3. Food Safety and Nutrition

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3.1 Food and Nutrition

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 Pre-school Learning Alliance. At snack and meal times, we aim to provide/serve nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs.

Procedures

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

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we find out from parents their children's dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies. (See the Managing Children who are Sick, Infectious or with Allergies policy.)
- 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 ask parents to inform us of any changes in their child's dietary needs. 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 updated record to signify that it is correct.
- The child's key person is informed about the individual child's dietary needs and a note is made on the setting's group list so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed.
- 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 ensures that all staff are aware of the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis and the differences between allergies and intolerances which may develop at any time.
- We display the snacks for the information of parents.
- We provide nutritious food for all snacks, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- We include a variety of foods from the main food groups:
  - dairy foods;
  - grains, cereals and starch vegetables; and
  - fruit and vegetables.
- 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, and 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. 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 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.
- Children are supervised during meal and snack times and always remain within sight and hearing of staff and where possible staff are sat facing children when eating to ensure they are eating in a way that prevents choking and so they can prevent food sharing and be aware of any unexpected allergic reactions.
- 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.
- At snack time we provide whole pasteurised milk or water for the children to drink.

- If a child chokes at mealtime and intervention is given. We record details of the incident and ensure that parents/carers are informed.

Lunch Club

Lunch club is run between sessions and available to all children who attend the setting. A packed lunch is provided by the children's parents. At least one Paediatric First Aider must always be on site when children are present, and at least one Paediatric First Aider must be present and within sight and sound of children at mealtimes. Consideration will be given around staff breaks, lunchtimes and abscences from the setting so that we are compliant with paediatric first aid requirements.

We:

- inform parents of our policy on healthy eating;
- encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit, and milk based desserts such as yoghurt or crème fraîche. We discourage sweet drinks and provide children with water or milk.
- 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;
- ensure staff sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion, and where possible staff are sat facing children when eating.

Legal framework

- Regulation (EC) 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the hygiene of foodstuffs
- Food Information Regulations 2014
- The Childcare Act 2006

3.2 Food hygiene

Policy statement

We provide and/or serve food for children on the following basis:

- Snacks.
- Packed lunches.

We maintain the highest possible food hygiene standards with regard to the purchase, storage, preparation and serving of food.

Procedures

- The person in charge and the person responsible for food preparation understands the principles of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) as it applies to their business. The basis for this is risk assessment as it applies to the purchase, storage, preparation and serving of food to prevent growth of bacteria and food contamination.
- All our staff who are involved in the preparation and handling of food have received training in food hygiene.
- The person responsible for food preparation and serving carries out daily opening and closing checks on the kitchen to ensure standards are met consistently.
- We use reliable suppliers for the food we purchase.
- Food is stored at correct temperatures and is checked to ensure it is in-date and not subject to contamination by pests, rodents or mould.
- Packed lunches are stored in a cool place; un-refrigerated food is served to children within 3 hours of arriving at preschool.
- Food preparation areas are cleaned before use as well as after use.
- All surfaces are clean and non-porous.
- All utensils, crockery etc are clean and stored appropriately.
- Waste food is disposed of daily.
- Cleaning materials and other dangerous materials are stored out of children's reach.
- Children do not have unsupervised access to the kitchen.
- When children take part in cooking activities, they:
  - are supervised at all times;
  - understand the importance of hand washing and simple hygiene rules
  - are kept away from hot surfaces and hot water; and
  - do not have unsupervised access to electrical equipment such as blenders etc.

Reporting of food poisoning

- Food poisoning can occur for a number of reasons; not all cases of sickness or diarrhoea are as a result of food poisoning and not all cases of sickness or diarrhoea are reportable.
- Where children and/or adults have been diagnosed by a GP or hospital doctor to be suffering from food poisoning and where it seems possible that the source of the outbreak is within the setting, the manager will contact the Environmental Health Department and the Health Protection Agency, to report the outbreak and will comply with any investigation.
- We notify Ofsted as soon as reasonably practicable of any confirmed cases of food poisoning affecting two or more children looked after on the premises, and always within 14 days of the incident.

Legal Framework

- Regulation (EC) 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the hygiene of foodstuffs

This policy was reviewed by	The Fledgelings Preschool
On	March 2026
Date to be reviewed	March 2027
Signed on behalf of the provider	Ann Goodall
Role of signatory	Management Committee