Safer Eating 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 grains

    fresh 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. We have a separate food mat for children with allergies, a list with a photo of each child with allergies/ intolerances/preferences is displayed on our kitchen door.
- We ensure we have an allergy action plan 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.

What we do at Lunch and Snack Time

- Whilst eating, children are always within sight and hearing of a member of staff. We have Two staff sitting down on opposite sides of the table when the children sit for snack/ lunch times to ensure that all children are kept safe and aware of choking. The staff are vigilant at all times.
- All staff in the session are Paediatric First Aid trained and attend first aid training which is updated .

- Staff who are eating with the children must role-model hygiene, healthy eating and best practice at all times, for example not drinking cans of fizzy drinks in front of the children.
- Staff arrange the table before children in our care sit down; there should be no waiting time.
- Hands are wiped/washed clean before their meal.
- Healthy snacks are offered at snacktime along with water or milk. Fruit or raw vegetables, such as carrot or tomato, are offered in batons, which children should be encouraged to help in preparing. Bananas and other foods are not cut as rounds but are sliced to minimise a choking hazard.
- Portion sizes are gauged as appropriate to the age of the child
- Children are encouraged to empty their plate after they are finished and offered a wipe to wipe their mouth and hands .
- When the children are finished an adult will clean all the tables with appropriate cleaner and sweep the floor- put plates and any cups in the dishwasher.
- Lunch time – parents provide a packed lunch for their child. We give guidance for healthy eating and the importance of this. The staff encourage the child to eat their savoury food first then fruit or yoghurt,
- We do take out of the lunch bags unhealthy food and return to the parents
- To protect children with food allergies or specific dietary requirements, children are discouraged from sharing and swopping their food with one another.
- Allergy mats are provided for children who have allergies and a staff member will sit to ensure the child only eats what they can eat.
- When the children are finished they are given a baby wipe to wipe their mouths and hands and encouraged to put their lunch bag in the tubs.
- The staff sweep the floor and use cleaner to wash the tables once lunch club is finished
- Information for parents is displayed, including: the allergens from snack time.
- Choking – to reduce the risk of choking we have two staff seated opposite sides of the table where the children eat. The staff sit so they are facing the children and can see all children. Staff encourage children to put small amounts of food in their mouths and to chew and swallow carefully before more food is put into their mouth. Children not allowed to leave the table unless they have finished the food in their mouth. Staff to refrain from talking to each other when children are eating. Staff have Paediatric First Aid qualifications are present during eating. If a choking incident happens it will be recorded and shared with the parents of the intervention given. This will be reviewed to reduce risks and address concerns.
- Allergens – a child with an allergy, preference , intolerance have their own mat . The information states the allergen , photo of the child. Allergens are noted in red lettering. We are a nut free setting .

- Lunch club – A staff member who has been food allergy and hygiene trained will check the food in a child's lunch bag to ensure it is suitable for the child. They will place the lunch bag on to the correct place mat for a child with allergies. Small harder fruit as grapes, tomatoes will be cut into 4 ways length ways rather than width. Children must stay seated , two staff are seated opposite as at snack. All staff are vigilant and encourage slow careful eating.
- Temperature checks are recorded for the fridge daily as part of our opening / closing checks.

The policy was adapted by Leverstock Green Playgroup
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Signed on behalf of the provider T Dignum

Role of signatory Manager

1/9/26