# Health and Safety

# Food and drink

### Policy statement

Tywardreath Preschool Playgroup regards snack and mealtimes 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. At snack and mealtimes, we aim to provide nutritious food which meets the children's dietary needs.

### 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.
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.
We display current information about individual children's dietary needs in the kitchen. This is checked before every snack time, 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 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 and are especially vigilant where we have a child or staff member who has a known allergy to nuts.
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 into account this information in the provision of food and drinks.
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.
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 that are appropriate for their ages and stages of development and that take account of the eating practices in their cultures.
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.
To protect children with food allergies, we discourage children from sharing and swapping their food with one another.
For children who choose to drink milk, we provide semi-skimmed milk, as recommended by the National Food Board. This is funded by the LEA milk scheme and delivered twice a week by a local dairy. We provide dairy alternatives to children, in line with allergies, intolerances and requirements.

*Packed lunches*
We ensure perishable contents of packed lunches are consumed within three hours of arriving at the setting.
We inform parents of our policy on healthy eating.
We have a separate parent/carer packed lunch policy which details what foods and quantities we consider acceptable for a pre-school aged child.
We provide a copy of the packed lunch policy in our welcome pack and on the lunchbox crate and discuss the content of packed lunches before the child starts at the setting with their parents/carers.
We provide further literature about healthy eating in the porch and by posts on our Facebook page.
We encourage parents/carers to provide a carbohydrate such as sandwiches, wraps, crackers, pitta, pasta with a healthy filling, at least one portion of fruit, and milk-based deserts such as yoghurt, fromage frais or crème fraîche.
We discourage sweet drinks and can provide children with water or milk.
We discourage packed lunch contents that consist largely of crisps, processed foods, sweet drinks and sweet products such as cakes or biscuits. We have a limit on one ‘junk’ item per lunchbox. We reserve the right to return this food to the parent as a last resort.
We ensure staff sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.