

Safeguarding and welfare requirement; Health

Where children are provided with snacks and drinks they must be healthy, balanced and nutritious.

Promoting health and hygiene

Food and drink/healthy eating

Policy statement

At Jack and Jill's we recognise snacks and meal times are an important part of the day, eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating. We promote healthy eating using resources and materials from the preschool alliance. At snack time we aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs. We encourage parents to provide a healthy packed lunch for their children who attend lunch club.

Procedures

We follow these procedures to promote healthy eating at Jack and Jill's

- Before a child starts we ask their parents about their dietary needs and preferences including any allergies.
- We record information about each child's needs in the registration form and parents sign the form to confirm that the details are correct.
- We regularly consult with parents to ensure our records are kept up to date on allergies and dietary needs. Parents sign the up to date form to signify it is correct.
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed at all times.
- 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 picture of the snack we offer so parents/carers can see.
- We provide nutritious food for all snacks avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar, salt and artificial colourings, additives and preservatives.
- We encourage the parents and children to provide fruit and vegetables to be prepared and used at snack times.
- 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 who has a known allergy to nuts.

- Through discussion with parents and research from 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 do not use a child's allergies or dietary needs as a label for the child or make the child feel singled out because of his/her diet or allergy.
- We organise snack and meal times so that they are social occasions in which children and adults participate.
- We use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making their own choices and feeding themselves.
- We provide 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 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 of the day.
- We inform parents who provide food for their child about the storage facilities available in the setting.
- We give parents who provide food for their children information about suitable containers for food.
- 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 milk as well as water.

Packed lunches

We offer the opportunity for children to have lunch at preschool, where the children are required to bring pack lunches we

- Inform parents that we do not have the facilities to refrigerate packed lunches, therefore advise for an ice pack to be included to keep food cool.
- Inform parents of our healthy eating policy.
- Encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit and milk based product such as a yogurt. We discourage sweet drinks and can provide children with water.
- We discourage pack lunches that consist largely of crisps, processed foods, sweet drinks and sweet products such as cakes and biscuits, we reserve the right to return this food to the parents as a last resort.
- We ensure staff sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.

Legal framework

- Regulation (EC) 852/2004 of the European parliament and of the council on the hygiene of foodstuffs.

Further guidance

- **Safer food, better business (food standards agency 2011)**
Other useful preschool learning alliance publications
- **Nutritional guidance for the under-fives.**
- **The essential early year's cookbook.**
- **Healthy and active lifestyles for the early years.**

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Jack and Jill's preschool

Held on

Date to be reviewed

Signed on behalf of

Name of signatory

Role of signatory