

Food and drink

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Health

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

Policy statement

We regard snack and meal times as an important part of our day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating. We promote healthy eating and at snack and meal times, we aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs.

Procedures

We follow these procedures to promote healthy eating in our setting.

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we ask their parents about their dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies. See the Managing Children who are Sick, Infectious or with Allergies Policy.
- We record information about each child's dietary needs in the Registration Form and parents sign the form 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 so that all our 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 display the menus of meals/snacks for parents to view.
- We provide nutritious food for all meals and snacks, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- We include a variety of foods from the four main food groups:
 - meat, fish and protein alternatives;
 - dairy foods;
 - grains, cereals and starch vegetables; and
 - fruit and vegetables.
- 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 we are especially vigilant where we have a child who has a known allergy to nuts.

- Through discussion with parents and research reading, we obtain information about the dietary rules of the religious groups to which children and their parents belong, and of vegetarians and vegans as well as about food allergies. We take account of this information in the provision of food and drinks.
- We provide a vegetarian alternative on days when meat or fish are offered and ensure Halal meat or Kosher food is available for children who require it.
- We show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. We 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 adults 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.
- In order to protect children with food allergies, we discourage children from sharing and swapping their food with one another.
- For young children who drink milk, we provide whole pasteurised milk. Although we slowly introduce semi-skimmed milk from the age of two years; firstly into meals and dishes, such as on cereal or in white sauces, before offering it as a drink, so that the transition is gradual.
- For each child under three, we provide parents with daily written information about feeding routines, intake and preferences.

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

This policy was adopted by	Bosco Nursery	<i>(name of provider)</i>
On	14/01/2023	<i>(date)</i>
Date to be reviewed	14/01/2024	<i>(date)</i>
Signed on behalf of the provider		
Name of signatory	Leigh Tucker	
Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)	Nursery Manager	