

## Snack-times and meal times

Children are supervised during mealtimes and always remain within sight and hearing of staff **and where possible should be sat facing children whilst they are eating so they can make sure children are eating in a way to prevent choking and also prevent food sharing and be aware of any unexpected allergic reactions.** . A member of staff with a valid paediatric first aid certificate is always present at mealtimes and there is a named person responsible for ensuring that the food provided meets each child's needs. There is always a qualified level 2 food hygiene member of staff on the premises during snack and lunchtimes.

A 'snack' is prepared mid-morning and mid-afternoon and can be organised according to the discretion of the setting manager e.g. picnic on a blanket. Snacks will be varied and well balanced throughout the week and will include 2 fruits or vegetables and a low fat carb option (eg crackers, toast, cereal, breadsticks)

- Children may also take turns to help set the table. Small, lidded plastic jugs are provided with choice of semi skimmed milk or water.
- Children wash their hands before snack-times.
- Children arrive as they want refreshment and leave when they have had enough. Children are not made to leave their play if they do not want to have a snack.
- Staff join in conversation and encourage children's independence (big group) by allowing them to pour drinks, butter toast, cut fruit etc.

## Mealtimes

- Tables are never overcrowded during mealtimes.
- Children are always within sight and hearing of staff at mealtimes and where possible sat facing them while they are eating.
- There is a Paediatric First Aider present at children's meal and snack times.
- Children wash their hands and sit down at lunch.
- Children are encouraged to choose what they want from their lunch boxes.
- A healthy example for a packed lunch would consist of a sandwich, wrap or pasta, vege crisps, fruit, a yoghurt and a healthy treat.
- Packed lunchboxes should NOT include salty snacks, crisps or mini cheddars . Children's vegetable crisps, rice cakes or breadsticks are allowed.
- Chocolate bars, sweets or leftover takeaway food are not allowed in lunchboxes.
- Drinks are provided by Little Poppies and the children will be offered milk or water.
- Children are given a sensible amount of time to eat at their own pace and are always given a 5 min warning to finish. They are not made to eat what they do not like and are only encouraged to try new foods slowly.

- In order to protect children with food allergies or specific dietary requirements, children are discouraged from sharing and swapping their food with one another.
- Mealtimes are relaxed opportunities for social interaction between children and the adults who care for them.
- Information for parents is displayed on the parent's notice board, including:
  - Ten Steps for Healthy Toddlers [https://infantandtoddlerforum.org/media/upload/pdf-downloads/HR\\_toddler\\_booklet\\_green.pdf](https://infantandtoddlerforum.org/media/upload/pdf-downloads/HR_toddler_booklet_green.pdf)

Fresh water is available throughout the day (a refillable water bottle is required)

We fully respect individual parent's food choices for their children and understand that there are many different needs and tastes. However, if children's lunch boxes fall short of expectations within this policy, we will send home a reminder to the parents. We want to work with parents to educate our children about healthy dietary choices so that the children, through the understanding of a balanced diet, will develop a greater appreciation of a healthier lifestyle.

Updated advice from the Government is that small round fruits (grapes strawberries, cherry tomatoes etc) should be quartered, remove any stones or pips, cut large fruits (melon) or hard fruits and vegs (eg apple, carrots) into slices not chunks, nuts or whole seeds should not be given to children under the age of five.

We will take into consideration special dietary requirements and allergies and all staff are made aware of these. A chart showing all dietary requirements/allergies is located in the kitchen and continually monitored. If you have any concerns, please talk to your Keyworker or Manager.