



Nutrition, Meals and Healthy Eating Policy:

At snack and meal times, we aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs. The food we provide has been assessed and prescribed by a nutritionist to ensure that all essential food groups are covered throughout the day. We aim to meet the full requirements of the Ofsted Care Standards on Food and Drink (Standard 8) and the EYFS Welfare Requirements.

Before a child attends the nursery, we find out from parents about their children's dietary needs, including any allergies. We record information about each child's dietary needs in her/his registration record and parents sign the record to signify that it is correct. 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 which is consistent with their dietary needs and their parents' wishes.

We plan menus in advance, involving children and parents in the planning. We display the menus of meals/snacks for the information of parents.

We provide nutritious food at all meals and snacks, avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings. We include protein and calcium for growth as well as essential minerals and vitamins in meals which are offered.

We include some cultural foods, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones. Through discussion with parents and research reading by staff, 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. Staff will 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.

We organise meal and snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate. We use meal and snack times to help



children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and feeding themselves.

We provide children with utensils which are appropriate for their ages and stages of development and which take account of the eating practices in their cultures.

In accordance with parents' wishes, we offer children arriving early in the morning - and/or staying late - an appropriate meal or snack.

We have rules about children sharing and swapping their food with one another in order to protect children with food allergies.

Food Supplied by Parents

We aim to ensure all aspects of food and nutrition at Ducklings Childcare Ltd promote the health and wellbeing of the children.

Parents are advised to include a small, named icepack if food is likely to spoil. Children are not allowed to swap or share their food from lunch boxes. We requests parents not to include the following:

- Sweets
- Food containing nuts (some children in Ducklings Childcare Ltd may have an allergy reaction to any contact with nuts.)
- Fizzy/sugary drinks

Eating Environment

Ducklings will provide a safe, calm and healthy eating environment for children having a packed lunch at Ducklings Childcare Ltd.

We do this by:

- Ensuring all children wash their hands before their meal
- Encouraging children to eat all or try to eat most of the food provided in their lunch box.
- Making sure children have the time to eat their lunch and do not rush, whilst, recognising that children also need time to play.
- Asking children to take leftovers from lunchboxes home to enable parents to see what their child has eaten.
- Providing fresh water for every child Packed Lunches

We would like lunch boxes to reflect a healthy balanced meal. There are currently no government *regulations* regarding the contents of children's



packed lunches. However the British Nutrition Foundation produced a set of *guidelines* recommending what should be included in lunch boxes to provide them with a healthy meal. We are asked by OFSTED to provide parents with appropriate food content for lunch boxes.

The recommended contents of a healthy lunch box are:

- A good portion of starchy food e.g. wholegrain roll, thick slice of wholemeal bread, pitta pocket, plain cracker, pasta or rice salad.
- Plenty of fruit and vegetables e.g. an apple, satsuma, handful of cherry tomatoes or carrot sticks, mini can of fruit chunks(decanted into a plastic container), small box of raisins
- A portion of milk or dairy food e.g. individual cheese portion, pot of yogurt.
- A small portion of lean meat, fish or alternative e.g. 2 slices of ham, quorn, cheese, tuna, egg or hummus.
- A drink e.g. small carton of fruit juice, no added sugar fruit squash. Water/juice concentrate is provided.
- One small packet of crisps, a fruit scone or portion of malt loaf, a small cake or biscuit may also be included (please avoid chocolate as much as possible).

Drinks

Access to drinking water throughout the day is dependent on the age and stage of the children in our care.

Our 3-4 year old room has drinking water available and children can access this independently.

The 2 – 3 room have access to drinking water but must ask for assistance in pouring the water as they are too young to help themselves.

Our 0 - 2 room operate a system where children are provided with drinking water at regular intervals throughout the day depending on their age and feeding requirements.

For children who drink milk, we provide whole and pasteurised milk. We provide milk for children and offer alternatives for children with milk allergies. Allergy requirements are discussed with Parents and Carers and a suitable alternative is found and provided as necessary.

