

FOOD AND DRINK POLICY

This Pre-school regards snack and lunchtime as an important part of the sessions. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating.

At snack we provide nutritious fresh food, which meets the children's dietary needs. At lunch, we encourage parents to do the same.

EYFS 09/2025 . Children must eat in safe, designated areas that are age appropriate and free from distractions. Suitable seating must be provided. Children must be adequately supervised and whilst eating, children must be within sight and hearing of a member of staff. There must always be a member of staff in the room with a valid paediatric first aid certificate,

- Before a child starts to attend the Pre-school, we find out from parents their children's dietary needs, including any allergies or special dietary requirements.
- We provide information about the **allergenic ingredients** used in any food that the children may play with or be used in a learning activity.
- We request from parents and record information about each child's dietary needs in her/his registration record.
- We consult with parents to ensure that our records of the children's dietary needs – including any allergies – are up-to-date. Parents sign to confirm the information held is correct.
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed about them.
- Children should not be brought into Pre-school while they are eating, to prevent any dropped food contaminating the area.
- We have fresh drinking water constantly available for the children. Only water and/or milk is on offer to the children during snack time.
- The fridge is checked for cleanliness and temperature monitored on a daily basis.
- At least one staff member on lunch duty will have attended an Early years Food hygiene training course which is renewed every 3 years.
- Whilst children are eating there must be a staff member in the room with a valid paediatric first aid certificate.

Choking Incidents.

- Staff must follow safe preparation guidelines to prevent contamination and choking hazards. If a child experiences a choking incident that requires

intervention, providers should record details of where and when and how the child choked and ensure parents are made aware.

Snack Time

- Snack time starts at approximately 10.30 am in the morning session and 1.30 pm in the afternoon session. It takes place on a rolling basis with small groups of children being invited to wash their hands and sit at the snack table with a member of staff.
- We use snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, preparing food and drink and feeding themselves.
- We have strict 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 semi-skimmed pasteurised milk. This is delivered twice a week and is kept in the fridge.

Lunchtime Sessions

Our Aim

To provide a caring, safe and fun environment, with high quality supervision for children whilst they eat lunch for a half hour period between 12 and 12.30 pm.

The Purpose

- To provide children with an opportunity to develop independence and sociability around eating.
- To support a child's preparation for school, where lunches are provided by parents and children sit together to eat within a certain timeframe.

Lunch Session

- To run between 12 pm and 12.30 pm.
- Children to bring their own packed lunch, the contents of which must adhere to Pre-school food guidelines (see below).
- There will be a minimum of 2 staff on each shift.
- A minimum of 1 staff member per lunch session to have a valid Food, Health and Hygiene Certificate.
- A member of staff in the room with a valid paediatric first aid certificate.
- A minimum of 1 staff member per lunch session to have a childcare qualification.
- Staff: child ratios to match or better County recommendations for Lunch Clubs of 1:8.

The Practicalities

- Children staying for lunch will be invited to wash their hands as the morning only children are collected.
- The children will then collect their named lunch box from the crates in which they are kept (un-refrigerated), closely monitored by the lunch staff to ensure the correct lunch box is taken, and take a seat at the table. In busy periods the lunch
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- boxes will be put out on the tables by the staff and the children directed to their lunchbox.
- Children will be seated in safe, designated areas and children must always be within sight and sound of a responsible adult.
- Most packaging/leftovers will be sent home so parents can see what has been consumed.
- Once a child has finished his/her meal and the lunch box is packed away, they may join in with the afternoon activities.

Pre-school Food Guidelines

- Lunch boxes, drink bottles and bags should be clearly named.
- Lunch boxes will be stored in a rack in the kitchen – this is not refrigerated, we therefore recommend that picnic ice packs are placed in with your child’s food.
- Fridge temperature is checked and recorded daily to ensure optimum temperature is maintained.
- To take into consideration any allergies, no nuts (including peanut butter), to be in any lunch bag. Parents will be notified of any updates to exclude items regarding food allergies as they occur.
- Ofsted will be notified within 14 days of the incident occurring if there is an outbreak of food poisoning affecting 2 or more children.
- Parents will be encouraged and guided to provide a healthy, balanced meal for their child.

[packed-lunches-guidance.pdf](#) – this includes lots of suggestions such as healthier treat swaps, and a ‘Build your own packed lunch’ guide.

[Lunchbox ideas and recipes – Healthier Families - NHS](#) includes some simple lunch box ideas.

[Eating well early years — First Steps Nutrition Trust](#) – this has a selection of downloadable booklets including guides on portion sizes with photos to illustrate.

This policy was agreed and adopted at a Committee Meeting held on

Signed

For and on behalf of Marlow Bottom
Pre-school CIO