



Nutrition and Mealtimes Policy

At Cheeky Monkeys Day Nursery, we believe that mealtimes should be happy, social occasions for children and staff alike. We promote shared, enjoyable positive interactions at these times. We use these times to promote understanding of being healthy and caring for our bodies and our oral health.

We are committed to offering children a variety of healthy, nutritious, and balanced meals and snacks, which meet individual needs and requirements.

We ensure that:

- A balanced and healthy breakfast, midday meal, tea and two daily snacks are provided for children attending a full day at the nursery.
- Menus are planned in advance and in line with guidance produced by the Department for Education. These are rotated regularly, reflect cultural diversity and variation and are available for all staff, children, and parents/carers to view.
- All allergens are displayed alongside the menus to show the contents of each meal.
- We provide nutritious food at our snack and mealtimes, avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar, salt, and artificial additives, preservatives, and colourings.
- Menus include at least **3** servings of fresh fruit and vegetables per day.
- Milk and water are provided as drinks to promote oral health. Fresh drinking water is always available and accessible. It is frequently offered to children and babies and intake is monitored. In hot weather staff will encourage children to drink more water to keep them hydrated. Children are allocated a personal, named nursery drinking cup/bottle.
- Children who require specific formula milk we ask that parents/carers provide this and ensure that it is a new tub with the seal intact and clearly labelled with the child's name. Staff will log the date the container is opened and will use for

no longer than 4 weeks. We will ask parents/carers to replace as required. We ask that parents/carers provide bottles for the children with appropriate Teets. Staff will make bottles up fresh before each feed and follow the package instructions precisely.

- Individual dietary requirements are respected. We gather information from parents/carers regarding their children's dietary needs, including any special dietary requirements, preferences, and food allergies that a child has and any special health requirements before a child starts or joins the nursery. Where appropriate, we will carry out a risk assessment in the case of allergies and work alongside parents/carers and or health professionals to put into place an individual dietary plan for their child. For special dietary requests that do not meet our nutrition and oral health guidelines we will need written confirmation or a personal health care plan from a relevant health professional.
- We give careful consideration to seating arrangements in order to avoid cross contamination of food from child to child. Where appropriate, an adult will sit with children during meals to ensure safety and minimise risks. Where appropriate, discussions will also take place with children about allergies and potential risks to make them aware of the dangers of sharing certain foods.
- Staff show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. They 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.
- Staff set a good example when eating with the children and model good table manners. Meal and snack times are organised so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate in small groups. During meals and snack times children are encouraged to use their manners and conversation is encouraged
- Staff use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drinks when safe and appropriate and by feeding themselves.
- Staff support children to make healthy choices and understand the need for healthy eating.
- Where possible, we provide foods from the diet of each of the children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones.
- Cultural differences in eating habits are respected.
- Any child who shows signs of distress at being faced with a meal he/she does not like will have his/her food removed without any fuss. If a child does not

finish his/her first course, he/she will be offered a banana which is a healthy and filling alternative to provide energy and nutrition they will still be offered a helping of dessert.

- Children not on special diets are encouraged to eat a small piece of everything.
- Children who refuse to eat at the mealtime are offered food later in the day.
- Children are given time to eat at their own pace and not rushed.
- Quantities offered take account of the ages of the children being catered for in line with recommended portion sizes for babies and young children.
- We promote positive attitudes to healthy eating through play opportunities and discussions.
- The nursery provides parents with daily information of feeding and meal times for all children.
- No child is ever left alone when eating or drinking to minimise the risk of choking.
- We will sometimes celebrate special occasions such as birthdays with the occasional treat of foods such as cake, sweets, or biscuits. These will be given at mealtimes to prevent tooth decay and not spoil the child's appetite. Where we have frequent birthdays and celebrations, we consider other alternatives such as celebrating through smiles and praise, stickers, and badges, choosing a favourite story, becoming a special helper, playing a party game, dancing and/or singing their favourite song.
- All staff who prepare and handle food are competent to do so and receive training in food hygiene which is updated regularly.
- In the very unlikely event of any food poisoning affecting two or more children on the premises, whether or not this may arise from food offered at the nursery, we will inform Ofsted as soon as reasonably practical and in all cases within 14 days. We will also inform the relevant health agencies and follow any advice given.

Packed Lunches/External food

Unfortunately, at Cheeky Monkeys Day Nursery we do not have the appropriate storage space/environment for packed lunches/food from home to be provided safely. We also have staff and children with serious allergies to monitor and keep safe.

Children accessing Nursery meals during their sessions is highly promoted as this supports a varied, well-balanced diet and is fully inclusive. We do have a strict Lunch Box policy in place for the purpose of opt out procedures.

This policy was reviewed on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
<i>March 2025</i>		<i>September 2025</i>