



## **Food & Drink Policy**

### **Policy Statement**

Neston Preschool Playgroup regards snack and meal times as an important part of the setting's day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults, and helps children to learn about healthy eating as well as acceptable behaviour during this time.

At snack times, we aim to provide nutritious food which meets the children's individual dietary needs where necessary.

There is always a member of staff in the setting who has at least a basic food hygiene certificate.

### **PROCEDURES**

#### **1. Dietary Requirements**

- 1.1 Before a child starts to attend the setting, we find out from parents their children's dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies.
- 1.2 We record information about each child's dietary needs in his/her registration record and parents sign the record to signify that it is correct.
- 1.3 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 up-dated record to signify that it is correct.
- 1.4 We display current information about individual children's dietary needs in the snack area so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed about them, including giving any necessary guidance to the parent helper when preparing snacks.
- 1.5 We display the 14 Allergens poster in the snack area and we keep a checklist of all the food given to the children on a weekly basis.
- 1.6 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.
- 1.7 We plan snack menus in advance, involving children in the planning.
- 1.8 We display the menus of snacks to encourage children to be more independent and to inform parents.

- 1.9 We provide nutritious food at snack time, avoiding unhealthy quantities of saturated fat, sugar, salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- 1.10 We include a variety of foods from the four main food groups:
- Meat, fish and protein alternatives;
  - Dairy foods
  - Grains, cereals and starchy vegetables; and
  - Fruits and vegetables
- 1.11 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.
- 1.12 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.
- 1.13 Through discussion with parents and research by staff, we obtain information about the dietary rules of the religious groups to which children and their parents belong, of vegetarians and vegans and about food allergies. We take account of this information in the provision of food and drinks.
- 1.14 We provide a vegetarian alternative on days when meat or fish are offered and make every effort to ensure appropriate food e.g. Halal meat, Kosher food is available for children who require it.
- 1.15 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 his/her diet or allergy.

## **2. Eating of meals and snacks**

- 2.1 We organise meal and snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate.
- 2.2 We use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and feeding themselves.
- 2.3 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.
- 2.4 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/day.
- 2.5 We inform parents who provide food for the children about the storage facilities available in the setting.
- 2.6 We give parents, who provide food for their children, information about suitable containers for food.

2.7 In order to protect children with food allergies, we discourage children from sharing and swapping food with one another.

2.8 We provide milk for those children who drink it.

### **3. Packed lunches**

In our setting we do not provide cooked meals and children are required to bring packed lunches. We:

3.1 Advise parents, especially in hot weather, to use ice blocks/packs in lunch boxes to ensure food is kept cool. Certain items can be refrigerated upon request;

3.2 Inform parents of our policy on healthy eating;

3.3 Encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit and milk based deserts such as yoghurt or crème fraiche. We discourage sweet drinks and we provide children with water or milk;

3.4 Discourage packed lunch contents that consist largely of crisps, processed foods, sweet drinks and sweet products such as cakes or biscuits. We reserve the right to return this food to the parent as a last resort; and,

3.5 Ensure staff sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social and educational occasion.

### **Legal Framework**

Regulation (EC)852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Hygiene of Foodstuffs

### **Further Guidance**

Safer Food, Better Business (Food Standards Agency 2011)  
Food Regulations for small and medium food businesses (March 2015)

This policy was formulated in consultation with staff and the Management Committee of Neston Pre-school Playgroup and was formally adopted at a committee meeting held on 6 / 3 / 2017. This policy was reviewed and updated on 09/10/2018.

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee:

Print Name    Helena Blamire-Brown

Role of Signatory                                Chairperson

Date to be reviewed                            March/April 2019