



# Waltham Pre-School

## Food and Drink

### Policy Statement

Our provision 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. We promote healthy eating using resources and activities in circle time. At snack and mealtimes, we aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs.

Cakes are discouraged on children's birthdays; we celebrate birthdays with an artificial cake. Should treats come into pre-school, they will be sent home with each child to enable parents to make the decision on whether they receive them.

Meals at Pre-school are freshly cooked by our on-site cooks.

All meals and snacks for our nursery age children are provided as part of the daily charge. Due to health and safety regulations, we are not able to reheat food from home for individual children.

Pre-school age children can order and purchase a daily hot meal or bring their own packed lunch meal. All snacks are provided

### 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 Managing Children who are Sick, infectious or with Allergies Policy)
- We record information about each child's dietary needs on the admission 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. Parents sign the up to date record to signify 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 parent's wishes.
- We plan menus in advance, to ensure they are balanced and nutritious.
- We display the menus of meals / snacks for parents to view.
- We avoid large quantities of saturated fat, sugar, salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- We include a variety of foods from the four main food groups:  
meat, fish and protein alternatives;  
dairy foods;  
grains, cereals and starch vegetables; and fruit and vegetables.
- 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 take care not to provide food containing nut 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 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 provide a variety of vegetarian meals, which could be offered on meat and fish days. We would make every effort to provide Halal meat or Kosher food 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 his/her diet or allergy.

- We organise meal and snack times, so they are social occasions in which children and staff participate.
- We use meal and snack times to help children develop independence through making choices, serving drinks, and feeding themselves.
- We provide children with the 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.
- 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 pasteurised milk. Although we slowly introduce semi-skimmed milk from the age of two years, firstly into meals and dishes, such as on cereal or in white sauces, before being offered as a drink, so that the transition is gradual.
- For each child under two, we provide parents / carers with daily written information about feeding routines, intake and preferences.

### Packed Lunches

- We inform parent/carers of our healthy eating policy;
- We encourage parents to provide an ice pack to keep food cool;
- We 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 can provide children with water or milk;
- We discourage packed lunches 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;
- We ensure staff sit with the children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.

### Legal Framework

- Regulation (EC) 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Hygiene of Foodstuffs.