

Rainbow Pre-school

Rainbow Pre-school Spirit



Healthy Eating and Nutrition Policy

Policy Statement

Statement of intent

Rainbow Pre-school aims to provide every child, family, member of staff and visitor who has contact with Rainbow Pre-school, with the knowledge and understanding of what contributes to a healthy diet and lifestyle. We aim to embed these principles so everybody can make a positive contribution to their own health and wellbeing as well as introducing healthy practices that become lifelong habits.

We acknowledge the nutritional and health benefits from breastfeeding, and therefore welcome visitors and families to breastfeed on site. We have an office space should privacy be required.

Background

Rainbow Pre-school offers a mix of sessional and full day care. When children attend full day care the families are encouraged to provide a healthy and nutritious packed lunch for their child. We provide guidance on the type of food and drink that should be provided. Unfortunately we do not have the facilities to prepare or provide lunches for children, however, during the morning and afternoon sessions we do provide a healthy and nutritious snack.

Eating represents a social time for children and adults, and helps children to learn about healthy eating. We create an area for children to engage in positive social interaction at snack and lunch times, through some of the procedures as listed below. We promote healthy eating using resources and materials from a variety of sources. At snack time, children's cooking activities, festivals and celebrations we aim to provide healthy and nutritious food, which is low in salt, sugars and saturated fats. All foods are always checked to ensure they meet the children's individual dietary needs. We aim to meet the full requirements of Ofsted regarding food and drink.

We explore the topic of healthy eating and food within our curriculum. We plan activities which promote healthy eating and eating a wide range of foods e.g. cooking activities, role play, matching healthy and unhealthy foods, Harvest festival, fruit and veg printing, looking at healthy teeth etc. We explore textures, smells and tastes of a variety of food during group activities to encourage discussion around new foods. We provide information to parents in relation to healthy eating such as recipes, lunchbox ideas and sugar swap ideas; based on the Change 4 Life initiative.

Procedures

We follow these procedures to promote healthy eating at Rainbow Pre-school:

- Before a child starts at Rainbow Pre-school, we find out from parents their child's dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies (see the Managing Sickness and Allergies Policy).
- We do not reward children with food, we use other methods of rewarding children, i.e. praise, cuddles and stickers.
- We record information about each child's dietary needs on the registration and parents sign the record to signify it is correct.
- It is the parent's/carers responsibility to inform the pre-school of any changes in dietary requirements or changes in allergies. Parents will then sign and date the updated record to ensure that it remains 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.
- Food activities are planned in advance (e.g. festivals, celebrations, birthdays, teddy bears picnic etc.), involving children and parents in the planning; these menus are then displayed for the information of the parents/carers. We predominantly use healthy food when participating in these events and celebrations i.e. fresh fruit/vegetables, dairy products and carbohydrates. However one in every four celebrations may also include an element of treat food. Fresh drinking water is provided or milk if the celebration is during snack time.
- We display the menu of snack in the lobby and pre-school rooms.
- A risk assessment is completed during snack/lunch time to ensure food* is cut up correctly and the correct hygiene procedures are followed. (*sausages, grapes, cherry tomatoes etc).
- Children are involved in the planning and preparation of snacks.
- We encourage children to develop independence with their health and self-care and encourage children to cut up snack with provision and support from practitioners, using child safety knives.
- We provide nutritious food for snacks avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, artificial sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings. Snacks consist of a variety of fruit, vegetables and a carbohydrate.
- 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.
- We also do not allow kiwi fruit in pre-school due to risk of allergy.
- Through discussion with parents 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, whilst ensuring we still meet the requirements of Healthy Early Years Award requirements.
- 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.
- We organise snack times and lunch club so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate.
- Practitioner's role model and encourage the use of good manners at all times.
- Practitioners sit with the children at all times and are encouraged to eat and join in with the children during snack time. Practitioners are encouraged to bring in a clear plastic drinks bottle with water that they can keep hydrated with during work.
- We use snack time and lunch club 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.
- Any treats that are brought into pre-school for celebrations are sent home for the children to eat at home. Parents are discouraged from bringing in food as part of birthday celebrations however if they wish to do so, we only permit 1 small individually wrapped food item per child.
- For children who drink milk, we provide semi skimmed, pasteurised milk at snack times.

Lunch Club

Where children attend lunch club we:

- Inform parents of our healthy eating ethos
- We provide parents with leaflets and suggested menu ideas to promote a healthy lunch box, suggestions include: meat, fish and protein alternatives, dairy foods, grains, cereals and starch vegetables, and fruit and vegetables.
- We discourage sweet drinks and provide free access to fresh drinking water;
- Ensure staff sit with children during lunch club so that the mealtime is a social occasion.
- Parents are provided with a poster on how to cut up grapes correctly and other food that could be a choking risk e.g. cherry tomatoes, blueberries.
- A risk assessment is completed during snack/lunch times to help prevent choking, children's lunch boxes are healthy and the correct hygiene procedures are carried out.

Food preparation

- Practitioners always thoroughly wash their hands before handling and preparing food.
- Practitioners are not involved in the handling and preparation of food if suffering from any infections/contagious illness.
- Practitioners must wear their hair up while preparing snack, and at lunch times.
- Practitioners are to wear gloves, if they have rings on or have their nails painted/acrylics.

During periods of extreme circumstances i.e. Covid-19, for reasons of health & safety, rules around cooking activities, children bringing in treats, and snack provision may be changed or suspended for a prolonged period of time.

Legal Framework

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

This policy was adapted at a meeting at Rainbow Pre-school in September 2021

Signed on behalf of Rainbow Pre-school

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Policy review date: September 2022