Meals and Snacks



We source and purchase food from well known reputable companies. We ensure that food is delivered by appropriate means e.g. frozen goods remain frozen in transit.

Snack times and meal times are part of the daily routine and we have set times for these. This ensures that all children sit down to eat together and promotes a relaxed social time where children can develop their PSED skills.

Children are encouraged to help themselves to cold foods like sandwiches and fruit. However hot food is provided by the staff to ensure the safety of the children at all times.

When children are reluctant to eat, practitioners will accept the child's wishes and provide only positive encouragement. Children will not be made to eat what they do not want and, depending on individual circumstances, an alternative may be offered. This information will be shared with parents to try to identify any underlying problems and develop solutions which may be incorporated into the child's next session.

If a child misses a meal because he/she is asleep or arrives late then the meal will be stored in appropriate storage conditions until such a time that the child is ready to eat. If the food on offer is no longer safe to eat i.e. if it cannot be re-heated then an alternative meal will be offered.

Parents and Carers

For each child under two, we provide parents with daily written information about feeding routines, intake and preferences.

We also provide recipes of our most popular dishes for parents to take home and try with the rest of the family.

We inform parents who provide food for their children about the storage facilities available in the nursery and provide information about suitable containers for food.

Parents and Carers Providing Meals/snacks

In the event of a parent/carer wishing to provide a packed lunch for their child, a discussion will take place about the types of foods which will be appropriate for them to provide in the nursery. This is to ensure that children still have access to healthy foods whilst at the nursery and that children who are eating at the same table as the child with a packed lunch do not get conflicting messages about what constitutes healthy food.



Packed lunches will be clearly labelled with the child's name and stored in the fridge in the kitchen.

If a parent/carer forgets to provide a packed lunch as discussed, we will contact the parents to seek clarification about what they would like us to provide their child on that day.

Birthdays and Celebrations

Children's birthdays are celebrated in accordance with individual children's cultures and beliefs. If parents wish to bring a birthday cake in to share with the children this is permitted but must be bought not home made. However children are only provided with a small piece of cake at snack time, along with the regular fruit they receive.

Dietary needs

Children's dietary needs are displayed in each room to ensure that all staff, volunteers and students are aware of individual children's dietary needs.

Copies of these lists are also kept in the kitchen to inform the cook of any changes which may be necessary to adhere to these requirements.

The nursery takes into account individual families cultural and religious practices and we work with parents to ensure that the meals we offer are in accordance with their wishes.

We encourage all children to eat together and share their own likes and dislikes with peers. However staff encourage all children to be sensitive to other children's individual dietary needs and eating habits and demonstrate to children the appropriate behaviour and responses whilst at the table.

Meal time procedures

A child-centred, happy and relaxed atmosphere should extend throughout the day and accordingly at all meal times.

Children are provided with food and drink at regular intervals in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink are properly prepared, nutritious and comply with dietary and religious requirements as necessary.

Practitioners should: -

- Make meal and snack times a positive experience for all children by not rushing meal times.



- Encourage children to feed themselves to develop their independence and fine motor skills.
- Encourage children's table manners.
- Respect children's and adult's cultural differences that are different from their own.

Practitioners will sit and eat with the children making positive comments and having a positive approach to healthy eating.

Staff meals and snacks

Staff are encouraged to sit and eat with the children at lunch times. Meals are offered to all staff for a nominal daily price.

If staff choose to bring their own lunches they are asked to store and eat these in the staff room. Whilst we recognise every individual's right to choose their own foods we also work in an environment where it is of the utmost importance to promote healthy eating within the rooms. It is therefore inappropriate for staff to consume unhealthy food near the children as this may not support our healthy eating ethos.

Fresh drinking water is available for staff however in the interest of safety, hot drinks must not be taken into the areas where children are present. This includes public corridors and outdoor areas.