

6.5

Maidenbower Pre-School Playgroup

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Health

Where children are provided with meals, snacks and drinks, they must be healthy, balanced and nutritious.

Food and drink

Policy statement

We regard 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 at snack and meal times and recommend to parent's/carers healthy food to put into children's lunch boxes. We ask parent/carers to provide nutritious snacks, which meets the children's individual dietary needs.

WE DO NOT ACCEPT KIWI OR NUT PRODUCTS DUE TO ALLERGIES

Procedures

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

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we ask their parents/carers about their 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 the Registration Form and parents sign the form to signify that it is correct.
- We regularly consult with parents to ensure that our records of their children's dietary needs – including any allergies - are up-to-date.
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all our 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 needs and preferences, as well as their parent/carers wishes.
- We ask parent/carers to provide nutritious snacks.
- When cooking with the children, we try to avoid large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- We take care not to accept food containing nuts or nut products and we are especially vigilant where we have a child who has a known allergy to nuts.
- Through discussion with parents/carers and research reading, we obtain information about the dietary rules of the religious groups to which children and their parents/carers belong, and of vegetarians and vegans, as well as about food allergies. We take account of this information in the provision of food and drinks.
- On party days we make every effort to ensure Halal meat or Kosher food is available for children who require it or provide another suitable alternative.
- We show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. We 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 adults participate.

- We use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, cutting fruit, pouring 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.
- 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 also encourage children to bring a water bottle in during the warmer months to access freely when needed.
- We inform parent/carers who provide food for their children about the storage facilities available in our setting.
- We give parent/carers 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.
- We provide semi-skimmed milk from the age of two years.

Packed lunches

When children are required to bring packed lunches:

- We ask parent/carers to provide an ice pack to keep food cool
- We inform parents/carers of our policy on healthy eating;
- We encourage parent/carers to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit, and milk-based deserts, such as yoghurt or crème fraiche.
- If providing fruit like grapes, blueberries, tomatoes etc please can you ensure that they are cut in half length ways or quarters so they don't pose a choking risk.
- We do not accept fizzy drinks and can provide children with water.
- We do not accept sweets; these will be left in the lunch box to be eaten at home.
- We discourage packed lunch contents that consist largely of crisps, processed foods, fizzy drinks and sweet products such as cakes or biscuits. We reserve the right to return this food to the parent/carer if deemed unsuitable or leave it in their lunch box/bag.
- We ensure that adults sit or are around the children when they eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.

Legal framework

- Regulation (EC) 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Hygiene of Foodstuffs.

Further guidance

- Safer Food, Better Business (Food Standards Agency 2011)

This policy was adopted by _____ *(name of provider)*
 On _____ *(date)*
 Date to be reviewed _____ *(date)*
 Signed on behalf of the provider _____
 Name of signatory _____
 Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner) _____

