



14. Food and Drink Policy and Practice

Aims of Policy

This policy outlines our practice around food and drink, and maintaining food hygiene standards.

Introduction

It is Seer Green Pre-School's policy that our staff, Trustees and parents are aware of the need to maintain good food hygiene standards and that we all take food hygiene seriously. We regard snack and meal times as an important part of the Pre-School's day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating. We promote healthy eating, good oral health and aim to provide nutritious food which meets the children's individual dietary needs.

The Pre-School is registered with Buckinghamshire County Council as a provider of food – in accordance with the guidance issued by Bucks County Council Early Years.

The sharing of refreshments can play an important part in the social life of the Pre-School as well as reinforcing children's understanding of the importance of healthy eating and good oral health.

The Pre-School will ensure that:

- Before a child starts to attend the Pre-School, we find out from parents their dietary needs, including any allergies. (See our Managing Children with Allergies Section within the 'Health and Safety (including Bereavement) Policy' (Policy 15).)
- Snacks provided are nutritious, usually fruit and vegetables. There are occasional exceptions when food is eaten as part of a festival or celebration, for example Christmas Party sandwiches, crisps and cakes. Biscuits may also be eaten at Forest School. To celebrate birthdays, we offer Pom-Bear crisps, which the birthday child helps to prepare.
- Children's medical and personal dietary requirements are respected.
- Adults do not bring hot drinks into the play area(s). Adults are provided with secure lidded cups for soups etc which they can have with the children when everyone is seated during lunch times.
- The dietary rules of religious groups and also of vegetarians/vegans are known and met in appropriate ways.
- Snack and meal times are appropriately supervised and children do not walk about with food and drinks.
- Fresh, filtered drinking water is available to the children and staff at all times.
- We operate systems to ensure that children do not have access to food/drinks to which they are allergic.
- Milk provided for children is semi-skimmed and pasteurised.
- All food and drink is stored at the appropriate temperature and is prepared in a hygienic way.
- Fruit and vegetables are bought on a weekly basis and are prepared at each Pre-School session by a member of staff who always checks that they are still fit for consumption.
- All staff, volunteers and children wash their hands before any preparation of and contact with food. We use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and feeding themselves.
- Milk is not used if it is beyond its 'Use By' date or if there is any doubt about its condition.
- The fridge is cleaned regularly and the temperature recorded each day.
- Staff receive appropriate training for their contact with food.

- Parents are made aware of this policy. A reminder is included on all requests for food, e.g. Christmas Party etc. It reads as follows: *Please could you ensure that any food that you provide is fresh, within its 'Use By' date, stored at the appropriate temperature and that it has been prepared in a hygienic way. Please refer to our 'Food and Drink Policy and Practice' for further information (Policy 14).*
- Information on the provider of the Pre-School's milk is kept by the Operations Manager.
- Children carry out their cooking at low level tables, are supervised by a suitable adult, are in small groups and use safe and suitable utensils for their age and ability.
- If a child requires alternative food or drink for allergy purposes at snack time, this must be provided by their parent or guardian.
- All surfaces are cleaned and sanitised prior to and after the preparation and consumption of food.
- Washing up of items for food and drink is done by a disposable cloth and paper towels. Washing up of painting/glueing equipment is done in a separate sink with designated implements.

Should an outbreak of food poisoning occur at the Pre-School, Ofsted will be notified immediately.

Packed lunches

We:

- Inform parents of our policy on healthy eating, and any allergens they must not put in their child's lunch boxes.
- Encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit and vegetables, and milk-based desserts such as yoghurt or fromage frais. We discourage sweet drinks and can provide children with water.
- Ensure parents cut up grapes lengthwise.
- Discourage packed lunch contents that consist largely of crisps, processed foods, sweet drinks and sweet products such as cakes or biscuits. We reserve the right to return this food to the parent as a last resort.
- Ensure staff sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.

As with all the policies for Seer Green Pre-School, the Operational Plan should be referred to for the specific details of day to day operations of the Pre-School. In addition, any issues which arise in the course of a child's time with the Pre-School and that are related to a child's health and wellbeing, parent's or staff's concern, or the overall care and safety of our children, staff, parents and equipment will be dealt with in a professional and confidential manner in order to arrive at an appropriate outcome.

This policy was adopted on (date) _____

Signed on behalf of Seer Green Pre-School (Chairperson) _____

This policy was reviewed as indicated below:

2007 created

2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 reviewed and updated as required

July-Nov 2017 reviewed and updated

June-July 2018 reviewed and updated

May 2019 reviewed and updated

February 2020 reviewed and updated

June 2020 reviewed and updated

June 2021 reviewed and updated

July 2022 reviewed

June 2023 reviewed

September 2024 reviewed and updated

UNCRC related article:

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Every child has the right to the best possible health. Governments must work to provide good quality health care, clean water, nutritious food and a clean environment so that children can stay healthy. Rich countries must help poorer countries achieve this.