

Food safety, hygiene and nutrition policy

This policy was adopted by Leverstock Green Playgroup

Aim

Our setting is a suitable, clean, and safe place for children to be cared for, where they can grow and learn. We meet all statutory requirements for food safety and fulfil the criteria for meeting the relevant Early Years Foundation Stage Safeguarding and Welfare requirements

Objectives

- We provide nutritional snacks which promote health and reduce the risk of obesity and heart disease that may begin in childhood.
- We follow the main advice on dietary guidelines and the legal requirements for identifying food allergens when planning menus based on the four food groups:
 - meat, fish, and protein alternatives
 - milk and dairy products
 - cereals and grainsfresh fruit and vegetables.

We regard snack and mealtimes as an important part of our day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults, and helps children to learn about healthy eating

- Parents share information about their children's particular dietary needs with staff when they enrol their children and on an on-going basis. This information is shared with all staff who are involved in the care of the child. We display all children with dietary requirements on, along with a laminated place mat for those children with a photo on.
- Foods provided by the setting for children have any allergenic ingredients identified and displayed
- Care is taken to ensure that children with food allergies do not have contact with food products that they are allergic to.
- Risk assessments are conducted for each individual child who has a food allergy or specific dietary requirement.
- We provide milk and water during the session. The children bring in a water filled bottle so can access a drink throughout the session.
- We do allow diluted squash where there is a medical need.
- We ask the parent/ carer to speak with the Manager for an exception to bringing in water
 - We display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all our staff and volunteers are fully informed about them.we advise the parent of the snack we have by displaying a note in our window to be seen at home time.

- 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.
 - 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 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 snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and adults participate.
 - We use snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, collecting a plate and cup, choosing snack, pouring their drink and feeding themselves.
- To protect children with food allergies, we discourage children from sharing and swapping their food with one another.

- For young children who drink milk, we provide semi-skimmed milk from the age of two years.

Packed lunches

The children are required to bring packed lunches; we advise our parents/carers that

- The lunch bags are not refrigerated and recommend an ice pack to keep food cool is placed in the lunch box/bag
- Inform parents of our policy on healthy eating.
- Encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit, and milk-based desserts, 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 or milk.
- We 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.
- Cutting of grapes/ small items like cherry tomatoes as may cause choking- we will cut fruit ie apples
- Ensure that adults sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.

Special Events – Birthday / special occasions

To ensure food brought in from home is balanced and meets the settings food guidelines we recommend fruit or non-edible options eg bubbles or stickers are brought in if a parent wants to share to celebrate their child's birthday/ celebrations.

Food Hygiene

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

We registered as a food provider with the local authority Environmental Health Department.

Procedures

Our staff with responsibility for food preparation/ understand the principles of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) as it applies to our setting. The basis for this is risk assessment of the purchase, storage, preparation and serving of food to prevent growth of bacteria and food contamination.

- All our staff who are involved in the preparation and handling of food have received training in food hygiene.
- 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 handwashing 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.
- 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 several 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 leader 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.

The policy was adapted by Leverstock Green Playgroup

On June 2026

Signed on behalf of the provider Fern Manly

Role of signatory committee member

Updated annually

Policies & Procedures for the EYFS 2021 (Early Years Alliance 2022)