

6.4 Nutrition and Mealtimes

EYFS: The Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements
3.48-3.50

Policy Statement

Mealtimes should be happy, social occasions for children and staff alike. Positive interactions should be shared at these times and enjoyed. Hopes and Dreams is committed to offering children healthy, nutritious and balanced meals and snacks that meet individual needs and requirements.

Procedures

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

- A balanced and healthy breakfast, lunch, tea and two daily snacks are provided for children attending a full day at the nursery
- We display the menus of meals/snacks for the information of parents.
- All allergens are displayed on the menus to show the contents of each meal
- Meals and snack times are organised so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate in small groups.
- During meals and snacks, children are encouraged to use their manners and say, 'please' and 'thank you' and conversation is encouraged. This is role modelled and facilitated by the staff.
- Staff set a good example and most eat with the children to show good table manners.
- 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 and that take account of the eating practices in their cultures.
- No child is ever left alone when eating/drinking to minimise risk of choking and there is always a first aider available at snack and mealtimes.
- Quantities offered will take account of the ages of the children being catered for in line with recommended portion sizes for babies and young children
- Any child who shows signs of distress at being faced with a meal they do not like will have the food removed without any fuss, but no alternative will be offered in replacement as we do not want children to develop bad habits.
- If a child does not finish their first course, they will still be given their dessert, but will not be offered seconds. The purpose behind this as we do not want children to associate dessert as a 'treat'.
- Children not on special diets will be encouraged to eat a small piece of everything
- Children who are slow eaters will be given time and will not be rushed
- Children who refuse to eat at mealtimes will be offered food later in the day e.g. babies falling asleep.
- The nursery will provide parents of children **under three's only**, with daily written records of feeding routines and meals eaten for all children.

- The nursery will not provide food to be taken home for consumption.
- We do not allow parents to bring in their own food due to allergies and Health & Safety requirements.
- Children's birthdays are made special with a platter of fruit and through various activities within the classrooms.
- In the very unlikely event of any food poisoning affecting two or more children on the premises, whether or not this may arise from food offered at the nursery, we will inform Ofsted as soon as reasonably practical and in all cases within 14 days. We will also inform the relevant health agencies and follow any advice given.

Mealtimes

- Breakfast – is served between 8.00am – 8.30am and consists of cereal, toast, and an option of either fruit or vegetables.
- Lunch – A hot meal is served at 11.30am, for babies, 11.45am for toddlers and 12.00pm for pre-schoolers. Lunch consists of a main dish, served with vegetables or salad, and a fruit or dairy based dessert.
- Tea - is served at 3.30pm for babies and toddlers, 4.00pm for pre-schoolers. This too consists of a main and fruit for dessert.
- Snacks - Healthy, nutritious snacks are served at appropriate times during the day.

Menu Planning

- Our menus are rotated on a 4 weekly cycle and are reviewed twice a year. Spring/Summer and Autumn/Winter.
- We have a separate menu for babies who are weaning.
- We provide foods from the diet of each of the children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones.
- We liaise with nutritionists with the Early Years Nursery Partnership to ensure we meet the criteria for The Child's Food Trust under 5's nutritional guidelines.
- Please see <http://www.eynpartnership.org/> for further information.

Healthy Eating

- The nursery will promote positive attitudes to healthy eating through play opportunities, cooking activities and discussions
- We promote the importance of healthy eating, and foods that are good for us.
- We limit the use of processed foods.
- We provide organic, meat, fruit and vegetables and our fish is responsibly resourced,
- For children who drink milk, we provide organic milk. Whole milk for the under 2's and semi-skimmed for the over 2's.
- When meat or fish is served, there is always a vegetarian alternative, made to look as close to the main dish as possible.
- We provide a minimum of five portions of fruit and vegetables a day on our menu.
- We provide nutritious food for all meals and snacks, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- Only milk and water are provided as drinks to promote oral health. Water is served with meals and milk is served with snacks.
- Dried fruits are only offered as part of a main meal rather than a snack to prevent tooth decay.

