**Food and Drink Policy**

## Statement of Intent

West Wycombe Pre-school regards snack time and lunchtime as an important part of the pre-school’s session. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating and oral health.

## Aim

To promote healthy eating by providing a choice of fresh, nutritious food, which meets the children’s individual dietary needs. These foods include fresh fruit and vegetables along with bread sticks, cream crackers, cheese, rice cakes and whole wheat toast, pittas and naan breads. To educate children of the effects that foods and drinks have on our bodies and support them in making healthy choices.

To encourage those parents whose children stay for lunch to pack a healthy nutritious lunch and to make them aware of those children within the group that may have severe allergies.

*“Get the right amount of nutrients and energy they need while they are growing rapidly, which is especially important for children who might not have access to healthy food at home. This can help prevent children from becoming overweight or obese. Develop positive eating habits early on. Children’s early experiences with food can shape future eating habits. This can impact children’s long-term health including maintaining a healthy weight, and good oral health.”*  **Early Years Foundation stage nutrition guidance, May 2025.**

The legal framework for this work is:

* Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition guidance May 2025

## Methods

## We are registered with the local Environmental Health Department

## We have food management procedures in place to control any hazards that could arise when providing food & drink.

## These procedures are reviewed regularly to ensure they are effective.

* When eating children will be within sight and hearing of a member of staff who holds a valid Paediatric First Aid certificate at all times.

## Before a child starts at Pre-school, we find out from parents their child’s special dietary requirements, preferences, food allergies & intolerances & any special health requirements.

* We record information about each child’s dietary needs within a Health Care Plan and produce a poster which is displayed in the eating area showing a photograph of the child & their specific dietary requirements so all staff and volunteers are aware.
* All staff receive training from the Preschool’s Manager on allergies and intolerances detailed within children’s Health Care Plans and sign training records to acknowledge their understanding of each child’s requirements.
* We require staff to show sensitivity in providing for children’s diets and allergies. Staff 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.

**Breakfast and snack times**

* Breakfast cereals provided at Breakfast Club will be chosen based on those that have the lowest sugar and salt content, labelled as ‘low’ (green) in these areas.
* We use a red plate, bowl & cup for those children to have dietary allergies to highlight they may require alternative provision and allow for no mistakes to be made.
* Our healthy snacks & drinks are offered through a ‘Café’ during the morning session. Foods high in sugar or salt with be avoided, for example dried fruit and tinned fruits in syrups.
* For children who drink milk, we provide semi-skimmed pasteurised milk. Alternatives can be provided by parents should they wish to do so, but we recommend that those products provided are ‘unsweetened and calcium-fortified’.
* Children wash their hands before eating or drinking.
* The Café ensures snack times are social occasions in which children and staff participate.
* At the cafe children are encouraged and supported to develop independence through making choices and serving themselves.
* We have fresh drinking water constantly available for the children at the kitchen or in the rooms downstairs. As well as asking that all children provide their own water bottle to have available to them throughout their session at Preschool.
* We inform the children about how to obtain the water and that they can ask for water at any time during the session.
* As a setting we display the Allergens Poster provided by the Food Standards Agency on the notice board and record all foods provided for the children during snack and cooking activities, logging the main allergy groups on a chart.

**LUNCH TIMES**

* Whilst children are eating there must always be a member of staff in the room with a valid paediatric first aid certificate. Preschool management are responsible for identifying & selecting a competent training provider to deliver their paediatric first aid training.
* Children who attend lunch should be provided with a healthy packed lunch that is **nut free** due to allergies within the setting.
* Nut products such as Nutella must not be used as they pose a serious threat to children with allergies.
* The children all sit together & staff ensure lunch time is a social occasion in which children & staff participate
* Children are encouraged to eat their healthy foods first with any treats being after their other food items.
* Children should have limited treats items within their lunch box to encourage healthy eating practices.
* Food contained within the packed lunch should be cold (we do not heat food at pre-school), or provided within a hot flask.
* During warm weather we recommend that freezer packs are used to keep the packed lunch cool.
* Foods such as grapes, cherry tomatoes & cocktail sausages **MUST** to be cut in half to avoid being a choking hazard
* Sweets are a treat & should not be part of a child’s lunch.
* Staff will encourage children to eat all their lunch but staff will respect the child’s wishes and their decisions.
* All uneaten food & empty packages will be returned in the lunch box so parents/carers can monitor their child’s food consumption.
* We communicate information about children's severe allergies in a sensitive manner and with regard to our confidentiality policy.

If 2 or more children that are looked after on the premises are affected by food poisoning we inform Ofsted within 14 days of the incident occurring.

This policy was adopted by West Wycombe Pre-school Playgroup in October 2013. Policies are updated when necessary and reviewed on a yearly basis.

Reviewed and amended June 2025