**FOOD AND DRINK POLICY**

**This setting regards snack and meal times as an important part of the setting’s day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating. We promote healthy eating; and at snack times we aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the individual dietary needs.**

**This setting is committed to the Healthy Early Years scheme.**

**WE ARE A NUT FREE SETTING**

**In our setting we provide or serve food for children on the following basis :**

* **Snacks**
* **Packed lunches (brought from home and stored in refrigerator)**

**The pre-school will ensure that:**

* Before a child starts to attend the setting, we find out from parents their children’s dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies (see ‘Managing Children with Allergies’ policy).

* Parents record information about each child’s dietary needs in her/his registration record and sign the form 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.

* The setting has staff members with up-to-date Food Hygiene Certificates.

* 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 his/her diet or allergy.

* We organise meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and feeding themselves.

* We have fresh drinking water constantly available for the children, and this is encouraged, especially on hot days.

* We provide semi-skimmed milk or water with snacks.

* We have rules about children sharing and swapping their food with one another in order to protect children with food allergies.

* We provide nutritious food for all snacks, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.

* 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.

* 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.

* We will ensure parents are aware of the need to check with staff before bringing in food to share (e.g. birthday cakes).

* 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, vegans and other special diets, and about food allergies. We take account of this information in the provision of food and drinks.

* We organize meal and snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate, promoting positive social interaction, to encourage healthy choices and cleanliness.

* Staff model good table manners and are positive about trying new foods and eating together.

* Children have opportunities to learn about growing food, food preparation, healthy eating, balanced diet, hygiene and oral health.

**Packed lunches**

* Packed lunches, provided by the parents, are stored in a refrigerator, clearly labeled with the child’s name.

* We inform parents about healthy eating practices.

* We encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit and milk-based desserts such as yoghurt or crème fraiche. We discourage sweet drinks and can provide children with water or milk.

* We discourage packed lunch contents that consist largely of crisps, processed foods, sweet drinks and sweet products such as cakes or biscuits.

* We ensure staff sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.

* Parents/carers will be advised if their child is not eating well.

**EYFS key themes and commitments**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **A Unique Child**  | **Positive** **Relationships**  | **Enabling** **Environments**  | **Learning and Development**  |
| 1.4 Health and wellbeing  | 2.1 Respecting each other 2.2 Parents as partners 2.4 Key person  | 3.2 Supporting every child 3.4 The wider context  | 4.4 Personal, social and emotional development  |

Date of next review: September 2024

Signed………………………………….. Position…………………………….. Date……………

Copies of the original signed document are available upon request.