

WHITLEY LODGE UNDER FIVES

HEALTHY EATING POLICY/ ORAL HEALTH

Statement of intent

Our pre-school regards snack times as an important part of the pre-school session. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy, balanced and nutritious eating and the importance of good oral hygiene. We talk to the children about brushing our teeth twice a day and choosing non sugary snacks.

Legislation and references

Statutory framework for the EYFS 2026

Health and Safety Policy

Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance

Aim

At snack times, we aim to provide healthy, balanced and nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs and special health requirements, taking into consideration any food allergies. We aim to meet the full requirements of the EYFS Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements, EYFS Nutrition Guidance and recommendations of the Environmental Health Service Department. We aim to promote healthy eating and oral health as part of a healthy lifestyle.

Methods

- Before a child is left at pre-school, we find out from parents their children's dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies (registration form/verbal discussion with parents/carers).
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed about them.
- We record the snack given each day and complete an allergen checklist. We also implement a double signed risk assessment to ensure that children receive only food and drink which is consistent with their dietary needs and their parents' wishes.
- In the case of severe allergies, a protocol is put into place and all parents/carers are informed by letter and notices to ensure that the child is not exposed to the allergen. Care is also taken when storing foods that they are clearly labelled and kept separately to avoid contamination by an allergen.
- We provide nutritious food for snacks, avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- We provide a variety of healthy snacks including fruit, yoghurts, vegetables, crackers and cheese. We encourage children to try all snacks but accept when there is an item a child does not like. The snack will still be offered again as children's tastes can change.
- We try to include foods from the diet of each of the children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones.

- Through discussion with parents and research reading by staff, we obtain information about the dietary rules of the religious groups, to which children and their parents belong and of vegetarians and vegans, and about food allergies. We take account of this information in the provision of food and drinks.
- Staff members receive relevant training on food handling.
- We require staff to show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. Staff 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 operate a "Snack to Share" scheme where parents/carers are invited to bring in a healthy snack for their child to share with his/her peers ensuring that whatever item of snack brought in is sealed and is in its original packaging and is in its use by/ best before date
- We organise snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate.
- We use snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices and feeding themselves. (This is closely supervised to ensure dietary requirements are observed.)
- We provide children with utensils when necessary which are appropriate for their ages and stages of development and which take account of the eating practices in their cultures.
- Snacks are prepared and served using hygienic procedures e.g. fruit and vegetables are washed, food preparation surfaces and snack tables are cleaned with hot water and then anti bacterial spray. (See also Health and Safety Policy)
- Adults and children wash hands before preparing and eating snacks.
- We have fresh drinking water constantly available for the children to access themselves at any time during the session.
- For children who drink milk, we provide semi-skimmed milk, served in individual cartons with a straw. Milk is delivered by the dairy which also delivers to the school, and is stored in the fridge until used. Staff check the dates on the carton/bottle before serving milk.
- Food is purchased from reputable suppliers and checked for quality. Receipts are kept for traceability. Food is stored either in the food cupboard or the fridge as appropriate and the fridge temperature is checked and recorded daily. Food is inspected daily to check use by dates and discarded when necessary.
- For children who do not drink milk, water is available as an alternative, served in a plastic cup (trainer cups are available if required)
- Parents who wish to provide an alternative drink are advised to bring it in a named bottle or container.
- Cooking/food activities with the children are chosen to promote an understanding of the importance of a healthy diet.
- The pre-school includes activities within the curriculum that give opportunities to discuss healthy eating and good oral hygiene.
- Parents are informed of potential harm that frequent use of dummies can cause to their child's teeth and gums (refer to dummy policy)

