

Seedling Nursery

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Seedling Nursery Leamington Spa
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Nutrition and Mealtimes

At Seedling Nursery we believe that mealtimes should be happy, social occasions for children and staff alike. We promote shared, enjoyable positive interactions at these times. We are committed to offering children healthy, nutritious and balanced meals and snacks which meet individual needs and requirements.


We will ensure that:

- A healthy breakfast (for children arriving 8.00am - 8:45am) and two daily snacks are provided for children attending a full day at the nursery
- We provide nutritious food at all snack times, avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar, salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- We provide hot meals at lunchtime and afternoon tea. Menus are planned in advance over a 2 week rotation period. Allergens are noted for each meal.
- Fresh drinking water is always available and accessible. It is frequently offered to children and babies and intake is monitored. In hot weather staff will encourage children to drink more water to keep them hydrated. We encourage all children to drink water at the meal tables and offer milk at snack time.
- Individual dietary requirements are respected. We gather information from parents regarding their children's dietary needs, including any special dietary requirements, preferences and food allergies that a child has and any special health requirements, before a child starts or joins the nursery. Where appropriate, we will carry out a risk assessment in the case of allergies and work alongside parents to put into place an individual dietary plan for their child. Parents are asked to complete a **Care plan** if allergies warrant medication.
- We give careful consideration to seating to avoid cross contamination of food from child to child. Where appropriate, an adult will sit with children during meals to ensure safety and minimise risks. Where appropriate, age/stage discussions will also take place with all children about allergies and potential risks to make them aware of the dangers of sharing certain foods.
- Staff show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies.
- Staff set a good example and eat with the children and show good table manners. Meal and snack times are organised so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate in small groups. During meals and snack times children are encouraged to use their manners and say 'please' and 'thank you' and conversation is encouraged.
- Staff use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices and feeding themselves.
- Staff support children to make healthy choices and understand the need for healthy eating
- We provide foods from the diet of each of the children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones.
- Cultural differences in eating habits are respected.
- First practise encouragement strategies and other strategies before talking to management. Any child who shows signs of distress at being faced with a meal he/she does not like will have his/her food removed without any fuss. If a child does not finish his/her first course, he/she will still be given a helping of dessert. No pudding is not a defined strategy and not an overarching policy. We will encourage the children to eat their meals by praising them with lots of encouragement. If we identify that more children need support in this area, staff are to consult and talk to management to see what the best strategy to use for individual children.



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- Children not on special diets are encouraged to eat a small piece of everything.
- Children are given time to eat at their own pace and not rushed.
- Quantities offered take account of the ages of the children being catered for in line with recommended portion sizes for babies and young children. We use NHS recommended portion sizes for children when serving and when planning our meals.
- We promote positive attitudes to healthy eating through play opportunities and discussions.
- The nursery provides parents with daily records of feeding routines for all children.
- No child is ever left alone when eating/drinking to minimise the risk of choking.
- We will sometimes celebrate special occasions such as birthdays with the occasional treat of foods such as cake, sweets or biscuits. These will be given after their lunch. Where we have frequent birthdays and celebrations we consider other alternatives such as celebrating through smiles and praise, stickers and badges, choosing a favourite story, becoming a special helper, playing a party game, dancing and/or singing their favourite song.
- We do allow parents to bring in cakes on special occasions. We ensure that all food brought in from parents meets the above and health and safety requirements and ingredients that are listed within the Food Information for Consumers (FIR) 2014 and detailed in the allergens policy and procedure. Parents will be requested to provide us with a list of ingredients if the cake is homemade. Shop bought cakes must be in their box, which will list the ingredients.
- All staff who prepare and handle food are competent to do so and receive food hygiene training.
- In the very unlikely event of any food poisoning affecting two or more children on the premises, whether or not this may arise from food offered at the nursery, we will inform Ofsted as soon as reasonably practical and in all cases within 14 days. We will also inform the relevant health agencies and follow any advice given.

This policy was last updated	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
May 2024		May 2025

