

Healthy Eating Policy

Policy statement

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. At snack and meal times, we aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs.



Procedures

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

- Nursery provides a hot cooked lunch and pudding that is prepared on site by our chef. All children that stay for lunch are encouraged to eat a variety of foods. A sandwich or similar may be provided if any child does not eat their hot meal, and fruit and yoghurt is provided as an alternative to the pudding. **Charges apply for the hot meals.**
- Lunchtime is a sociable time for the children and staff, and we do find that the children want to eat the same as all of their peers. We do not actively encourage providing a packed lunch for your child however if you need to, then nursery recommends a cold packed lunch bought into nursery in an appropriate lunch bag/box to maintain freshness. For parents who do provide a packed lunch for their child; we advise that they supply a selection from the following items in accordance with NHS choices a balanced lunch box should contain:
 - Starchy foods – bread, rice, potatoes, pasta
 - Protein foods - meat, fish, beans
 - Dairy – cheese, yoghurt
 - Vegetables, salad
 - Fruit
- It is not necessary to provide a drink in your child's lunch box as water is available. However, should you choose to have a drink, to ensure compliance with our Healthy Eating Policy, this drink should be a high quality fruit juice.
- We 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.

Parents are NOT to send in any confectionary or ANY product containing NUTS.

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we find out from parents their children's dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies and record the information.

- 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/cultural needs and preferences.
- We display the menus for tea and After School Care Club for the information of parents and these are reviewed regularly.
- We provide nutritious food for all meals and snacks, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- Snacks are provided twice a day, and there is a monthly charge for these. **Alternatively, if parents wish to provide the snack, it needs to consist of fruit, vegetables, crackers or breadsticks or something similar.**
- We include a variety of foods from the four main food groups:
 - meat, fish and protein alternatives;
 - dairy foods;
 - grains, cereals and starch vegetables; and
 - fruit and vegetables.
- From time to time we will introduce the children to foods from different cultures.
- 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 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.
- 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.
- The children need to bring in a named water bottle so they can access water throughout the day. We inform the children about how to obtain the water and that they can ask for water at any time.
- In order to protect children with food allergies, we discourage children from sharing and swapping their food with one another.
- For young children who drink milk, we provide whole pasteurised milk. Formula will need to be provided by the parents.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of: Thorney Island Nursery

Held on: May 2023

Date to be reviewed: May 2024

Signed on behalf of the committee: _____

Name of signatory: Karen Theobald

Role of signatory: Manager