



## St Nicolas Playgroup

### Food and Drink Policy

#### 1.0 Introduction

A well-balanced diet is vital for children to develop healthily along with fresh air and regular exercise.

This setting regards snack and mealtimes as an important part of the settings routine. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating. At snack and mealtimes, we aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs.

We promote good practices for oral health throughout our setting.

Although we will reinforce the importance of healthy foods. On odd occasions to fit in with our themes, other snacks will be offered i.e. sweet biscuits or other 'treats'. Parents will be notified by our newsletter of any changes to snacks, and we ask that at that point they inform us of any restrictions.

Staff are aware and comply with [childhood obesity a plan for action](#) to reduce obesity within young children and adults.

#### 2.0 Daily practices

- 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 which 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 session/day.
- We provide snacks for the children, and parents provide a packed lunch if the child is attending the afternoon session. We provide nutritious food during snacks, for example, crackers, breadsticks, fruit, bread, and crumpets. We avoid large quantities of fat, sugar, salt, and artificial additives, preservatives, and colourings.
- For children who drink milk, we provide semi-skimmed milk.
- We inform parents who provide their own food for their children about the storage facilities available in the setting.
- We give parents who provide food for their children information about suitable containers for food.
- We have rules about children sharing and swapping their food with one another in order to protect children with food allergies.

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### 3.0 Food preparation and storage

- Food preparation areas are a separate area from where the children eat.
- Food is prepared in the kitchen and children are not allowed to enter the kitchen.
- Staff will wear gloves to prepare food. Cutting will be done on the appropriate colour chopping board. Staff will wash hands before handling food.
- Tabletops and preparation areas will be cleaned with a fresh cloth and anti-bacterial spray.
- Staff are aware and have knowledge of how to store food in a fridge.
- Staff will ensure all foods are prepared hygienically; the heating of foods will be as per the manufacturer's guidelines.
- If needed, foods will be washed prior to serving.
- Milk will be stored in the fridge. The playgroup will be informed of any issues by the parish council. Cartons will be checked daily for use by dates and damage and discarded if need be. All opened cartons will be discarded at the end of the session. As part of our daily safety check, we will monitor the fridge temperature and record it.
- Food and milk will be stored in the fridge, it is the Council's responsibility to ensure that the fridge and oven are regularly inspected, but staff will check if this is done.
- Staff will complete a form stating where foods have been purchased. Receipts will be kept as proof of purchase.
- If there is an outbreak of food poisoning affecting two or more children looked after on the premises, we will notify Ofsted as soon as possible and within 14 days of the incident occurring.

### 4.0 Dietary requirements

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we find out from parents their child's dietary needs, including any allergies and we record this information in her/his registration record.
- 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, of vegetarians and vegans, and about food allergies. We take account of this information in the provision of food and drinks.
- We regularly consult with parents to ensure that our records of their child's dietary needs; including any allergies, are up to date.
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs in the kitchen 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 parent's wishes.
- 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.



## 5.0 Hygiene requirements

- Healthy personal hygiene routines are encouraged. The children wash their hands on arrival to the setting and before mealtimes.
- Staff are required to complete a food hygiene course via Noddle Now every 2 years. The food hygiene lead, Lynda Hillyer will attend the level 3 food hygiene course every 3 years. Details of staff training are available on request.
- For any cuts that occurred to fingers/hands during food preparation, a blue plaster will be used to cover the wound. These blue plasters will be kept in the First Aid Box.

## 6.0 Lunchtimes

- Parents of children attending the afternoons sessions on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, or Fridays will provide their child with a lunchbox. Parents will be asked to provide healthy snacks and advice will be given.
- Parents will be notified of allergies amongst the group.
- Food should be prepared at home in accordance with the safer eating policy. Fruit and hard vegetables should be cut and prepared to avoid choking risks.
- We are a nut-free setting.

## 7.0 Special occasions

- Children have the option to bring cake to the setting on birthdays. Permission is gained from parents before allowing the children to consume.
- We celebrate foods from a variety of cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones. We use different foods to celebrate festivals and religious events.

## 8.0 Snack donations

- As a group, we have set up a voluntary snack donation system whereby parents can donate snacks for the children. This is managed by the parental committee. These snacks will be checked by our staff and recorded. **We do not keep the receipts for these items.** This was agreed and set up by the new committee voted in as of September 2017 to support the group financially.

This policy was adopted on 08/03/2022

This policy was reviewed by:	The Manager	Signed
On:	Date: 21 August 2025	VE Evans
Date of next review:	Date: 21 August 2026	