



Healthy Eating Policy

Aim of Policy

This policy is in place to inform parents and staff members about nutrition and snack/mealtimes at Beckside Preschool & Nursery. It is in place to help identify and cater for individual food requirements and to promote healthy eating and good oral health.

We are committed to ensuring that the food provided onsite supports the development of healthy eating practices. We understand that early food experiences have an important effect on adult eating patterns and may influence attitudes to eating.

Snack and mealtimes is when children's natural curiosity for exploring new concepts will be extended to introduce new tastes and textures.

We will ensure that:

- A balanced and healthy breakfast, lunch (if requested by parents/carers) and one daily snack is provided for children attending a full day at the setting.
- Menus will be planned in advance, rotated regularly and reflect cultural diversity
- Our menu is shared with parents in Tapestry
- We provide nutritious food at all snack and meal times
- Menus will include servings of fresh fruit and vegetables
- Fresh drinking water is available throughout the day for the children
- We do not provide sweet puddings. Any puddings are sugar free or fruit based.
- We ask parents not to provide birthday cakes when it is their child's birthday.
- Individual dietary requirements required for medical or cultural reasons will be respected and where possible, catered for.
- We will gather information from parents regarding their children's dietary needs including any allergies.
- Where appropriate we will carry out a risk assessment in the case of allergies and work alongside parents to put into place an individual diet plan for their child
- We provide children with familiar foods and introduce them to new ones
- We use meals and snack times to help children develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and feeding themselves.
- The setting provides children with utensils that are appropriate for their ages and stages of development.
- Promote healthy eating and good oral health with the children and parents

Team members providing meals and snacks for the children will:

- Be offered opportunities for relevant training and development

- Under the Food Safety Act, 1990, persons preparing food will hold a food hygiene certificate or have been given training in the food hygiene procedures of the setting
- Make mealtimes an enjoyable, social occasion.
- Use meal and snack times to help promote children to develop independence through participation in the preparation of a meal when appropriate, making choices, serving food and drink, and feeding themselves
- Encourage children to try a bit of everything, but not make a fuss if they don't want to
- Encourage children who bring a pack up from home to eat the 'healthy' components of their meal before any 'treats'.
- Praise a child when they try something new
- Model good eating habits by sitting and eating meals with the children.
- Encourage lots of conversation, table manners, and use of words such as 'please' and 'thank you'
- Encourage the older children's independence by letting them take turns to hand out plates, cups, cutlery etc., then wash up, dry up and wipe the table after the meal if appropriate

Food and Nutrition Information and Record Keeping

The setting follows these procedures to promote healthy eating and to promote good oral health. This is shared with parents through informal discussions and through our parent newsletters.

- Becksides is a water only setting. A water bottle containing juice that is brought into the setting will be watered down week by week until the child is drinking water only
- Before a child starts at the setting, parents provide details about their child's dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies and these are shared with the nursery cook
- Information is added to the setting's record keeping system
- Parents are regularly consulted to ensure that the records of their children's dietary needs are up-to-date.
- Practitioners engage in regular, open communication with parents and/or carers to understand each child's current stage in the introduction of solid foods. This includes gaining insight into the textures the child is accustomed to and ensuring that no assumptions are made based solely on age.
- All food provided is prepared in a way that reflects the child's individual developmental needs. Practitioners work collaboratively with families to support children in progressing to the next stage of eating when they are developmentally ready, ensuring this transition is guided by the child's pace and comfort.
- The setting displays current dietary information about individual children so that all staff are fully informed of them.
- The setting implements systems to ensure that children only receive food and drink that is consistent with their dietary needs and preferences, as well as their parents' wishes.

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