



Helmdon Acorns Preschool

FOOD AND DRINK POLICY

Helmdon Acorns regards snack and meal times as an important part of our day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults. We actively encourage children to learn about healthy eating using a range of resources. At snack and meal times, we aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs.

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.)
- Parents record information about each child's dietary needs in the Registration Form and parents sign the form to signify that it is correct.
- Children with allergies will have Individual Health Care Plans (IHCP)
- 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 plan snack in advance, involving children and parents in the planning.
- We inform the parents of the snack that the children have been offered via the noticeboard.
- 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.
- 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 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 any 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.



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- We provide a vegetarian alternative on days when meat or fish are offered and make every effort to ensure Halal meat or Kosher food is available for children who require it.
- 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 meal and snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate.
- For lunches children usually sit in their key worker groups and sometimes this also happens for snacks.
- 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 within their cultures.
- Parents are asked to provide children with a bottle of water in a named beaker. We discourage squash or juice in the setting, other than as an accompaniment to their lunchbox. 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 extra water at any time during the day. Empty water bottles are topped up throughout 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 semi skimmed pasteurised milk.
- All staff that are making and preparing food will hold a current Level 2 Food Hygiene Certificate.

Packed lunches

Where cooked meals are not ordered, children staying for lunch are required to bring packed lunches. We:



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- encourage parents to pack the lunch in a thermal container or ensure perishable contents of packed lunches are contained in 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 desserts, such as yoghurt or crème fraîche, We discourage sweet drinks;
- 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; and
- 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.

This policy was adopted by the Committee of Helmdon Acorns on:

Reviewed, signed and dated on behalf of the committee by: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Reviewed, signed and dated on behalf of management by: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____



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Date of next review: _____