

Food and drink policy

Statement of intent

This playgroup regards snack times as an important part of the playgroup's session/day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating.

Aim

At snack times, we aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs. We aim to meet the full requirements of Ofsted's Care Standards on Food and Drink (Standard 8).

Methods

- Before a child starts to attend the playgroup, we find out from parents their children's dietary needs, including any allergies.
- We record information about each child's dietary needs in her/his registration record and parents sign the record 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 staff and volunteers are fully informed about them.
- We implement systems to ensure that children receive only food and drink which is consistent with their dietary needs and their parents' wishes.
- We provide nutritious food at all snacks, avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- We include the following elements in snacks which are offered:
 - protein for growth; and
 - essential minerals and vitamins in raw foods, salads and fruits.
- 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.
- Through discussion with parents and research reading by staff, we obtain information about the dietary rules of the religious groups to which children and their parents belong, and of vegetarians and vegans, and about food allergies. We take account of this information in the provision of food and drinks.
- 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 which are appropriate for their ages and stages of development and which 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 session.
- We have rules about children sharing and swapping their food with one another in order to protect children with food allergies.
- For children who drink milk, we provide whole and pasteurised milk.
- For children who don't drink milk we provide water.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Easington Playgroup