

Meal and Snack Time Policy

To ensure consistency throughout the nursery this policy outlines the nursery's meal ethos and the staff's responsibilities in ensuring that it is delivered to all children in the setting.

Ethos

We will respect all parent's dietary wishes for their children. Children will be provided with nutritious healthy cooked meals and snacks including their five a day of fruit and vegetables.

Policy and Procedures

Parents dietary wishes and food preferences for their children will be followed. Allergy lists are displayed in all rooms for staff to refer to.

All staff that prepare food will have their food hygiene qualification.

There will always be a first aider present during all mealtimes.

Children will always have access to fresh water, (milk at snack times).

No child will ever be force fed any food or drink.

Staff will follow the recommended guidance for a child's portion size for their age. Extra food will be available for children who are still hungry.

Children that do not eat their dinner will still be given their pudding. Pudding is not to be used as a bribe or a reward for eating lunch or dinner, pudding is part of the meal.

Children are to be encouraged to try foods through praise, staff role modelling good eating habits e.g. not talking with mouth open, and sticker rewards.

We will not offer children food alternatives if they do not eat what is provided at meal times. However we will monitor them and ensure that there is something for them to eat at the next snack or meal time.

Staff will not rush the children at meal times, staff will allow at least 30 minutes for each lunch and dinner time, giving the children time to eat, (approximately 20 minutes for main and 10 for pudding).

Staff will wait until the last child has finished eating (unless a child starts eating later than the others) until clearing all children's plates. This will prevent children finishing just because their friends have, this also teaches children good manners and waiting skills.

Staff will not take a child's plate away from them even if they say that they do not like it. This allows time for the child to change their mind and try/eat the meal.

Children are allowed to explore their food.

We will allow children to get messy during mealtimes. Babies may make marks in their food- which is early mark making.

If a staff member has a concern about a child's eating habits they will discuss this with the parents/carers and/or the nursery manager.

Staff will sit and eat at the table with the children, role modelling good eating habits.

If a child is not eating the meal but exploring it with their hands or cutlery, staff will allow them to do so, unless they are being rude or upsetting their peers in doing so.

Children will use real cutlery to feed themselves and this is encouraged from the baby room and throughout.

All staff to wear appropriate clothing when preparing food.

Appropriate size portions for staff when role modelling and only if available and not stopping the children from having theirs/extra.

All staff and the Management team to ensure we continue to comply with the Food Standards Agency and retain 5/5 grading.