

Nutrition and Mealtimes Policy

At Daisy Chain we believe that mealtimes should be happy, social occasions for children and staff alike. We promote shared, enjoyable positive interactions at these times.

We are committed to offering children healthy, nutritious and balanced meals and snacks which meet individual needs and requirements.

We will ensure that:

- A balanced and healthy midday meal, tea and two daily snacks are provided for children attending a full day at the nursery
- A balanced and healthy breakfast will be provided for children attending an Early Start session
- Menus are planned in advance and in line with example menu and guidance produced by the department for education, these are rotated regularly and reflect cultural diversity and variation. These are displayed for children and parents to view
- All allergens are displayed alongside the menus to show the contents of each meal
- We provide nutritious food at all snack and meal times, avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar, salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings
- Parents and children are involved in menu planning
- Only milk and water are provided as drinks to promote oral health. Fresh drinking water is always available and accessible. It is frequently offered to children and babies and intake is monitored. In hot weather staff will encourage children to drink more water to keep them hydrated
- Individual dietary requirements are respected. We gather information from parents regarding their children's dietary needs, including any special dietary requirements, preferences and food allergies that a child has and any special health requirements, before a child starts or joins the nursery. Where appropriate, we will carry out a risk assessment in the case of allergies and work alongside parents to put into place an individual dietary plan for their child
- We give careful consideration to seating to avoid cross contamination of food from child to child. Where appropriate, an adult will sit with children during meals to ensure safety and minimise risks. Where appropriate, age/stage discussions will also take place with all children about allergies and potential risks to make them aware of the dangers of sharing certain foods
- Staff show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. They 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
- Staff set a good example and eat with the children and show good table manners. Meal and snack times are organised so that they are social occasions in which children and

staff participate in small groups. During meals and snack times children are encouraged to use their manners and conversation is encouraged

- Staff use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink, and feeding themselves
- Staff support children to make healthy choices and understand the need for healthy eating
- Where possible, we provide foods from the diet of each of the children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones.
- Cultural differences in eating habits are respected
- Any child who shows signs of distress at being faced with a meal he/she does not like will have his/her food removed without any fuss. If a child does not finish his/her first course, he/she will still be given a helping of dessert
- Children not on special diets are encouraged to eat a small piece of everything
- Children who refuse to eat at the mealtime are offered food later in the day
- Children are given time to eat at their own pace and not rushed
- Quantities offered take account of the ages of the children being catered for in line with recommended portion sizes for babies and young children
- We promote positive attitudes to healthy eating through play opportunities and discussions
- No child is ever left alone when eating/drinking to minimise the risk of choking
- We do not allow parents to bring in cakes on special occasions.
- All staff who prepare and handle food are competent to do so and receive training in food hygiene
- In the very unlikely event of any food poisoning affecting two or more children on the premises, whether or not this may arise from food offered at the nursery, we will inform Ofsted as soon as reasonably practical and in all cases within 14 days. We will also inform the relevant health agencies and follow any advice given.

Food brought into Nursery

To enable us to safely manage all the children's dietary needs and promote a positive environment we carefully manage food brought into Daisy Chain. Parents wishing to provide their children's meals must inform the Nursery Manager a minimum of 8 weeks prior to the start of term or at time of registration.

- Where a parent chooses to provide their own meals, this must be for every meal during every session. If children attend their session without sufficient food (i.e., food that does not adhere to our policy), then these will be provided by Daisy Chain at a cost to the Parent.
- Parents should provide meals in line with our current menu. Where a child's individual needs or the child's family require adaptations to the menu these must be agreed in advanced with the Nursery Manager. Strict procedures to ensure

appropriate management of ingredients is essential to ensure the safety of the children and must be adhered to.

- Parents will be provided with a list of ingredients which must not be included in any meal.
- Where ingredients used in a meal are not known or should not be included, the meal will not be used, and the child will be given a meal provided by Daisy Chain at a cost to the Parent.
- Each meal should be in separate food containers labelled with the child's name, date and contents. Foods should be brought into nursery in appropriate containers to prevent cross contamination. Foods which require re-heating should be brought in microwave safe containers. Parents should deliver the days food and collect the used containers at the Office.
- Parents should ensure that food is prepared safely, the Food Standards Agency offers guidance to consumers [Homepage | Food Standards Agency](#) if parents require further support or information please ask the Nursery Manager.
- Food should be prepared to minimise the risk of choking, advice on Early Years food choking hazards [Food safety - choking](#) if parents require further support or information please ask the Nursery Manager.
- The food must not have been previously re-heated.
- Food should be kept below 8°C to prevent bacteria from growing. Foods should be transported in a cool box or cool bag with ice or frozen gel packs. As soon as food arrives at the nursery it should be placed in the fridge until use.
- Parents/Carers should follow the guidance and requirements set out in the document, ***"Further information for providing food and consumables and opt out of the additional activities"***