try new foods and understand the value of good health and nutrition.

Older children are encouraged to serve themselves independently with assistance where required to pour their own drinks, lay the tables etc.

Children will be given a child sized knife, fork and spoon and encouraged and supported to use these. Where it is part of a child's culture to eat with their fingers or chopsticks, this will be encouraged and supported. Babies will be served food using an appropriate weaning spoon and also given their own spoon; they will not be discouraged from using their hands to eat their food as this is part of their development.

Packed lunches and other food provided by parents are not permitted on site due to the risk involved with children with dietary requirements.

We do not reheat food; if a child misses a meal (e.g. because they are asleep) we will prepare them a substitute meal.

Where a child is weaning we will discuss with the parents their requirements and consult our Weaning Guidelines to come up with a joint strategy to meet the needs of the individual child. These will be reviewed weekly with the parents in line with our Working in Partnership policy.

Food is not used as a reward or withheld as a punishment; children are encouraged and supported to eat the meal served but if they do not eat anything then an alternative will be offered where possible. We will discuss with parents relevant strategies to deal with any issues regarding food.

We cannot guarantee an environment free from any food product including nuts.

We comply with food hygiene legislation and have relevant Model Kitchen Procedures (available on request) in place to ensure food is stored and prepared safely. Staff who prepare and handle food are trained to do so.

In the event of any cases of food poisoning, we will inform Ofsted and Environmental Health and take the appropriate action.

We encourage birthday celebrations in nursery however we do not permit parents to bring in birthday cakes or other party food, party bags or food gifts due to our strict dietary requirements procedures which is in place to manage the risk to children with food allergies, and also to meet parents' preferences for their child. The staff and children will make a cake in nursery and parents are invited to bring in books or games to share with the other children.