Early Years Nutrition Policy

Based on the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Guidance

# Introduction

At Jumping Jo’s Day Nursery, we recognize the importance of good nutrition in the early years of a child’s life. This policy outlines our commitment to providing children with healthy, balanced, and nutritious food and drink in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) guidance. Good nutrition is a cornerstone of children’s growth, development, and overall well-being. It supports their ability to learn, promotes social interaction, and instils lifelong healthy eating habits.

Staff members must sit with the children throughout all mealtimes. This is to ensure that the children are eating safely and that there are no possible incidents of choking. If symptoms of choking or allergic reactions are noticed, all staff have their Paediatric First Aid certificate and have been trained on what to do in response to this. Management will be informed immediately and parents will be contacted if any of these incidents occur.

This policy is designed to:

* Ensure all children in our care receive meals, snacks, and drinks that meet their dietary needs and development stages.
* Promote healthy eating practices among children, staff, and families.
* Support children in making independent choices about food and developing positive attitudes towards eating.
* Comply with statutory EYFS guidance and best practices for early years nutrition.

Our objectives are to:

* Provide nutritionally balanced meals that align with government guidelines and EYFS standards.
* Accommodate individual dietary requirements, including allergies, intolerances, and cultural and religious preferences.
* Educate children and their families about the importance of healthy eating through activities and communication.
* Ensure mealtimes are enjoyable, social experiences that encourage positive behaviour and good manners.

We will provide:

* Three meals a day where applicable—breakfast, lunch, and tea—alongside healthy snacks.
* Fresh fruit and vegetables with every meal and snack.
* Milk and water as the primary drinks available to children throughout the day.
* Low-sugar, low-salt, and minimally processed foods to support healthy growth.

Please see separate policy for packed lunch guidance.

## Dietary Requirements

All dietary needs are respected and recorded during enrolment. Families are encouraged to update staff about any changes in their child’s dietary requirements. The following steps are taken:

* Allergy and intolerance management plans are implemented for children with specific needs.
* Cultural and religious food preferences are adhered to without compromising nutritional balance.
* Staff are trained to recognize and manage allergic reactions effectively.

We aim to create a positive and inclusive mealtime environment by:

* Encouraging children to sit together and share meals in a family-style setting.
* Allowing children to serve themselves where appropriate to promote independence and choice.
* Modelling healthy eating habits and manners through staff interaction.

Staff monitor children’s eating habits to ensure they are eating well and address any concerns with families promptly.

To ensure the effective implementation of this policy, all staff involved in food preparation and service undergo food hygiene and safety training.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if there are changes to EYFS guidance, government regulations, or specific needs within our institution.

By adhering to this policy, we aim to foster a culture of healthy eating that benefits children’s physical, emotional, and social development. We believe that laying a strong foundation for nutrition in the early years is a vital step towards a lifetime of well-being and positive eating habits.

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