

6.5 Food and drink

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 using resources and materials and build the topics into our sessions.

Procedures

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

- Children must bring their own snacks, lunch and drink with them to the Kindergarten. Their lunch box/ drinks bottle must clearly be marked with their name.
- We ask that parents provide their child with snacks and meals that are nutritious and meet the children's individual dietary needs.
- We encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit, and milk based deserts, such as yoghurt or crème fraîche, where we can only provide cold food from home. We discourage sweet drinks and can provide children with water or diluted fresh fruit juice;
- We 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;
- Some activities may involve group cooking, such as cooking bread on the campfire, therefore 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. Parents sign the updated record to signify that it is correct.
- 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.
- Any food provided by us will aim to be nutritious avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- 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 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.
- We inform parents about the storage facilities available in our setting and information about suitable containers for food.
- We ensure perishable contents of packed lunches are stored in a cool location.
- In order to protect children with food allergies, we discourage children from sharing and swapping their food with one another.
- We maintain the highest possible hygiene standards with regards to the purchase, storage, preparation and storing of food and we are registered as a food provider with the local authority Environmental Health Department.
- At least one member of staff on duty at the Kindergarten will hold a current Food Hygiene Certificate and will ensure that safe procedures are undertaken accordingly.

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)

This policy was adopted by	Hidden Valley Bushcraft	<i>(name of provider)</i>
On	23/05/2018	<i>(date)</i>
Date reviewed	16/10/2019	<i>(date)</i>
Date to be reviewed	16/10/2020	
Signed on behalf of the provider	<i>L Goldsmith</i>	
Name of signatory	Louise Goldsmith	
Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)	Owner	

Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications

- Nutritional Guidance for the Under Fives (Ed. 2010)
- The Early Years Essential Cookbook (2009)

Healthy and Active Lifestyles for the Early Years (2012)