

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Health

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

Hollytree Community Pre-school – Policies and Procedures

6.5 Food and drink

Policy statement

At Hollytree pre-school we regard 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, and at snack time we encourage children to bring in a piece of fruit or equivalent healthy snack, which meets the children's individual dietary needs. We encourage packed lunches to also be healthy and nutritious.

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.)
- 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 updated record to signify that it is correct.
- 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 and preferences, as well as their parents' wishes.
- We take care not to 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.
- 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 as parents are encouraged to send a filled water bottle in with their child every day. When a child does not have their own water bottle, we will provide one for them and make them aware of where it is.
- We inform parents who provide food for their children about the storage facilities available in our 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

As we cannot provide cooked meals and children are required to bring packed lunches, we:

- ensure perishable contents of packed lunches are refrigerated or contain an ice pack to keep food cool;
- inform parents of our policy on healthy eating;
- provide a guide to healthy lunches with a 'Healthy Lunch Leaflet' which is available on our website and as a paper copy for parents;
- encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit, and milk-based deserts, such as yoghurt or crème fraîche. 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;
- provide children bringing packed lunches with plates, cups and cutlery where needed; and
- 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.

Further guidance

- Safer Food, Better Business (Food Standards Agency 2011)

This policy was adopted by	Hollytree Community Pre-school
Last review	August 2023
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Signed on behalf of the provider	<i>J Goldspink</i>
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Role of signatory	Joint Manager