

## **Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Health**

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

### **6.5 Healthy Eating Policy**

#### **Policy statement**

Our provision regards 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 using resources and materials from the Early Years Alliance. At snack and meal times, we aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs.

We promote the good health, including the oral health of the children we look after.

#### **Procedures**

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

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we ask their parents about their dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies and intolerances. (See the Managing Children who are Sick, Infectious or with Allergies Policy.)
- We have ongoing discussions with parents and/or carers and, where appropriate, health professionals to develop allergy action plans for managing any known allergies and intolerances
- 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. Parents sign the up-dated 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.
- 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 display photos of the snacks we provide for parents to view.
- We provide nutritious food for snacks, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- 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.
- 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.

- 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. We take account of this information in the provision of food and drinks.
- 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 organise meal and snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate.
- We use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and feeding themselves.
- Children bring in their own water bottles on a daily basis and have access to them at all times.
- In accordance with parents' wishes, we offer children arriving early in the morning, and/or staying late, an appropriate meal or snack.
- We inform parents who provide food for their children about the storage facilities available in the 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.
- For young children who drink milk, we provide semi-skimmed milk.

### *Packed lunches*

We do not provide cooked meals and children are required to bring packed lunches, we:

- ensure perishable contents of packed lunches are refrigerated or contain an ice pack to keep food cool;
- inform parents of our policy on healthy eating;
- encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit, and milk-based deserts, such as yoghurt or crème fraîche, where we can only provide cold food from home. We discourage sweet drinks and can provide children with water.
- 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;
- ensure staff sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.

### *Safer Eating*

- Whilst children are eating we ensure there are always staff who have full and valid paediatric first aid training sitting with them
- We refer to the British Society for Allergy and Clinical Immunology (BSACI) [allergy action plan](#). Providers must ensure that all staff are aware of the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis, the differences between allergies and intolerances and that children can develop allergies at any time, especially during the introduction of solid foods which is sometimes called complementary feeding or weaning.
- We refer to the NHS advice on food allergies: [Food allergy](#) and treatment of anaphylaxis: [Anaphylaxis](#) - NHS ([www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)).

- We prepare food in a way to prevent choking. We follow guidance on food safety for young children: [Food safety - Help for early years providers](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/food-safety-help-for-early-years-providers) - GOV.UK (education.gov.uk) includes advice on food and drink to avoid, how to reduce the risk of choking and links to other useful resources for early years providers.
- Children will be seated on appropriately sized low chairs while eating. Where possible there should be a designated eating space where distractions are minimised.
- Children will always be within sight and hearing of a member of staff whilst eating. Choking can be completely silent, therefore, staff will be alert to when a child may be starting to choke. Our staff sit facing children whilst they eat, so they can make sure children are eating in a way to prevent choking and so they can prevent food sharing and be aware of any unexpected allergic reactions.
- When a child experiences a choking incident that requires intervention, we record details of where and how the child choked and ensure parents and/or carers are made aware. The records should be reviewed periodically to identify if there are trends or common features of incidents that could be addressed to reduce the risk of choking. Appropriate action should be taken to address any identified concerns.

### Legal framework

- Regulation (EC) 852/2004 – updated 2021 - of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Hygiene of Foodstuffs. [Regulation \(EC\) No 852/2004](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2004/852/oj) defines food hygiene as meaning '*the measures and conditions necessary to control hazards and to ensure fitness for human consumption of a foodstuff taking into account its intended use*'.

### Further guidance

- EYFS on safer eating [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68c024cb8c6d992f23edd79c/Early\\_years\\_foundation\\_stage\\_statutory\\_framework\\_-\\_for\\_group\\_and\\_school-based\\_providers.pdf.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68c024cb8c6d992f23edd79c/Early_years_foundation_stage_statutory_framework_-_for_group_and_school-based_providers.pdf.pdf)
- Food Standards Agency <https://www.food.gov.uk/>
- Safer Food, Better Business (Food Standards Agency 2020)
- Allergy Action plan <https://www.bsaci.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/BSACIAllergyActionPlan2018NoAAI2981-2.pdf>
- Food allergy <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/food-allergy/>
- Anaphylaxis <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/anaphylaxis/>
- Food safety <https://help-for-early-years-providers.education.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/food-safety>

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	Cuckoo Meadow	<i>(name of provider)</i>
Held on		<i>(date)</i>
Date to be reviewed		<i>(date)</i>
Signed on behalf of the provider		
Name of signatory		
Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)		

*Annual review details and signed copy of this policy is on file in the office*