



Food and Drink POLICY

Circulate to all Directors, Senior Managers & Nursery
Managers: January 2017

Approved by Director of Childcare & Operations:
January 2017

Next Review Date: October 2017



Policy statement

At Hungry Caterpillars we regard 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. We promote healthy eating using a variety of resources and materials. At snack and meal times, we aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individuals' 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 policy 6.2 managing children who are sick, infectious or with allergies policy)
- We record information about each child's dietary needs on the registration form and parents sign the form to signify that it is correct.
- We regularly consult with parents to ensure child's dietary needs on the registration form and parents sign the form to signify that it is correct
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that staff and volunteers are fully informed about them.
- We implement systems such as different coloured plates for different dietary needs, 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 plan menus in advance, involving children and parents in the planning
- We display the menus of meal/snacks for parents to view
- We provide nutritious foods for all meals and snacks, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservative and colourings
- We include a variety of foods from the four main food groups
 - Meat, fish and protein alternative
 - Dairy foods
 - Fruit and vegetables
- We include foods from the diet of each of the child's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones
- 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
- 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, as well as about food allergies. We take account of this information in the provision of food and drinks.

Policy and Procedure 6.8

- We provide a vegetarian alternative on days when meat or fish are offered and make every effort to ensure Halal meat or Kosher food is available for children who require it
- 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 meal and snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate.
- We use meal and 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 the children about how to obtain the water and that they can ask for water at any time during the day.
- In accordance with parents' wishes, we offer children arriving early in the morning, and/or staying late, an appropriate meal or snack.
- We inform parents who provide food for their children about the storage facilities available in the setting.
- We give parents who provide food for their children information about suitable containers for food
- In order to protect children with food allergies, we discourage children from sharing and swapping their food with one another.
- For young children who drink milk, we provide whole pasteurise milk. From the age of two years, we introduce semi-skimmed milk. For each child under two, we provide parents with daily written information about feeding routines, intake and preference.

Packed Lunches

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

- Inform parents of our policy on healthy eating
- Encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit, and milk based desserts, such as yoghurt or crème fraiche. We discourage sweet drinks and can provide children with water or milk
- Discourage packed lunch contents that consist largely of crisps, processed foods, sweet drinks and sweet products such as cakes or biscuits.