- 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 include a variety of foods from the four main food groups:
 - meat, fish and protein alternatives
 - dairy foods
 - grains, cereals and starch vegetables
 - fruit and vegetables
- We provide a mixture of white and brown grains such as rice and pasta.
- Whereas guidelines recommend a mixture of white and wholemeal bread is to be offered across the week particularly for children under 2, who's digestive systems are not yet ready to cope with just wholemeal. Due to the number of part time children who attend Hopes and Dreams Montessori Nursery, to ensure that they do not get too much of one or the other, we provide the 50/50 bread, which has been approved by the nutritionist.

Desserts

Sugary foods and confectionery should be avoided between meals but are not banned altogether. In fact, a sweet pudding after lunch is encouraged, in order to provide a sufficient intake of calories, fat and nutrients to meet the relatively high needs of this age group.

Many parents will request just fruit as a dessert option for their child, believing this to be the most balanced choice. However, by supplying fruit alone, children often don't receive enough calories, carbohydrate or nutrients (such as iron and calcium), which a variety of different dessert options can help to provide.

For this reason, we follow the Children's Food Trust recommendation that a dessert should be provided as part of lunch and tea each day. They suggest a variety of options (such as crumbles or baked apples, semolina, rice pudding or custard, yoghurt or fromage frais, carrot cake or fruit flapjack and fruit salads) rather than relying on fresh fruit alone.

<http://www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk/childrens-food-trust/early-years/>

Please note that our desserts are fruit and milk based.

Special Dietary Requirements

- During the child's induction, parents will need to inform us, in writing, of any dietary requirements, whether they are, serious medical allergies, mild allergies/intolerances or religious. We also cater for lifestyle choices such as vegetarian, vegan and gluten free.
- For severe allergies, we will need parents to complete a Health Plan which is reviewed every six months, and they will also be asked to provide the nursery with medication such as Piriton or epi pens (Please note, there must be two epi-pens provided and kept at the nursery)
- Any dietary requirements will be put onto the Dietary Requirements List, a copy of which is kept in the classrooms and the kitchen.
- Good communication between home and the nursery is very important and we ask parents to inform in writing when there are changes to their child's dietary needs.
- Each day, the cook will cross reference the 'forms' with the menus and provide alternate food if necessary.

- Extreme care will be taken to check all foods for ingredients to prevent children being given foods they must not have.
- Any food different to the main meal is labelled accordingly.
- We give careful consideration to seating to avoid cross contamination of food from child to child. Where appropriate, an adult will sit with children during meals to ensure safety and minimise risks. Where appropriate, age/stage discussions will also take place with all children about allergies and potential risks to make them aware of the dangers of sharing certain foods
- Staff show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. They 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
- Whilst we will support parents with their weaning process, by the age of one, we will expect all children (except those with allergies, religious or lifestyle choices reasons) to be following our menus, inclusive of desserts.

Children's Drinking Water

- Fresh drinking water is available at all times for the children.
- For the baby rooms, (under 2's), fresh beakers of water are made up each morning, individually labelled with the children's names. They are kept in the room and offered to the children regularly throughout the day, as well as each mealtime. The water is changed at least once a day.
- In the toddler and pre-school rooms (2-5yrs) there is a drinking table with a water dispenser and beakers, so that children can freely access water at all times. The toddlers are encouraged to place their beakers in the washing – up bowl when they have used them, and the staff will wash and replace them at regular intervals, but the pre-school children are encouraged to wash and replace them themselves. The water in the dispenser is replaced at least one a day and checked regularly to see if it needs refilling.
- Water at mealtimes and milk with snacks, are offered in jugs so that children use their independence to pour it themselves.
- During warmer weather children are encouraged to drink more frequently

Staff Training

- All staff are trained in Food Hygiene and Allergy Awareness and part of their induction, this is renewed every three years
- The Nursery Chef is trained in nutrition for Under 5's

Reviewed: April 2022	Next review date: April 2023
Signed on behalf of the nursery: <i>L. Thorpe Zuzanska</i>	