

Happy Days Childcare



Food safety and nutrition procedures

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.

- Staff discuss and record children's dietary needs, allergies and any ethnic or cultural food preferences with their parents/ carers. 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, procedure 4.04 Allergies and food intolerance is followed.
- Staff record information about each child's dietary needs in the individual child's registration form; parents/ carers sign the form to signify that it is correct.
- Up-to-date information about individual children's dietary needs is displayed so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed.
- 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
- The menus of meal and snacks are displayed on the parent notice board for parents/ carers to view. Foods that contain any food allergens are identified.
- 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/ carers and research reading by staff, staff obtain information about the dietary rules of the religious groups to which children and

their parents/ carers belong, and of vegetarians and vegans, as well as about food allergies. Staff take account of this information when providing food and drink.

- Staff provide a vegetarian alternative when meat and fish are offered and would offer a vegetarian option for children with cultural requirements such as Halal meat.
- Where it is not possible to source and provide Halal meat or Kosher food, a vegetarian option is available; this will be discussed and agreed with parents/ carers at the time of the child's registration.
- 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.
- 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/ carers to support them with children who are showing signs of 'food preference 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/>

Packed lunches

We do not normally allow packed lunches as we do provide good quality, freshly prepared meals daily. However, there may be some circumstances in which we may allow it. (For example, a SEND child who can only cope with home-prepared food). In these instances, we reserve the right to charge for the lunch hour at the rate that includes our meal as we still have to provide resources including cutlery, staff and role-modelling behaviour for preparing children to develop their social skills.

Where a packed lunch is allowed, we would require parents/ carers:

- To ensure perishable contents of packed lunches are refrigerated or contain an ice pack to keep food cool.
- Be aware of our policy on healthy eating.
- encourage parents/ carers to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit, and milk-based deserts, such as yoghurt or crème fraiche, where we can only provide cold food from home. We discourage sweet drinks and can provide children with water or diluted fresh fruit juice.
- 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.
- provide children bringing packed lunches with plates, cups and cutlery; and
- ensure that adults sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.