



FIRST STEP PLAYGROUP



1.19 Food and drink

Policy statement

First Step Playgroup regards snack and meal times as an important part of the setting's day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating. We promote healthy eating, by providing a piece of fruit or vegetable from a local, organic food supplier during snack time. We aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs. We provide a range of food tasting and cooking activities and encourage children to try new foods.

COVID-19 ADDENDUM

As part of our risk management to reduce the risk of COVID-19 we will not be operating our snack bar throughout the pandemic. Parents are asked to provide a health snack of a piece of fruit or chopped vegetable in a named container for the child to access at snack time. The snack must be prepared to your child's liking, such as chopped or peeled to reduce adult contact with the food. Additionally grapes must be halved along the length (from top to bottom) of the grape.

Procedures

We follow these procedures to promote healthy eating in our setting.

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we find out from parents their children's dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies. (See the Managing Children with Allergies policy.)
- We regularly consult with parents to ensure that our records of their children's dietary needs - including any allergies, are up-to-date. Parents sign the up-dated record to signify that it is correct.
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed about them.
- We implement systems to ensure that children receive only food and drink that is consistent with their dietary needs and preferences as well as their parents' wishes.
- We display the menus of snacks for the information of parents on the notice board daily.
- We provide nutritious food for all snacks, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- We include a variety of foods from the four main food groups:
 - dairy foods;
 - grains and cereals
 - fruit and vegetables.
 - protein

- We include foods from the diet of each of the children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones.
- We take care not to provide food containing nuts or nut products as per our No Nut policy (See the Managing Children with Allergies policy). We remind parents we are a nut free setting.
- Through discussion with parents, 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.
- We require staff to show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies.
- We organise meal and 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, serving food and drink and feeding themselves.
- We have fresh drinking water constantly available for the children. We inform the children about how to obtain the water and that they can ask for water at any time during the day.
- We inform parents who provide food for their children about the storage facilities available in the setting and encourage the use of cold packs in children's pack lunches throughout the year.
- In order to protect children with food allergies, we discourage children from sharing and swapping their food with one another.
- For children who drink milk, we provide semi-skimmed pasteurized milk.
- During snack preparation we comply with food safety standards (see food hygiene policy)

Packed lunches

Where children are required to bring packed lunches, we:

- inform parents that we cannot provide refrigeration for packed lunches and advise/encourage them to include ice packs.
- inform parents of our policy on healthy eating;
- encourage parents to provide healthy packed lunch by informing them of government guidelines for feeding children age 2-5
- discourage packed lunch contents that consist largely of crisps, processed foods, sweet drinks and sweet products such as cakes or biscuits.
- ensure staff sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.
- Appropriate ratios and first aid qualified staff are always present in the room during meal times to prevent choking incidents.

Legal Framework

- Regulation (EC) 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the hygiene of foodstuffs

This policy was adopted at a meeting of

First Step Playgroup, Somersham

Held on

24th May 2019

Reviewed

07 October 2020

Reviewed

Name of signatory

Angie Kelly

Role of signatory (e.g. manager)

Playgroup Manager
