

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

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. At snack time, 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 about their dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies. (See the Managing Children who are Sick, Infectious or with Allergies Policy.) This is recorded on the Registration Form.
- We regularly consult with parents to ensure that our records of their children's dietary needs – including any allergies - are up-to-date. An Allergy Update Form is given to parents/carers of children with allergies or food preferences to sign and they are advised to update us of any changes.
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed about them.
- We provide nutritious food for all snacks, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- We include a variety of food and drink for snack time which include:
 - fruit, vegetables, cheese, bread, crackers
 - milk or water
- 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.
- When we open food ie cheese, we add the date to the packaging and seal the bag, breadsticks, crackers are placed in a sealed container.
- 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 snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate.
- We use 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 constantly available for the children.
- We inform parents who provide food for their children about the storage facilities available in the setting.

- In order to protect children with food allergies, we discourage children from sharing and swapping their food with one another.
- When parents send in food for a themed activity ie food tasting or cakes to celebrate a child's birthday then the children's dietary requirements are taken into account and a list of ingredients are share with parents via our Class Dojo app.

Packed lunches

Where we cannot provide cooked meals and children are required to bring packed lunches, we:

- Encourage parents to add an ice pack to keep food cool;
- Inform parents of our policy on healthy eating;
- 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;
- Return any uneaten food in the packed lunch box so parents can see what their child has or has not eaten;
- Provide children bringing packed lunches with plates, cups and cutlery if required; and
- Ensure staff sit with children while they eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.
- Children are within sight and hearing during their lunch time session

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 Last Updated Jan 2018)

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	Cobham Community Pre-School	<i>(name of provider)</i>
Held on	May 2025	<i>(date)</i>
To be reviewed again	May 2027	<i>(date)</i>
Signed by	Kerry Cater	
Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)	Chairperson	