

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Health

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

6.5 Food and drink

Policy statement

At Langdale Pre-School, 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. At snack and meal times, we aim to support parents to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs.

Procedures

We follow these procedures to promote healthy eating at Langdale Pre-School;

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we ask their parents 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 on 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 updated record to signify that it is correct.
- 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 parents' wishes.
- We take care not to allow food containing nuts or nut products and we are especially vigilant where we have a child who has a known allergy to nuts.
- 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 and feeding themselves.
- Fresh drinking water is constantly available for the children. The children know about how to obtain the water and can select their water bottles at any time during the day.
- We inform parents about the storage facilities available in our setting.
- In order to protect children with food allergies, children are not allowed to share and swap their food with one another.

Packed lunches

All children attending Langdale Pre-School bring a packed lunch. We;

- ensure perishable contents of packed lunches are stored in the coolest area on site;
- inform parents of our policy on healthy eating;

- encourage parents to provide a healthy, balanced lunch and nutritious snack. We discourage sweet drinks and promote children drinking water at pre-school;
- 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 that adults sit with children to 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)
- Nutritional Guidance for the Under Fives (Pre-school Learning Alliance 2009)
- The Early Years Essential Cookbook (Pre-school Learning Alliance 2009)
- Healthy and Active Lifestyles for the Early Years (Pre-school Learning Alliance 2012)