Diagram

Description automatically generatedTeynham House

41 Alderwood Road

Eltham

SE9 2LR

**Food and nutrition policy**

**Introduction**

Eltham Green Nursery aims to implement the whole setting approach to healthy eating in order to improve the health of children, their families and staff. We will equip our children with the knowledge, understanding and skills that enable them to make the sort of choices that lead to a healthy lifestyle and develop to their full potential. In our setting children will be provided with a range of opportunities to learn about food and make healthier food and drink choices.

All hot meals (lunches) are prepared in the kitchens of Alderwood Primary school and transported to us in hot containers. The menus are provided by Chartwells that are designed to be low in fat, salt and sugar, they are rotated on a three weekly basis and changed each term. Breakfast is provided by the nursery with a range of cereals as well as tea which offers the children pittas, vegetable sticks and rice cakes etc. Children have access to fresh fruit on a daily basis and fresh drinking water in their own labelled sports bottle which is provided by the nursery. Water and milk are the only drinks offered in the nursery day.

**Aims**

The main aims of our nursery food & nutrition policy are:

* **To enable children to make healthy choices through the provision of information and development of appropriate skills and attitudes.**
* **To provide healthy, balanced and nutrious food/drink choices throughout the day (or time the children are in the setting) and ensure any food brought in from home compliments this except for special occasions.**
* **To ensure that all aspects of food and drink promote the health and well being of the children, staff and visitors to our setting.**
* **To ensure food is nutritionally appropriate to the age/stage of each child.**

**Equal opportunities**

We offer a balanced and nutritional menu over the day that takes into account all the children’s religious and medical needs.

**Staff**

All the staff at Eltham Green Nursery have undertaken their Food safety & hygiene level 2 certificate to ensure they are compliant with food safety practices. Staff are aware of good hygiene procedures e.g. hair tied back for food preparation and washing of hands. All staff have a key role in influencing children’s knowledge, skills and attitudes about food, so it is important that they are familiar with this policy and healthy eating guidelines. It is essential that staff are committed to setting an example with food in the setting. The nursery staff are encouraged to promote healthy eating at all times and when in contact with children they are not eating unhealthy foods or drinks to ensure that they are good role models. During meal times the staff eat what they children are eating or a healthy alternative.

**Learning through food**

Within our daily nursery routine we offer: Breakfast, Snack, Lunch and Tea.

Aspects of these meal times are interactive where children are encouraged to self-serve additional helpings of their hot meal whilst seated at the table, they are also developing independence in scraping their leftovers in to the bin. Children experience and play with different real fruits and vegetables in their home corners as well as offered regular activities such as food tasting, food chopping and cooking. We also talk about good nutrition and healthy eating practices linking to good oral hygiene.

**Food and drink throughout nursery**

Food provided at Eltham Green Nursery is age appropriate. Where food items are used in play, children are supervised to ensure they are kept safe. We use the following procedures to ensure food safety:

* Choking hazards are checked and avoided.
* We will not use whole jelly cubes for play, if jelly is used then it will be prepared with water as per the instructions.
* All allergies and intolerances will be checked and activities will be adapted to suit all children’s needs so no child is excluded.
* Children’s allergies and intolerances will be visible to all staff.

Drinks provided at Eltham Green Nursery are healthy options.

* Fresh drinking water is provided throughout the day, children aged 2-4 years have their own labelled sports bottle. Our under 2’s will have sippy cups provided which are easily accessible.
* Semi skimmed milk is available for children at tea times, full fat milk is available for our under 2’s.
* Children who require formula milk will be provided by home.

**Breakfast**

We know that breakfast is an important meal of the day, that should provide 25% of a child’s energy requirement and contribute to their vitamin and mineral requirements. Daily we offer a selection of breakfast cereals – Cornflakes, weetabix, rice krispies, cheerios and malted wheaties.

**Morning snacks**

We understand that snacks can be an important part of a child’s diet therefore the snacks provided by the nursery will be familiar fruits or vegetables such as: apples, bananas, oranges etc. Where possible we also introduce unfamiliar fruits such as: mango, cherries,pineapple etc. We do gratefully accept fruit contributions from our nursery parents.

**Nursery meals**

All hot lunch meals are provided by Chartwells which are cooked on the premises of Alderwood primary school and transported through the school playground in hot containers. Menus are rotated on a three weekly basis, changing each term. Any food allergies or intolerances are catered for with specialised menus, provided separately from the other children’s food.

**Packed lunches**

Upon starting at Eltham Green Nursery, parents are given the opportunity to choose whether they would like their child to receive a nursery hot meal or to provide their own packed lunch, parents are then provided with information about the types of food their child’s packed lunch should contain. We encourage parents to provide packed lunches that reflect our commitment to healthy eating practices. This should include:

A sandwich / pitta bread / wholemeal pasta

A piece of fruit or chopped up vegetables such as raw carrot, cucumber or pepper

A fruit yoghurt

Parents can provide, if they feel it is necessary, one small bag of crisps or one cereal bar or one small portion of cake (not two or three in one lunchbox).

**Use of food as a reward/special occasions**

We do not encourage the regular eating of sweets or other foods high in sugar or fat, especially as a reward for good behaviour, or other achievements.

Birthdays will be celebrated by parents being welcomed to provide a small celebratory cake, considering ethical, religious, medical and dietary requirements. A shop bought cake must remain in its original packaging so that ingredients can be seen, if a small cake is homemade then a list of ingredients should be provided.

**Infant milk**

The nursery respects and follows the individual preferences of the families that care for babies and the choice of whether they use breast milk and/or formula is supported. The storage of infant milk are as follows:

* For breast milk we follow guidelines of storing milk in a fridge that is under 5 degrees on the day it is used.
* For formula milk the bottles are prepared as the baby needs them by adding the required powder to the water (70 degrees or above) and allowing the water to cool. The bottle will be discarded after a period of one hour.

**The food and eating environment**

The nursery will provide a clean and sociable environment for the children to eat their meals. Children will be encouraged to develop good eating skills and table manners and will be given plenty of time to eat.

Each staff member will sit at a table with the children, feeding the younger ones where needed and being a good role model to the older children, sharing conversations about healthy eating and the effects their bodies.

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