

SAFEGUARDING & WELFARE REQUIREMENT: HEALTH

6.5 Food and Drink



Policy Statement

At St John's Playtime Pre-school 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 and meal times, we aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs. Children are supervised when eating and always remain in sight and hearing of staff.

Procedures

We follow these procedures to promote healthy eating in our setting.

- Before a child starts to attend our setting, we ask their parents about their dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies (see policy 6.2 'Managing Children who are Sick, Infectious or with Allergies').
- We record information about each child's dietary needs in their 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 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 our snack menus for parents to view.
- We provide a café style 'rolling' snack which we encourage children's independence when helping to cut fruit and pour their own drinks.
- We provide nutritious food for all snacks, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- 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.
- 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, as well as about food allergies. We take account of this information in the provision of food and drinks.

- We require staff to show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. Our 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.
- We organise snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate.
- We use 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 and that take account of the eating practices in their cultures.
- 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.
- 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.

Packed Lunches

Children who stay for our 'Lunch Club' are required to bring a packed lunch with them as we cannot provide cooked meals in our setting. We therefore:

- Inform parents of our policy on healthy eating;
- Inform parents that lunch boxes should contain an ice pack as we are unable to refrigerate perishable items;
- Inform parents that we are unable to microwave cooked food brought in from home;
- Encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit, and milk based deserts, such as yoghurt or crème fraîche, as we can only provide cold food from home. We discourage sweet drinks and can provide children with water as an alternative;
- Discourage packed lunch contents that consist largely of crisps, processed foods, sweet drinks and sweet products such as cakes or biscuits. We reserve the right to return this food to the parent as a last resort;
- Inform our parents of our 'No Nuts' policy.

We also have a practitioner who is a trained **PANCO** (Physical and nutritional coordinator), **Kenna Keys**, who is able to support families with any concerns in this area.

- Information for parents is displayed on the parent's notice board, including:

- Ten Steps for Healthy Toddlers https://infantandtoddlerforum.org/media/upload/pdf-downloads/HR_toddler_booklet_green.pdf

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 held by St John's Playtime Pre-school committee on 17th June 2009.

This policy was reviewed & updated on: April 2023

This policy will be reviewed again on: April 2024

Signed on behalf of the Management committee and provider:

Name of Signatory: Lisa Calver *Lcalver*

Role of Signatory: Committee Chairperson