

Food and drink policy

Statement of intent

Linton Granta Playgroup regards snack and meal times as an important part of the setting's session. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating. The Pre-school Learning Alliance promotes healthy eating through their campaign 'Feeding Young Imaginations'.

Aim

At snack times, we aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs. We aim to meet the full requirements of The National Standards for Day Care on Food and Drink (Standard 8).

Methods

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we find out from parents their children's dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies.
- We record information about each child's dietary needs in her/his registration record and parents sign the record to signify that it is correct. To ensure the setting is fully aware of any change in dietary need, we ask that parents keep their child's information up to date
- 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 work with the Health Visitor to promote health eating
- 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. Where we are unable to meet specific requirements, such as offering exclusively organic produce or milk alternatives, parents are welcome to supply equivalent products.
- We plan menus in advance, involving children and parents in the planning
- We display our snack menus for parents to see in the setting.
- We provide nutritious food at all snacks, including a choice of fruit and vegetables, whole milk, water and a source of carbohydrate.
- We include foods from different 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 provide snacks suitable for vegetarians and make every effort to ensure Halal 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 her/his diet or allergy.
- We organise snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate.
- We use 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 access for water at any time during the session/day.
- For children who drink milk, we provide whole pasteurised milk.

Packed lunches

When children bring a packed lunch for the extended sessions we:

- 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 have rules about children sharing and swapping their food with one another.
- inform parents of our policy on healthy eating;
- encourage parents to provide a healthy balanced packed lunch:
- ensure staff sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of

Linton Granta Playgroup and Toddlers

Held on (date)

07/12/07

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee/Proprietor

Role of signatory (e.g. chairperson etc.)

To be reviewed on (date)

By December 2008