

## Food and Drink

### Policy statement

Little Learners nurseries regard snack and meal times as an important part of the 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 healthy, balanced and nutritious food, which meets children's individual dietary needs.

### How we organise food and drink in our nurseries

- We provide facilities for the hygienic preparation of food for children.
- Our premises are inspected periodically by local Environmental Health Officers who award a food hygiene rating (Scores on Doors).
- We ensure that staff involved in preparing and handling food receive training in food hygiene.

We have implemented the following to promote healthy eating at Little Learners:

#### 1. At registration:

- Before a child starts, we ask their parents about their child's dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies (also see the Children's Health Policy).
- We ask parents to record information about their child's dietary needs in the Registration Form. Parents are required to sign the form to confirm that information provided is correct.
- We regularly consult with parents to ensure that our records about children's dietary needs, including allergy information, is up-to-date.
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs in the nursery so that all staff are fully informed about them.
- We have systems in place to ensure that children receive only food and drink that is consistent with dietary needs and preferences.

#### 2. Menu planning:

- We plan menus in advance, involving children and parents in the planning wherever possible.
- We display the menus of meals/snacks for parents to view.

#### 3. Healthy eating

- We take care not to provide food containing nuts or nut products. We are especially vigilant where we have a child who has a known allergy to nuts.
- We provide nutritious food for all meals and snacks, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar, salt, artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- We include a variety of foods from the four main food groups:
  - meat, fish and protein alternatives
  - dairy foods
  - grains, cereals and starch vegetables



- fruit and vegetables.

- Fresh drinking water is available and accessible to children at all times.
- We let children know how to access water and let them know that they can ask for water at any time during the day.
- Water is provided for babies in beakers which are given at various times during the day.
- Toddler's water beakers are easily accessible to them on their level so they can access them when they need a drink of water.
- For young children who drink milk, we provide whole pasteurised milk.
- So the transition from whole pasteurised milk to semi-skimmed is gradual, we slowly introduce semi-skimmed milk from the age of two years, firstly into meals and dishes, such as on cereal or in white sauces. We then offer semi-skimmed milk as a drink.
- We provide children with utensils that are appropriate to their age and stage of development and, where relevant, eating practices in their culture.
- In order to protect children with food allergies, we do not allow children to share or swap their food with one another.
- For each child under two, we provide parents with daily written information about feeding routines, intake and preferences.

#### 4. Culture

- We include foods from children's cultural backgrounds.
- We provide a vegetarian alternative on days when meat or fish are offered and make every effort to ensure Halal meat or Kosher food is available for children who require it.
- 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.

#### 5. Social meal times

- We organise meal and snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate. Our staff sit and eat with children during meal times to role behaviour and encourage a healthy relationship with food.
- We use meal and snack times to help children develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink, and feeding themselves.

#### 6. Packed meals

Parents who provide packed meals for their child must be aware of the following:

- All meals must be provided for cover the hours the child attends nursery - this includes where relevant, breakfast cereal (milk will be supplied by nursery), a mid-morning snack, lunch, an afternoon snack and tea.
- Due to our limited storage we do not have the facilities to store any items in our fridge. Therefore, all foods brought in must not require refrigeration. Tea is served between 3pm and 4pm so this needs to be taken into account when planning what to supply as food will be out of the fridge for some time.



- We are unable to reheat or cook any foods brought in from home due to food safety and hygiene regulations.
- We request that parents to not provide food containing nuts.
- The food we offer at nursery is very important to us and supplying high quality healthy food is a vital part of our ethos. We check food brought into the nursery to ensure food provided meets the health eating requirements detailed in this policy.
- If food brought in isn't in accordance with this policy, we will provide the child with nursery food.
- Nursery food is chargeable and we will apply a charge for any food supplied.

This policy meets the requirements of the Statutory Framework for the EYFS 4<sup>TH</sup> January 2024

Date policy last reviewed/updated	June 2024	Reviewed by	Julia Ward, Head of Support Services
Date of next review/update	June 2025		

