

**Nazeing Pre-School, c/o Nazeing Primary School, Hyde Mead, Nazeing. EN9 2HS**

**Food and Drink Policy**

**Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Health**

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

There must be an area 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. All staff involved in preparing and handling food must receive training in food hygiene.

**Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Staff: Child Ratios**

Staffing arrangements must meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety. Providers must ensure that children are adequately supervised, including whilst eating, and decide how to use staff to ensure children’s needs are met. Providers must inform parents and/or carers about how staff are organised, and, when relevant and practical, aim to involve them in these decisions.

**Policy statement**

We regard snack and meal times as an important part of our day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults, and helps children to learn about healthy eating. At snack and meal times, we aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs.

**Procedures**

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

* Before a child starts to attend the setting, we ask their parents about their dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies.
* We record information about each child's dietary needs in the Registration Form and parents 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 updated record to signify that it is correct.
* We display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all our 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.
* We provide nutritious food for all meals and 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 we are especially vigilant where we have a child who has a known allergy to nuts, this is also the cases for Bananas due to server allergy of a child attending Nazeing Primary School.
* Through discussion with parents and research reading, we obtain information about the dietary rules of the religious groups to which children and their parents belong, and of vegetarians and vegans, as well as about food allergies. We take account of this information in the provision of food and drinks.
* We provide a vegetarian alternative on days when meat or fish are offered and make every effort to ensure Halal meat or Kosher food is available for children who require it.
* We show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. We 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 meal and snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and adults participate.
* We use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, 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.
* We inform parents who provide food for their children about the storage facilities available in our setting.
* We give parents who provide food for their children information about suitable containers for food.
* In order to protect children with food allergies, we discourage children from sharing and swapping their food with one another.
* For children who drink milk, we provide semi-skimmed pasteurised milk.

*Packed lunches*

Where we cannot provide cooked meals and children are required to bring packed lunches, we:

* ensure perishable contents of packed lunches are refrigerated or contain an ice pack to keep food cool;
* encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit, and milk based deserts, such as yoghurt or crème fraîche, where we can only provide cold food from home. We discourage sweet drinks and can provide children with water;
* 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;
* ensure that adults sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.

**Food Hygiene**

We provide and/or serve food for children on the following basis:

* Snacks.
* Meals.
* Packed lunches.

We maintain the highest possible food hygiene standards with regard to the purchase, storage, preparation and serving of food.

* Our staff with responsibility for food preparation understand their role in line with, Food Hygiene Level 1 training.
* All our staff who are involved in the preparation and handling of food have received training in food hygiene.
* The person responsible for food preparation and serving carries out daily opening and closing checks
* We ensure we regularly review our risk assessment of the purchase, storage, preparation and serving of food to prevent growth of bacteria and food contamination.
* We use reliable suppliers for the food we purchase.
* Food is stored at correct temperatures and is checked to ensure it is in-date and not subject to contamination by pests, rodents or mould.
* Packed lunches are stored in a cool place; un-refrigerated food is served to children within 4 hours of preparation at home.
* Food preparation areas are cleaned before and after use.
* There are separate facilities for hand-washing and for washing-up.
* All surfaces are clean and non-porous.
* All utensils, crockery etc. are clean and stored appropriately.
* Waste food is disposed of daily.
* Cleaning materials and other dangerous materials are stored out of children's reach.
* Children do not have unsupervised access to the kitchen facilities.
* When children take part in cooking activities, they:
* are supervised at all times;
* understand the importance of hand-washing and simple hygiene rules;
* are kept away from hot surfaces and hot water; and
* do not have unsupervised access to electrical equipment, such as blenders etc.

*Reporting of food poisoning*

Food poisoning can occur for a number of reasons; not all cases of sickness or diarrhoea are as a result of food poisoning and not all cases of sickness or diarrhoea are reportable.

* Where children and/or adults have been diagnosed by a GP or hospital doctor to be suffering from food poisoning and where it seems possible that the source of the outbreak is within our setting, the Manager will contact the Environmental Health Department to report the outbreak and will comply with any investigation.
* We notify Ofsted as soon as reasonably practicable of any confirmed cases of food poisoning affecting two or more children looked after on the premises, and always within 14 days of the incident.

**Legal framework**

* Regulation (EC) 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Hygiene of Foodstuffs.

**Further guidance**

* Nutritional Guidance for the Under Fives (Pre-school Learning Alliance 2009)
* The Early Years Essential Cookbook (Pre-school Learning Alliance 2009)
* Healthy and Active Lifestyles for the Early Years (Pre-school Learning Alliance 2012)

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| This policy was adopted by | NAZEING PRE-SCHOOL | *(name of provider)* |
| On | February 2025 | *(date)* |
| Date to be reviewed | February 2026 | *(date)* |
| Signed on behalf of the provider | Nicky Mainwaring | |
| Name of signatory | Emma Hughes | |
| Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner) | Chairperson | |