



## FOOD AND DRINK POLICY

Meal and snack times are an important and an enjoyable part of the children's day. We consider all elements of our work to ensure that we promote health awareness to our children. Our staff understand that they are role models to children about food and healthy eating patterns.

Cooking and baking simple meals is an enjoyable activity for children in the early years unit, and we encourage this. Cookery activities incorporate practice in mathematics and self-care, for example in measuring or counting ingredients and reinforcing the importance of hand washing, etc. Children also feel a sense of pride in cooking, or taking cooked food home with them.

### Aims

- To develop healthy eating and drinking activities that benefit pupils, staff, parents and others associated with the unit;
- To ensure that we are giving consistent messages about food and health;
- To improve the health of children;
- To promote health awareness;
- To give our children the information they need to make healthy choices;
- To contribute to the healthy physical development of the children;
- To provide opportunities for children and adults to share food to celebrate cultural diversity;
- To encourage social interaction with their peers during eating and drinking.

### Methods

- The early years unit will cater for all dietary requirements of the children and will provide nutritious and healthy daily snacks, i.e. fruit, vegetables, yogurt or toast;
- The children have a choice of 2 snacks during each session;
- Snacks are prepared by staff members who have completed their Food Hygiene training;
- The early years unit does not supply breakfast and we expect that children will normally have eaten before arrival. However, if your child has not eaten or is hungry, you may either bring food for him or her to have;
- Milk is free for children who are funded, and the children are encouraged to drink it during snack time;
- Parents who wish for their children to carry on having milk after funding has ceased are offered the option to make a one-off payment or pay termly;
- Fresh drinking water is available indoors and outdoors always. Children are encouraged to drink water during session times;
- No other drinks (such as juice or flavoured milk) can be brought for snack times;
- A packed lunch should consist of a variety of foods suitable to provide a balanced diet. Lunch staff shall make sure that children who bring packed lunches have a nutritious meal. We are unable to heat or prepare food brought from home;

- All children shall be supplied with water at lunchtime;
- Fresh drinking water will be available for all children during trips and outings;
- Children will not be separated at meal times according to the type of meal they have;
- Children will be encouraged to eat and to sample foods but will not be forced;
- Parents will be advised by staff if their child is not eating well.

### **Food allergies**

We aim to include all children whatever their dietary requirements. We ensure that children do not have access to food or drinks to which they are allergic. It is the parent's responsibility to inform the nursery and school using the registration documents of any allergies their child may have.

### **Procedure for eating and drinking**

- Children wash their hands before eating;
- Children are encouraged to read the relevant duas;
- Where appropriate children sit on the floor and eat, if space is limited then children will sit around a table to eat;
- Children are supervised whilst eating and drinking;
- Staff support the children in managing their food, to develop good eating skills and table manners and inculcate the sunnahs of eating and drinking;
- Opportunities to talk about food and healthy lifestyles are maximised;
- Children are given time to eat and drink;
- Children shall not walk around with food or drink;
- Children read the dua when they have finished eating and wash their hands;
- All cultural/religious requirements are respected.

### **Procedure for Food**

- All food is bought locally;
- Staff ensure that the food is not stale or contaminated;
- Staff ensure the 'sell by date' on the packaging has not expired;
- Food is stored either in the fridge or cupboard depending on the instructions on the packaging;
- Staff wash their hands before handling food;
- All snacks are prepared on the day they are due to be eaten, snacks are prepared in advance;
- Food is prepared on clean work surfaces and served in clean bowls/plates;
- All work surfaces are wiped clean with anti-bacterial spray;
- All dishes, utensils and knives are washed in warm soapy water;
- All equipment is left to dry and stored;
- Staff do not carry hot drinks through the play areas and do not place hot drinks within reach of children.