

6.5 Food and drink

Policy statement

At Filton Park Pre-School Playgroup, we regard snack and meal times as an important part of our day. Eating is a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating. At snack time, 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 the Managing Children who are Sick, Infectious or with Allergies Policy)
- Parents record information about each child's dietary needs in the Registration Form and sign the form to signify that it is correct
- It is the responsibility of 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
- 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 that is consistent with their dietary needs and preferences, as well as their parents' wishes
- We display the menus of snacks for parents to view
- We provide suitable food for all snacks, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings
- 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
- 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 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
- We inform parents who provide food for their children about the storage facilities available in the setting
- In order to protect children with food allergies, we discourage children from sharing and swapping their food with one another
- We usually provide semi-skimmed pasteurised milk.

Packed lunches

We cannot provide cooked meals. For children who bring packed lunches we give parents the following guidance:

- a packed lunch should be balanced and where possible include protein, carbohydrate, dairy and fruit/vegetables
- we discourage packed lunch contents that consist largely of processed foods. We reserve the right to return this food to the parent as a last resort
- we discourage sweet drinks
- we ensure staff sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.

We suggest:

- small sandwiches/wraps with a healthy filling or pasta or rice salad etc.
- fresh fruit/vegetables
- milk based deserts, such as yoghurt or fromage frais
- other suggestions include small portion of savoury snack e.g. crisps, or dried fruit, or cold meat/cheese, or small cake/biscuit
- water to drink.

Sweets and chocolate bars are not allowed in packed lunches.

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)

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	Filton Park Preschool Playgroup	<i>(name of provider)</i>
Held on		<i>(date)</i>
Date to be reviewed	Nov/Dec 2020	<i>(date)</i>
Signed on behalf of the provider		
Name of signatory	Adrian Reed	
Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)	Chair	

Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications

- Nutritional Guidance for the Under Fives (Ed. 2010)
- The Early Years Essential Cookbook (2009)
- Healthy and Active Lifestyles for the Early Years (2012)