



Promoting Health and Hygiene

Healthy Eating and Menu Planning

Policy statement

Cricklade Pre-School Playgroup regards 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. A balanced diet is essential for the maintenance and protection of health, to ensure that full mental and physical potential is reached each day and to optimise growth and development. Developing a healthy diet and good eating habits early in life will lay the foundations for future health.

When planning menus, Cricklade Preschool ensures that:

- Menus reflect children's cultural backgrounds, religious restrictions and the food preferences of some ethnic groups.
- Menus are produced following government advice and fruit is always available as an option.
- We provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs.
- Menus are clearly displayed so that parents and staff know what is being provided.
- Foods that contain any of the 14 major allergens are identified on the menu that is displayed for parents.
- Key persons regularly share information about the children's levels of appetite and enjoyment of food with parents.

Procedures

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

- Before a child starts to attend the pre-school, we find out from parents their children's dietary needs, including any allergies. (See the Managing Children with Allergies policy.)
- We record information about each child's dietary needs in her/his registration record.
- We consult with parents to ensure that our records of their children's dietary needs - including any allergies - are up-to-date.
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed about them.
- We require staff to show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. Staff members 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 provide nutritious food for snacks including, fruit, vegetables, breadsticks, and crackers. We avoid large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- Children are encouraged to try new foods at snack time.

- 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 organise snack and lunch times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate in positive social interaction. The eating environment is comfortable and relaxed to encourage participation. Adults model manners and socially acceptable behaviour.
- Healthy eating messages are shared through discussion by adults during snack and lunch times
- We promote healthy eating using resources and materials.
- We use lunch and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and feeding themselves.
- Adequate time and space is provided for each child to finish their meal or snack.
- Children are always reminded about the importance of hand washing before handling food.
- 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.
- For children who drink milk, we provide semi-skimmed pasteurised milk. Milk and water are offered at both snack and lunchtimes.

Packed lunches

Cricklade Pre-School Playgroup does not provide cooked meals and children are required to bring packed lunches, we:

- ensure packed lunches are refrigerated.
- inform parents of our policy on healthy eating and encourage parents to provide healthy food that their children will enjoy and this could include sandwiches with a healthy filling, pasta, fruit, and milk based deserts such as yoghurt or crème fraîche.
- discourage packed lunch contents that consist largely of crisps, processed foods, sweet/fizzy drinks and sweet products such as cakes or biscuits.
- ensure staff sit with children whilst the children eat lunch so that the mealtime is a social, supervised time.
- In order to protect children with food allergies, we discourage children from sharing and swapping their food with one another.
- Children's independence skills are encouraged e.g. pouring own drink, opening lunch boxes.
- A system is in place to ensure allergies and dietary requirements are recorded in a way that ensures they are known to all staff. In the case of severe allergies, children are closely supervised.

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 safety management procedures and food hygiene regulations for small business: www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/safer-food-better-business