

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Health

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



6.5 Healthy food and drink

Policy statement

At Abinger Common Nursery we regard snack and lunch 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 to both the children and families that attend the Nursery, using resources and materials displayed for parents and imbedded within the children's learning opportunities. At snack times, we aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs. We also offer guidance and tips to parents providing a packed lunch for their child to have at Nursery.

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.)
- ✦ We record information about each child's dietary needs in the Family Information 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 display the menu for snack time for parents to view.
- ✦ We provide nutritious food for our snack bar, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- ✦ We invite parents to provide fresh fruit, breadstick or dried fruit to contribute to the snack for the group.
- ✦ We include a variety of foods such as:
 - Cheese, milk, margarine
 - Cereals, bread, breadsticks or crackers
 - Fruit and vegetables

- ✦ 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 provide opportunities to try new foods through cooking and to experience different cultural foods.
- ✦ We take care not to provide food containing nuts or nut products and we are especially vigilant where we have a child who has a known allergy to nuts.
- ✦ Through discussion with parents and research reading, 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 show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. We 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 and lunch times so that they are social occasions in which children and adults participate.
- ✦ We use snack and lunch times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food, drink and feeding themselves and selecting their names to out in the Munching Monster box once they are finished.
- ✦ 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 the children about how to obtain the water and that they can ask for water at any time during the day.
- ✦ In order to protect children with food allergies, we discourage children from sharing and swapping their food with one another.
- ✦ Children are provided with a choice of either whole pasteurised milk or water.

Packed lunches

Children staying for lunch are required to bring packed lunches.

- ✦ We ask parents to ensure that all lunch bags and food containers are clearly labelled with their child's name.
- ✦ Parents are also advised to include ice packs in their child's lunch bag to keep perishable food cool;
- ✦ All parents are advised of our policy on healthy eating;
- ✦ We encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit, and milk based deserts, such as yoghurt or crème fraîche.
- ✦ We discourage sweet drinks and can provide children with water or milk;
- ✦ Parents are provided with tips and ideas for packed lunches, with the aim to discourage a packed lunch contents that consist largely of crisps, processed foods, sweet drinks and sweet products such as cakes or biscuits.
- ✦ Team members sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.

COVID-19 Update

The following procedures must be followed:

- ✦ Children's hands are washed prior to being given food or drink and afterwards.
- ✦ Staff who are eating with the children must role-model hygiene best practice.
- ✦ Tables are never overcrowded during mealtimes. Some social distancing is encouraged even though it is acknowledged that children will play in close proximity for the rest of the session.

Legal framework

- ✦ Regulation (EC) 853/2004 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)

This policy was adopted by

Abinger Common Nursery

On

May 2020

Date to be reviewed

May 2021

Signed on behalf of the provider



Name of signatory

Mrs Emma Powell

Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)

Nursery Chair Person