



6.5 Food and drink

Policy statement

Mulberry Pre-School regards snack and mealtimes as an important part of our day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating. At snack and mealtimes, we aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual 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 no. 6.2 Managing Children who are Sick, Infectious or with Allergies Policy)
- We record information about each child's dietary needs in the Registration 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.
- 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, religious and personal preferences, as well as their parents' wishes.
- We display the menus of snacks for parents to view.
- We provide nutritious food for all snacks, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- Our snacks consist of a carbohydrate, a protein/dairy and two fruit and/or vegetable.
- 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 do not 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.
- Only on special occasions is meat offered as part of our snack and on these occasions we make sure that we have an alternative for our children who require Halal meat, Kosher food, or who have to avoid certain meats for religious and/or personal preference reasons.
- 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 meal and snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and adults 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. Children are also encouraged to bring in their own water bottle from home.
- In order to protect children with food allergies, we don't allow sharing and swapping their food with one another.

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Health

6.5 Food and Drink



- We provide semi-skimmed pasteurised milk for our children as they are two and above.

Packed lunches

We do not provide cooked meals at our setting and therefore children staying for lunch are required to bring a packed lunch with them. We:

- inform parents to include an ice pack in their packed lunch to ensure perishable foods are not spoiled as we do not have refrigeration facilities;
- inform parents of our policy on healthy eating;
- inform parents that we do not have microwave facilities for cooked food brought from home;
- inform parents that no food containing nuts or nut products are allowed at our setting;
- encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit, and milk based deserts, such as yoghurt or crème fraîche. We discourage sweet drinks, we encourage parents to provide a water bottle and we can provide children with water;
- 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;
- ensure that adults sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.

Legal framework

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

This policy was adopted by:	Mulberry Pre-School
On (date):	1 September 2020
Date to be reviewed:	June 2021
Signed on behalf of the provider:	George
Name of signatory:	Georgina Stevens
Role of signatory:	Chair