



Food & Nutrition Policy

1. Summary

At Little Dragon's Day Nursery, we ensure all food and drink provided for the children, staff and visitors is homemade, using good quality ingredients. Meals and snacks are planned according to national guidelines for food and drink in early years settings and will be reviewed twice per year (summer and winter menus).

2. Legal framework

This policy relates to sections 3.47, 3.48 & 3.49 of the Statutory Framework for the EYFS (2017).

3. Policy Statement

- A balanced and healthy breakfast, midday meal, tea and two daily snacks are provided for children attending a full day at the nursery
- Menus are planned in advance, rotated regularly and reflect cultural diversity and variation. These are displayed for children and parents to view
- All allergens are displayed alongside the menus to show the contents of each meal
- We provide nutritious food at all snack and meal times, avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar, salt and artificial additives, preservatives, and colourings
- Menus include at least five servings of fresh fruit and vegetables per day
- Parents and children are involved in menu planning
- Fresh drinking water is always available and accessible. It is frequently offered to children and babies and intake is monitored. In hot weather staff will encourage children to drink more water to keep them hydrated
- Individual dietary requirements are respected. We gather information from parents regarding their children's dietary needs, including any special dietary requirements, preferences and food allergies that a child has and any special health requirements, before a child starts or joins the nursery. Where appropriate, we will carry out a risk assessment in the case of allergies and work alongside parents to put into place an individual dietary plan for their child
- We give careful consideration to seating to avoid cross contamination of food from child to child. Where appropriate, an adult will sit with children during meals to ensure safety and minimise risks. Where appropriate, age/stage discussions will also take place with all children about allergies and potential risks to make them aware of the dangers of sharing certain foods
- Staff show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. They 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
- Staff set a good example and eat with the children and show good table manners. Meal and snack times are organised so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate in small groups. During meals and snack times children are encouraged to use their manners and say 'please' and 'thank you' and conversation is encouraged
- Staff use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink, and feeding themselves
- Staff support children to make healthy choices and understand the need for healthy eating
- We provide foods from the diet of each of the children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones.



- Cultural differences in eating habits are respected
- Any child who shows signs of distress at being faced with a meal he/she does not like will have his/her food removed without any fuss. If a child does not finish his/her first course, he/she will still be given a helping of dessert
- Children not on special diets are encouraged to eat a small piece of everything
- Children who refuse to eat at the mealtime are offered food later in the day
- Children are given time to eat at their own pace and not rushed
- Quantities offered take account of the ages of the children being catered for in line with recommended portion sizes for babies and young children
- We promote positive attitudes to healthy eating through play opportunities and discussions
- The nursery provides parents with daily written records of feeding routines for all children
- No child is ever left alone when eating/drinking to minimise the risk of choking
- We will sometimes celebrate special occasions such as birthdays with the occasional treat of foods such as cake, sweets or biscuits. These will be given at mealtimes to prevent tooth decay and not spoil the child's appetite. Where we have frequent birthdays and celebrations we consider other alternatives such as celebrating through smiles and praise, stickers and badges, choosing a favourite story, becoming a special helper, playing a party game, dancing and/or singing their favourite song
- All staff who prepare and handle food are competent to do so and receive training in food hygiene which is updated every three years
- In the very unlikely event of any food poisoning affecting two or more children on the premises, whether or not this may arise from food offered at the nursery, we will inform Ofsted as soon as reasonably practical and in all cases within 14 days. We will also inform the relevant health agencies and follow any advice given.

4. Food & drink from home

At Little Dragon's Day Nursery, we provide food throughout the day, and encourage all parents to take up this provision in line with our healthy eating values.

Only food brought in for certain celebrations (such as birthday cake) may be shared with other children in the nursery and it must detail all the ingredients for allergy purposes. Items will be sent home for parents to choose whether they are happy for their child to have it.

5. Food activities

Activities that encourage children to recognise healthy choices and the importance of a healthy diet and lifestyle should be embedded in everyday practice. The nursery will provide cooking activities and staff will ensure that the recipes vary between sweet and savoury. The recipes will also be easy for the children to follow, enabling them to be involved with weighing and measuring ingredients.

Teaching children where their food comes from is also very important. The nursery has an area where the children can grow their own fruit and vegetables. The children are encouraged to look after the fruits and vegetables and harvest them when the time comes.

Children attending our nursery may come from a wide range of cultures and backgrounds and creating a cultural environment with opportunities to learn about diverse foods should therefore be encouraged. Working with families through effective parent partnerships plays a key role in helping all children to learn about, respect and celebrate foods from a variety of different backgrounds.



While the nursery discourages food play, as it is seen as wasting food and confusing the children at mealtimes, we also see the importance of children learning through direct experiences. For this reason, some sensory activities might include ingredients such as cornflour, and dried pasta, lentils and rice may be used in the role play area. In all such cases, food will be mixed with other ingredients, coloured or left dry so as not to appear the same as when a child should be eating it at mealtimes.

6. Procedures

6.1. Procedures to follow during meal/snack times

- All staff to wear tabards during snack and mealtimes, to be worn before serving commences
- Bibs for those children that require them
- Staff to be seated at or close to the table, at the children's level, not on the floor
- Babies should be fed with a suitable plastic spoon. Some under 2s may be given a teaspoon to feed or a small fork to feed themselves. Over 2s should be given a child size knife and fork. It is the responsibility of the child's key person to liaise with parents to ensure any changes to the above requirements are met.
- When serving food to the children ensure food is cut up to a suitable size i.e. grapes cut in half and sausages cut length ways so as to prevent choking hazards but also enabling the child to feed themselves.
- Children in the under 2s should have the skin removed from fruit and jacket potatoes
- If a child is sitting with straps attached, these straps must only be used to keep young children safe, and must not be used to restrain a child

6.2. Procedures for cleaning up after meal/snack times

- Tables to be cleaned with bio-guard and wiped dry
- Spray bio-guard onto a cloth or directly onto the table, if the table area is clear from children
- Floor to be swept and mopped, if necessary, using a solution of multipurpose cleaner and water (instructions to be found on the container)
- If the floor has been mopped a yellow caution sign MUST be appropriately displayed
- All flannels and bibs to be washed in the washing machine
- Staff tabards to be washed in the washing machine daily if soiled.

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