

09 Standard Childcare Practice

**09.8 Prime times – Snack-times and mealtimes (older children)**

**Snack times**

* A ‘snack’ Children are asked to bring in a healthy mid-morning and an afternoon snack. If it’s a forest school afternoon, Staff on meet and greet in the morning will make sure that the snack is in their rucksack ready.
* Children’s mid-morning snack is placed on the table ready for snack to open at 9.45am, A member of staff is always present during this time,
* Children wash their hands before and after snack-time.
* . Children are offered semi-skimmed milk as a main drink daily.
* 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 by allowing them to pour drinks, butter toast, cut fruit etc.

**Mealtimes**

**Setting to be cleared away to make space or dinner time**

* Tables are never overcrowded during mealtimes. Some social distancing is encouraged even though it is acknowledged that children will play in close proximity for the rest of the session.
* Children help staff set tables where possible and they wish to help
* Children bring in a packed lunch; all lunches are stored out of the reach of children.
* Children wash their hands and sit down.
* Children are encouraged to wait till everyone is seated before starting their lunch
* Staff have their lunch with children. Staff who are eating with the children role-model healthy eating and best practice at all times.
* Children are given time to eat at their own pace and are not hurried to fit in with adults’ tasks and breaks.
* In order to protect children with food allergies or specific dietary requirements, children are discouraged from sharing and swopping their food with one another.
* Mealtimes are relaxed opportunities for social interaction between children and the adults who care for them.
* Children are encouraged to wash their hands after lunch.