

Wendens Ambo Pre-School

6.0 Health

6.5 Food & Drink

Policy statement

We regard snack and meal times as an important part of our day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating. We promote healthy eating using resources and materials from the Pre-school Learning Alliance. At snack times we aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs, and a choice of water or milk to drink. We do not provide lunch but children are able to bring a packed lunchbox.

Procedures

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.)
- We record information about each child's dietary needs in the Registration Form and parents sign the form 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 updated record to signify that it is correct.
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all our 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 lists of snacks for parents to view.

- We provide nutritious food for all snacks, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- We try to 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 ensure that snacks are served with safety in mind; for example, grapes and cherry tomatoes are cut in half to minimise the risk of choking.
- If a child has a birthday, parents/carers may wish to bring special cakes/biscuits for their child to share with his/her friends. The records of dietary needs for each child are consulted when the situation arises.
- Sometimes we use food-tasting as part of our current topic in order to explore different cultural backgrounds through the introduction of new foods (for example, Chinese New Year, Diwali). The records of dietary needs for each child are consulted when the situation arises.
- We take care not to provide food containing nuts or nut products and we are especially vigilant where we have a child who has a known allergy to nuts.
- Through discussion with parents and research reading, we obtain information about the dietary rules of the 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.
- We show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. We do not use a child's diet or allergy as a label for the child, or make a child feel singled out because of their diet or allergy.
- We organise meal and snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and adults participate.
- We use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and feeding themselves.
- 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 our 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.

Packed lunches

- We remind parents to include a freezer/cool block in their child's packed lunch to help keep perishable foods cool, particularly in hot weather;
- 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 fraiche. 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; and
- ensure that adults sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.
- We provide fresh drinking water which is constantly available for the children to pour themselves during the session.
- For children who drink milk, we provide whole pasteurised milk.

Legal framework

- Regulation (EC) 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Hygiene of Foodstuffs.

Further guidance

- Safer Food, Better Business (Food Standards Agency 2011)

Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications

- Nutritional Guidance for the Under Fives (Ed. 2010)
- The Early Years Essential Cookbook (2009)
- Healthy and Active Lifestyles for the Early Years (2012)

This policy was adopted by

Wendens Ambo Pre-School (CIO)
Management Committee

On

Date to be reviewed

Signed on behalf of the provider

Name of signatory

Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or
owner)
