

## Promoting Healthy Eating

Incey Winceys Day Nursery and Preschool regards snack and meal times as an important part of the settings' day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating. At snack and meal times we aim to provide nutritious foods, which meet the children's individual dietary requirements.

The following procedures help to promote healthy eating within the setting:

- Before a child is left in our care we find out from parents what their child's dietary needs and preferences. This includes details of any allergies.
- We have an allergy checklist displayed to inform parents which of the 14 allergens are present in each meal or snack we provide.
- We record information about each child's dietary needs in his/her contract and parents sign the record to confirm that it is correct. The parent also agrees to update the record should any information change for example if an allergy become known.
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all staff, students and volunteers are aware and fully informed. In the nursery we use colour coded place mats during meal times to ensure that every child's dietary requirements are clearly shown.
- We work with the parents to provide a menu they are satisfied with and if possible, we remove dishes that they do not want their child to eat. We ask in the contract for it to be made clear what is parental choice and what is an allergy so that we can risk assess the situation and if necessary, we can ensure the nursery is free of the allergen.
- A healthy alternative is always provided for children that cannot eat the meal on offer. The parents are consulted if there are multiple dietary requirements so that meals remain consistent with home whilst ensuring they are nutritionally balanced.
- We plan menus in advance, in line with seasonal fruit and vegetables, and introduce new flavours through a series of taste testing sessions with the chef(s).

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- We are open to new meal ideas from parents, staff and children and welcome these as we regularly exclude meals from the menus which have not been favourable and continually try new foods.
- We display the menus for the information of the parents.
- We provide nutritious food, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar or salt, or artificial additives, preservatives or colourings. All food is prepared daily on site and wherever possible, is freshly prepared.
- The chef has had training in nutrition for children.
- We include a variety of foods from the four main food groups: meat, fish and protein alternatives; dairy foods; grains, cereals, pulses and starch vegetables; and fruit and vegetables.
- Puddings are offered after dinner, and are healthy and nutritious with limited sugar- often using maple syrup as an alternative.
- Fruit and veg are served as snacks throughout the day and children are given choices, and encouraged to make healthy decisions.
- We aim to introduce foods from different cultural backgrounds, and celebrate festivals with the traditional food from that country/tradition.
- We are a nut free provision. We take care not to provide food containing nuts or nut products and are especially vigilant when we have a child with a known nut allergy.
- We consider cultural and religious requirements when preparing menus and always provide a vegetarian alternative for those who need them.
- We require staff to show sensitivity in providing for a child's dietary requirements. Staff do not use a child's diet or allergy as a label for the child or make them feel singled out.
- We use meal and snack times to help children develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and where developmentally appropriate, feeding themselves.
- 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 throughout the day. For babies, cool boiled water is offered throughout the day from 6 months of age, and tap water from 1 year.
- The staff have been shown healthy portion sizes and taught about the health benefits during staff training. This is something staff talk to the children about. Parents are also offered advice about which meals are

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best for their child, and about portion sizes and the use of pudding and deserts.

- During snack and meal times, staff talk to the children about which food are good for them and which aren't so good. This is in line with promoting healthy eating.