

012 Food and Drink Policy

Policy statement

Grindleford and Eyam Playgroup regards snack and meal times as an important part of the setting'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 Public Health England. At snack and meal times, we aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs.

Legal framework

3.47 Where children are provided with meals, snacks and drinks, they must be healthy, balanced and nutritious. Before a child is admitted to the setting the provider must also obtain information about any special dietary requirements, preferences and food allergies that the child has, and any special health requirements. Fresh drinking water must be available and accessible at all times. Providers must record and act on information from parents and carers about a child's dietary needs.

3.48 There must be an area which is adequately equipped to provide healthy meals, snacks and drinks for children as necessary. There must be suitable facilities for the hygienic preparation of food for children, if necessary including suitable sterilisation equipment for babies food. Providers must be confident that those responsible for preparing and handling food are competent to do so. In group provision, all staff involved in preparing and handling food must receive training in food hygiene.

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2017

Procedures

We follow these procedures to promote healthy eating in our setting.

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we find out from parents their children's dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies. (See the 014 GEP Managing allergies)
- Parents record information about their child's dietary needs in her/his registration form and sign the form to signify that it is correct.
- 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 share current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed about them.
- 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.
- For a child with a severe allergy a Health Care Plan will be in place; including guidance on the allergen, the treatment and an action plan in case of allergic reaction. A risk assessment will be carried out and the plan will set out any additional controls required.

- We plan snacks in advance.
- We display the information about our snacks for parents, this will include information relating to the major allergens.
- We provide nutritious snacks, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- 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 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 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.
- In order to protect children with food allergies, we do not permit the sharing or swapping of food.
- For children who drink milk, we provide pasteurised milk.
- We will inform Ofsted of any incidence of food poisoning affecting two or more pre-school children within 14 days of the outbreak.

Packed lunches

We:

- inform parents of our policy on healthy eating
- ensure parents are informed of our storage facilities for packed lunches and encourage them to put an ice pack in
- encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit, and milk-based deserts such as yoghurt or crème fraiche
- 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)

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- we are unable to reheat food provided by parents
- provide children with water or milk
- provide children, bringing packed lunches, with plates, cups and cutlery
- ensure staff sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.

Documentation

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

013 GEP Health and hygiene

014 GEP Managing allergies

014 GEP Managing allergies – the major food allergens

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Grindleford and Eyam Playgroup:

Held on:

Date to be reviewed:

Signed on behalf of the committee:

Name of signatory:

Role of signatory:

All staff members and committee members will sign to indicate they have read, understood and agreed with the above policy.