

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Health

Where children are provided with meals, snacks and drinks, they must be healthy, balanced and nutritious.



6.5 Food and Drink

Policy statement

Nomansland Pre-School regards snack and meal times 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 materials from the Pre-School Learning Alliance. At snack and meal times 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 dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies. (See the "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. 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 only receive food and drink that is consistent with their dietary needs and preferences, as well as their parents' wishes.
- We provide nutritious food for all snacks, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- We include foods from the diet of each child's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones.
- We take care not to provide containing nuts 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 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 provide a vegetarian alternative on days when meat or fish are offered and make every effort to ensure Halal meat or Kosher food is available 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 operate an open snack area so children can choose when to have snack, encouraging them to be more independent.
- We use meal and snack times to help children 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.
- The children have access to their water bottles throughout the day, as well as the pre-school providing milk or water during their snack times.
- We inform parents who provide food for their children about the storage facilities available in the setting.
- We give parents who provide food for their children information about suitable containers for food.
- 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 semi-skimmed pasteurised milk.

Packed Lunches

Children are required to bring packed lunches, we:

- Ensure that lunch boxes are not left out of refrigeration for more than 4 hours and advise parents to use an ice pack to keep food cool;
- Inform parents of our policy on healthy eating;
- Encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit and milk based deserts, such as yoghurt or crème fraiche, where we can only provide cold food from home. We discourage sweet drinks and can provide children with water or diluted fresh fruit juice;
- 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 staff 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

Further Guidance

- Safer Food Better Business (Food Standards Agency 2011)

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	Nomansland Pre-School
Held on	8 th May 2013
Review date	May 2020
Date to be reviewed	May 2021
Signed on behalf of the management committee	
Name of signatory	Nikola Bishop
Role of signatory (e.g. chair/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)