

Meeting dietary requirements

Snack and mealtimes are an important part of the day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating. We aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs and preferences.

- There is always a trained Level 2 Food Hygiene member of staff on the premises for snack and lunchtimes
- Staff discuss and record children's dietary needs, allergies and any ethnic or cultural food preferences with their parents. A child's special dietary requirements are recorded on registration to the setting and information is shared with all staff.
- If a child has a known food allergy, the Allergies and food intolerance policy is followed.
- Parents record information about each child's dietary needs in the individual child's registration form
- Up-to-date information about individual children's dietary needs is displayed so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed. This can be found on the fridge in the kitchen.
- Staff ensure that children receive only food and drink that is consistent with their dietary needs and cultural or ethnic preferences, as well as their parent's wishes. At each mealtime, a member of staff is responsible for checking that the food provided meets the dietary requirements for each child.
- Staff aim to include food diets from children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones.
- Through on-going discussion with parents and research reading by staff, staff 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. Staff take account of this information when providing food and drink.
- All staff show sensitivity in providing for children's diets, allergies and cultural or ethnic food preferences. A child's diet or allergy is never used as a label for the child, they are not made to feel 'singled out' because of their diet, allergy or cultural/ethnic food preferences.
- Fresh drinking water is available throughout the day. Staff inform children how to obtain the drinking water and that they can ask for water at any time during the day. Individual water bottles are available in the main room throughout the day.
- Meal and snack times are organised as social occasions.

Fussy/faddy eating

- Children who are showing signs of 'strong food preferences, or aversions to food' are not forced to eat anything they do not want to.
- Staff recognise the signs that a child has had enough and remove uneaten food without comment.
- Children are not made to stay at the table after others have left if they refuse to eat certain items of food.
- Staff work in partnership with parents to support them with children who are showing signs of 'food preferences or aversion' and sign post them to further advice, for example, How to Manage Simple Faddy Eating in Toddlers (Infant & Toddler Forum) <https://infantandtoddlerforum.org/health-and-childcare-professionals/factsheets/>