

## Promoting Healthy Eating

Incey Winceys Day Nursery and Preschool regards mealtimes 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 mealtimes, we aim to provide nutritious foods, which meet the children's individual dietary requirements. Every member of our staff is Paediatric First Aid (PFA) trained and a certified PFA staff will always be present in the room whenever children are eating.

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

- Before a child is left in our care, we find out from the parents what their child's dietary needs/ requirements, preferences, food allergies, intolerances and any special health requirement they may have. This includes detailed information of any allergies and intolerances.
- A certified PFA member of staff will be seated within sight and hearing range and will be watching over the children while they eat. To aid in the prevention of choking, prevention of food sharing and the awareness of unexpected allergic reactions.
- Any child with an epi-pen requires a health care plan provided to the nursery before their first day.
- All staff are aware of the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis for children in our care. Epi- pens are kept in a sealed container. The plan is displayed on the room's board.
- We have an allergy checklist displayed on the kitchen door to inform parents of the 14 allergens that are present in each meal we provide.
- We record information about each child's dietary needs in his/her contract and parents sign to confirm that it is correct. The parent also agrees to update the record should any information change: for example, if an allergy becomes known, they could email to the office or update it on Famly.
- 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 place mats during mealtimes to ensure that every child's dietary requirements are clearly shown.
- We work with the parents to provide a menu that they are satisfied with and if possible, we remove dishes that they do not want their children to

eat. We ask in the contract to specify 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 work closely with the parents, more so, in the baby room, when solid foods and different textures are introduced to their children. At Incey Winceys we prepare food that is suitable for each child's individual development needs and aid in moving them to their next stage.
- We plan menus in advance, in line with seasonal fruit and vegetables, and introduce new flavours through a series of taste testing sessions.
- 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 distribute the menus on Famly for 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 starchy 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.
- 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 prepare food in a way to prevent choking for example we cut grapes and cherry tomatoes lengthwise and into quarters. In addition, we remove bones from meat or fish and cut large fruit into slices and not chunks.
- Any choking incidents need to be recorded and action will be taken to address any identified concerns.
- Babies are safely seated in a highchair and in age-appropriate low-level tables and chairs while eating.
- We use mealtimes 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 best for their child, and about portion sizes and the use of pudding and deserts.
- During mealtimes, staff talk to the children about which foods are good for them and which aren't so good. This is in line with promoting healthy eating.