



Food and drink policy

Department - Early Years

Responsible member of staff: **Sarah Harvey – Director of Nursery**

Review date: **April 2023**

Next review: **April 2024**

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Health

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

Promoting health and hygiene

Food and drink policy

Policy statement

Within The Early Years Department, we regard snack and meal times as an important part of the day. Providers must ensure that children are adequately supervised, including whilst eating, and decide how to deploy staff to ensure children's needs are met. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and help children learn about healthy eating, including oral health, as well as learning social skills. At snack and meal times, we aim to provide nutritious, healthy food. Our food is freshly prepared on site by Holroyd Howe, who provide a well-balanced diet for the entire age range of children, including those with special dietary needs. We require parents of babies using formula milk to provide this. Meals are chargeable at cost, or parents may provide a healthy lunch box for their child in accordance with our procedures listed below.

Procedures

We follow the following procedures to promote healthy eating in our Early Years Department.

- Before a child starts to attend the Early Years Department, we find out from parents their children's dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies.
- We record information about each child's dietary needs on her/his registration record, Health questionnaire and 'All about me' on tapestry. We also have an allergy information sheet which parents fill in with the key person before the child starts, this will then be amended every time a parent informs us of a change, parents sign the record to signify that it is correct.
- If a child has an allergy or intolerance we will ask parents if this has been confirmed by a GP/Consultant and then complete a Health care plan accordingly.
- We regularly consult with parents to ensure that our records are correct. We ask parents to keep us informed and updated as to their children's dietary needs, including any allergies their child may have. This applies whether the child has meals provided by Holroyd Howe, or has a lunch box provided.
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all staff are fully informed and aware of them.

- In Robins & Pre-School every child with an allergy or intolerance has a named placement indicating what they are allergic or intolerant to. A red mat indicates an allergy, an orange mat is for an intolerance and a blue mat is for a parental choice, i.e. Vegetarian.
- 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 parents' wishes.
- 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 provide nutritious food for all meals and snacks, which is prepared fresh each day.
- We display the menus of meals/snacks for the information of parents; these are displayed on the notice boards.
- 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.
- We can provide a vegetarian alternative on days when meat or fish is offered and make every effort to ensure Halal meat or Kosher food is available for children who require it. This must be ordered in advance.
- 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. Holroyd Howe is a nut free kitchen.
- Parents who wish to provide food for their child may do so. Food will be stored either in a freezer if frozen, or in the fridge as necessary.
- We remind parents that we are a healthy school and therefore discourage unhealthy snacks or meals. **We do not allow nuts in lunch boxes.** Sweets or unhealthy snacks will not be permitted to be consumed whilst at school or nursery.
- Meals and lunch boxes must be clearly labelled.
- We can give parents who provide food for their children information about suitable containers for food.
- Heating instructions must be clearly visible where applicable (Nest, Chicks only).
- Children in Robins and Pre-School only bring food which is suitable for eating without the need for reheating. We do not reheat meals or snacks from home.
- We will provide children bringing packed lunches, with plates, cups and cutlery.
- In order to protect children with food allergies, we discourage children from sharing and swapping their food with one another.
- 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.
- We have fresh drinking water available and accessible to 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 ask parents to provide a suitable drinking bottle or cup to enable the children to access this independently (age dependent).
- At snack times we offer children the choice of water or milk.
- Children are given a choice of fruit.
- Snack times for children in Robins and Pre-School is set up as a rolling snack. Children can then come and help themselves during this time, therefore not being disruptive to their play/learning. A staff member will always be monitoring the rolling snack station.
- For children who drink milk, we provide whole pasteurised milk in the Nest and Chicks rooms, and semi skimmed milk for all other children.
- Children in Robins are encouraged to be independent at breakfast/snack times. They will bring their plates, bowls and cups to the designated area. If there are any leftovers on their plates/bowls they will scrape these into a bowl or bin provided.
- Children in Pre-School are encouraged to be independent at meal times. After their meal they will bring their plates/bowls/cups up to the designated area. If there are any leftovers on their plates/bowls they will scrape these into a bowl or bin provided.
- Children in Robins and Pre-School will always be encouraged to tidy their drinks cups away after snack time.
- In accordance with parents' wishes, we offer children arriving early in the morning - and/or staying late - an appropriate meal or snack. This is by prior arrangement.
- For each child, in the Nest we provide parents with daily information on tapestry about feeding routines, intake and preferences. In all other rooms parents get a detailed handover from the information staff have recorded throughout the day reading food and snacks.
- We organise meal and snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate. Whenever possible, staff sit with the children to eat their lunch
- We promote good oral health, including encouraging and talking to children about brushing their teeth, providing age appropriate oral health activities and supporting parents.