



Health

6.5 Food and Drink

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Health

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

Policy Statement

Abbots Langley Pre-School regards snack and meal times as an important part of the Pre-School's 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 campaign *Feeding Young Imaginations*. 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 Pre-School.

- Before a child starts to attend the Pre-School, 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 child's file and on a list in the staff room. The information is also stored on our Pre-School database.
- We regularly consult with parents to ensure that our records of their children's dietary needs - including any allergies - are up-to-date.
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed about them.

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- 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 daily plan our snacks depending on children's allergies.
- We daily display the menus of snacks for the information of parents.
- We provide nutritious food for all snacks, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and 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 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, and 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 meal and snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff 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. We inform the children about how to obtain the water and that they can ask for water at any time during the day.

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- We inform parents who provide food for their children about the storage facilities available in the Pre-School.
- 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 children who drink milk, we provide semi-skimmed pasteurised milk.

Packed lunches

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;
- Inform parents of whether we have facilities to microwave cooked food brought from home;
- Encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit, and milk based deserts such as yoghurt or crème fraîche where we can only provide cold food from home. We discourage sweet drinks and can provide children with water;
- 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; and
- 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)

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)

This Policy was adopted at a meeting of Abbots Langley Pre-School held on	MARCH 2020
Date to be reviewed	MARCH 2022 OR SOONER IF CHANGES ARE REQUIRED
Provider	Pre-School Owner