

Food and Drink Policy



Policy Statement

At Freshlings we feel it is important to promote a healthy, balanced and nutritional diet for all the children in our care. We ensure that the food we provide is free from nuts or nut products and the kitchen where the food is prepared is nut free. We provide vegetarian alternatives and offer Halal chicken if required. All of our food is prepared fresh by the University of Plymouth, UCSP Catering department, with all dietary requirements/preferences catered for as much as possible. We ensure that the food and drink is appropriate for your child's age and stage of development and endeavour to do all we can to accommodate every child's individual needs. Children must be supervised at all times whilst eating.

We are sensitive to children's needs and do not label or single out a child with different diet. To prevent food allergies, we discourage children from sharing/swapping food with each other. In order to ensure children's safety, unless a child has a severe allergy or is weaning, parents are unable to provide their own food. Should this be required in this instance, the food will be removed from the container and put into a labelled tray and stored in the fridge. A food disclosure therefore must be signed by the parents before we will allow this to happen.

We regard snack and mealtimes at an important part of our day. Eating represents a social time for children and helps children to learn about healthy eating. We aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs.

Although we do not prepare and cook meals on site, both we and the kitchen that is used to cook our food is regulated by the Environmental Health Department.

A healthy diet is essential for young children as it promotes:

- Concentration, learning and behaviour
- Physical growth and development
- Builds up their strength
- Resistance to infection
- Gives plenty of energy

- Minimises future health risks like iron deficiency, anaemia, obesity, Type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke, cancer and dental decay
- Helps them to establish healthy eating patterns and habits for life

Procedures

During the registration process with us parents/carers are expected to fill in a dietary requirements/preferences section, including any allergies the child may have in order for us to cater for their child's individual needs. Any member of staff that is preparing food is to have an up-to-date Basic Food Hygiene Certificate; members of staff only prepare snacks for the children and serve the children's lunches during which time they wear the relevant protective clothing provided to them (Blue Cloth Aprons) to prevent cross contamination.

Food menus are displayed in the reception area for parents/carers to look at in order to ensure that their child's needs are being catered for. The nursery can provide an alternative for children with allergies, specific preferences or dietary requirements due to religion etc. There also may be times when we provide different foods in order to experience other cultures for example during Chinese New Year we will provide Chinese food tasting for the children to be involved in, ensuring that all allergies and dietary requirements are taken into account. We ask for feedback from children, parents and staff on our menus and can adapt them if appropriate. We provide nutritious food, avoiding large quantities of salt, saturated fat, sugar, artificial additives, preservatives, and colourings.

We will not wean children onto food until they are six months old unless directed to do so from a health professional. This is supportive of NHS guidelines and the welfare of the child.

Fresh drinking water must be available and accessible at all times and is provided for all children when they are indoors and outdoors. This is replenished when needed. The cups are labelled to ensure that children can locate their cup themselves (where age and stage appropriate) and in the Ladybird Room the children pour their own water to promote independence. All children are provided with full fat milk at snack times should they want it, unless they have a dairy allergy or intolerance.

All children are encouraged to be independent; according to their individual stage of development and practitioners sit with the children for encouragement and support if needed. We will provide utensils which are appropriate to their age and stage of development.

All food that is cooked on site is recorded and is prepared and cooked in guidance to the Safer Food, Better Business guidelines and we are registered

with Environmental Health, ensuring we follow all their guidance's for safe food preparation. Our food is prepared in Drakes Kitchen which is a nut free environment.

Records of food temperatures are taken both in Drakes kitchen and in the setting kitchen on arrival and on serving. Reheated food temperatures are recorded and must reach over 75c to ensure bacteria is killed. The exception to this is baby pouches which should just be warmed through.

The temperatures of all our fridges/freezers are to be monitored and recorded and any problems with these are to be reported so it can be dealt with as soon as possible. Fridge temperatures should be kept between 0-5 degrees and freezer temperatures should be kept at -18 degrees.

In the case of two or more confirmed food poisoning's, Ofsted will be informed as well as Environmental Health and measures will be put in place to prevent this from reoccurring, we will comply with any investigation.

All staff should ensure they are aware of all children's allergies/preferences/requirements to ensure that no child is ever given a food that could make them poorly or develop an allergic reaction.

We display the 14 recognised allergens and identify which of these in the foods that we supply. Details of these are found in the yellow folder in reception and ad hoc foods will be displayed on the whiteboards outside of each room.

The procedure for preparing bottle feeds must be followed correctly and staff should be aware of the amount of milk/formula that a child is currently being given. They must ensure that the appropriate guidelines laid out on the formula instructions are followed accordingly. Bottles of formula will be made up fresh as and when the child needs them, we will not use cooled boiled water and reheat. The kettle must be boiled 30 minutes before milk powder is added to ensure the formula will mix thoroughly (unless instructions state differently). Contents will be disposed of after two hours. The kettle must be emptied and refilled before every use when making bottles for children, the water must never be re-heated.

Information can be given to parent/carers with regards to healthy eating for their child and staff members are always happy to provide support to parents/carers if required to ensure their child is getting a healthy diet.

Cooking with children

We encourage our children to take part in cooking activities. They are supervised at all times and understand the importance of hand washing and simple hygiene. Children are kept away from hot surfaces and hot water and do not have unsupervised access to electrical kitchen equipment.

Legal Framework or Guidance

Safer Food, Better Business (Food Standards Agency 2011)

Voluntary Food and Drink Guidelines for Early Years Settings

The Eatwell Plate

Children's Food Trust – Early Years

PHE food preparation guide