



Registered Charity No. 1022409

## **8 Childcare practice policy and procedures**

### **8.8 Prime times practice procedures – Snack-times and lunch times**

#### **Snack time**

- A 'snack' is prepared mid-morning and can be organised according to the discretion of the preschool manager e.g. picnic on a blanket.
- Children may also take turns to help set the table. Small, lidded plastic jugs are provided with choice of milk or water.
- Children wash their hands before and after snack-time.
- Children are only offered semi-skimmed milk as a main drink'
- 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.
- Cream crackers, toast, rice cakes or oatcakes are offered.
- Children arrive as they want refreshment and leave when they have had enough. Children are not made to leave their play if they do not want to have a snack.
- Staff join in conversation and encourage children's independence by allowing them to pour drinks, butter toast, cut fruit etc.

#### **Lunch time**

- Tables are never overcrowded during mealtimes. Some social distancing is encouraged even though it is acknowledged that children will play in close proximity for the rest of the session.
- Children help staff set tables.
- Children and staff wash their hands before and after eating;
- Empty wrappers and packaging and left over food are left in the lunch boxes so that parents can see what their child has eaten
- Lids from drinking bottles are removed as they can be a choking hazard;
- Staff sit with children to eat their own lunch so that the mealtime are a social occasion and that staff can feedback to parents and carers about how well their child has eaten that day.
- Staff have their lunch with children and do not eat different food in front of children. Staff who are eating with the children, role-model healthy eating and best practice at all times, for example not drinking cans of fizzy drinks in front of the children.

- Children are given time to eat at their own pace and are not hurried to fit in with adults' tasks and breaks. They are not made to eat what they do not like and are only encouraged to try new foods slowly.
- In order to protect children with food allergies or specific dietary requirements, children are discouraged from sharing and swapping their food with one another.
- If children do not eat their main course, they are not denied pudding. Food is not used as a reward or punishment.
- Mealtimes are relaxed opportunities for social interaction between children and the adults who care for them.
- No child is left alone while eating.

This policy was adopted on

6<sup>th</sup> September 2023

Date to be reviewed

6<sup>th</sup> September 2024

Signed by committee chairperson

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Signed by preschool manager

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