

Promoting health and hygiene

General Welfare Requirement: Safeguarding and Promoting Children's Welfare

The provider must promote the good health of the children, take necessary steps to prevent the spread of infection, and take appropriate action when they are ill.

1.24 Food and drink

Policy statement

This setting regards snack and meal times as an important part of the setting's day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating. 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 find out from parents their children's dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies. (See the Managing Children with Allergies policy.)
- We record information about each child's dietary needs in her/his registration record and parents sign the record 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 up-dated record to signify that it is correct.
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all 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 snacks for the information of parents.
- 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 provided children with familiar foods and introduce 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 reading by 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 diet or allergy as a label for the child or make a child feel singled out because of her/his diet or allergy.

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- 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 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 who provide 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.
- 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 whole pasteurised milk.

Snack- time Policy

RAG rating: Green Scale:

‘A variety of healthy choices are widely promoted and offered at all meal and snack times’. ‘Snack and meal times are relaxed social occasions that are actively used to promote children’s learning and social development.

At our nursery we do not operate a ‘grazing table’. We have discussed this in the past with Ofsted inspectors who have approved our snack policy. For clarification set out below are the reasons that we do not have a ‘grazing table’ and the ethos behind the system that we use, which we believe meets the requirements set out in the RAG level 3 and by Ofsted guidelines.

We do not have a grazing table because: It would be unhygienic. Children could touch food and leave it, and another child would then be eating that snack. Even if children were trained to wash their hands before helping themselves to a snack, they could touch their nose, hair, etc, and then touch the food. Especially in the summer, flies and insects could access the food. Some of the snacks we give the children must be refrigerated and this includes milk, which most of our children drink.

Other problems.

- Many pupils have specific dietary requirements and are not allowed to eat the whole variety of snacks we offer. Nut allergies, diabetes, dairy intolerance, gluten intolerance, etc. In the case of diabetes all snacks have to be recorded.
- The government are quite rightly concerned about obesity in young children. Children cannot be allowed to help themselves to food whenever they like, this is very unhealthy. In the home, parents do not leave food out on tables for the children to help themselves to and do not want us to either.
- Social Skills. Too many children eat snacks on trays at home and do not learn to sit at a table and talk about their interests, what they have been doing, and things that they are excited or worried about.

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- Communication skills amongst young children are very poor and research shows that they need more opportunities to engage in conversation. Snack and meal times are the ideal opportunity to develop these skills.

Our Policy for Snack Times.

- The children help with the preparation of the snack.
- They help wipe the tables, give out the cups and bowls.
- They all wash their hands before sitting down.
- We discuss why we need to wash tables and hands before eating.
- The children pour out their own drinks and pass the snacks around.
- Staff sit with the children and engage them in conversation.
- The children bring in items from home to put on the display board, photos, tickets to attractions, birthday cards, postcards, etc.
- These are discussed during snack time. Birthdays are also celebrated.
- When they finish the children take it in turns to wash up and dry the cups and bowls.
- The staff ensure all children have sufficient to eat and drink and that any problems are noted and can be reported to parents.
- We follow the same policy at lunch times. We believe these times are extremely important for the children to learn good hygiene procedures, develop good eating habits and share in a social occasion with both their peers and teachers.

Packed lunches

Where settings cannot provide cooked meals and children are required to bring packed lunches, we:

- Ensure perishable contents of packed lunches are refrigerated or contain an ice pack to keep food cool;
- Inform parents of our policy on healthy eating;
- 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;
- 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.

Legal Framework

- Regulation (EC) 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the hygiene of foodstuffs

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Further guidance

- *Safer Food, Better Business*
www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/regulation/hygleg/hyglegresources/sfbb/
- Food Standards Agency food allergy online training

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This policy was adopted at a meeting of	Downham Nursery School	name of setting
Held on	July 2024	(date)
Date to be reviewed	July 2025	(date)
Signed on behalf of the management committee PP		
Name of signatory	E. J. Laffeaty- Sharpe	
Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner)	Principal /Proprietor	