

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

Noah's Ark Pre-School regard snack and meal times as an important part of the setting's session/day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults, and helps children to learn about healthy eating. This setting promotes healthy eating using various resources and materials. 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.

- Before a child starts to attend the setting we ask their parents/carers about their dietary needs and preferences, including any intolerances or 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 record 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/intolerances, are up-to-date. Parents sign the updated record to signify that it is correct.
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed about them. Risk assessments are created with the parent/carer and the key person/designated medication officer. These risk assessments are stored in the snack box and all staff are regularly updated on the risk content involved for each child.
- We also put in place a food and drink diary if requested by the parent/carer (this can particularly helpful if parents/carers are exploring the possibility of intolerances).
- When there are festivals or celebrations and we have different food/snacks we are careful to lease with families/carers regarding their child's intolerances/allergies or religious needs. We adapt the food/drink for the child's dietary needs and requirements.

- 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. During lunchtime one adult sits with each table of children overseeing the children's eating, drinking and supporting children's independence skills when clearing away.
- We have in place a 4 week rolling snack menu which is displayed on the Parent's notice board and the Noah's ark website
- We provide nutritious food for all meals and snacks, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar, salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- We include a variety of foods from three of the four main food groups:
 - dairy foods;
 - grains, cereals and starch vegetables; and
 - fruit and vegetables.
- We include foods from the diet of each of the children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones.
- Snack time is operated as a rolling snack for 1 hour within each session. This allows children to access their snack when they are hungry and is tailored towards children's individual needs. We encourage children to be independent in choosing their own snack and drink.
- We aim to promote and extend the children's understanding of food and a healthy diet during this time. The adult talks about where food comes from, how we prepare and uses this time to extend the children's learning; such as talking about colours, numbers and shapes.
- Children are able to make choices at snack time as this is an important part of their development.
- 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. Parents are made aware of this by the staff team upon their child's induction.
- Through discussion with parents and research reading by staff we obtain information about the dietary rules of the religious groups to which children and their parents belong, and of vegetarians and vegans, as well as about food allergies/intolerances. We take account of this information in the provision of food and drinks.
- 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, 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 use child safe knives for cutting, small jugs and plastic cups and plates alongside our accessible snack trolley.
- We ask children to bring a bottle of water with them to each session that they can access whenever they want. In the event that the bottle is forgotten we have fresh drinking water available. We inform the children about how to obtain the water and that they can ask for water at any time during the day. As the weather gets warmer we create drinking stations in the room and garden to encourage further hydration.

- At snack time the children are given milk or water to drink.
- For children that drink milk, we provide semi skimmed pasteurised milk in accordance with the food standards agencies latest guidelines.
- During the induction stage we inform parents/carers who provide food for their children about the storage facilities available in our setting.
- We give parents 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 conform to current food legislation regulation EC 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the hygiene of foodstuffs.

Packed lunches

- We inform parents who provide food for their child about the storage facilities available in the setting.
- During the induction stage the key person asks all parents to place a ice pack in their child's packed lunch box, to keep their food cool.
- We inform parents of our policy on healthy eating.
- We inform parents that we have the facilities to microwave cooked food brought from home.
- We encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit, and milk based deserts, such as yoghurt or crème fraîche. We discourage sweet drinks and provide children with water or semi skimmed pasteurised milk.
- 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.
- We provide children bringing packed lunches with plates, cups and cutlery; and milk/water as required.
- We ensure that adults sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.
- We operate a no nut policy so please do not send whole nuts or sandwiches that contain peanut butter or chocolate spread with nut additives e.g nutella.
- In order to protect children with food allergies we discourage children from sharing and swapping their food with one another.

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)

Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications

- Nutritional Guidance for the Under Fives (Ed. 2010)
- The Early Years Essential Cookbook (2009)
- Healthy and Active Lifestyles for the Early Years (2012)

| | | |
|---|--|---------------------------|
| This policy was adopted by | Noah's Ark Pre-School | <i>(name of provider)</i> |
| On | 18th April 2016 | <i>(date)</i> |
| Date to be reviewed | April 2017 | <i>(date)</i> |
| Signed on behalf of the provider |  | |
| Name of signatory | Tony Turner | |
| Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner) | Chairperson | |