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## 3.6. Promoting Health & Hygiene – Nutrition and Meal Times

At **Tarvin Pre-School & Day Nursery** we believe that mealtimes should be happy, social occasions for children and staff alike. We promote shared, enjoyable positive interactions at these times.

We are committed to offering children healthy, nutritious and balanced meals and snacks, which meet individual needs and requirements, following the Department for Education nutrition guidance[1].

We ensure that children's food is prepared and provided in line with children's individual needs, developmental stage and any agreed care or allergy plans and that staff are able to understand and consistently apply arrangements for managing allergies, food intolerances, dietary requirements and choking risks.

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This policy should be read in conjunction with the Allergies and allergic reactions policy.

### Our approach to food and healthy eating

- A balanced and healthy breakfast, midday meal, tea and two daily snacks are provided for children attending a full day at the nursery
- Menus are planned and in line with example menu and guidance produced by the Department for Education (copies can be provided on request). These are rotated regularly, reflect cultural diversity and variation and are displayed for children and parents to view;
- Menus include at least **5** servings of fresh fruit and vegetables per day

[1] https://bit.ly/EYFS_nutrition_guidance

- We provide nutritious food at all snack and mealtimes, avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar, salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings
- Quantities offered take account of the ages of the children being catered for, in line with recommended portion sizes for babies and young children.

**Sustainability**

- To provide cost-effective foods, we purchase staple long-life ingredients in bulk, use frozen or tinned fruit and vegetables if appropriate
- We plan menus to ensure that fruits and vegetables are seasonal and at their cheapest, we use a variety of meat, fish and vegetable alternatives
- We grow and use any produce from our garden plots

**Mealtime environment**

- Children are supervised appropriately while eating, including being within sight and hearing of staff, and supported to eat safely
- No child is ever left alone when eating or drinking to minimise the risk of choking, and a qualified paediatric first aider is always present during meal and snack times
- Staff set a good example sitting with the children and demonstrate good table manners. Meal and snack times are organised so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate in small groups. During meal and snack times children are encouraged to use appropriate table manners and staff promote conversation to support social development
- Staff use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drinks, and feeding themselves
- Any child who shows signs of distress at being faced with a meal they do not like will have their food removed without any fuss. If a child does not finish their first course, they will still be given a helping of any second dish
- Children not on special diets are encouraged to eat a small piece of everything
- Children who refuse to eat at the mealtime are offered food later in the day
- Children are given time to eat at their own pace and are not rushed.

**Drinks**

- Only milk and water are provided as drinks to promote oral health
- Fresh drinking water is always available and accessible. It is frequently offered to children, and intake is monitored

- In hot weather staff will encourage children to drink more water to keep them hydrated.

**Management of food allergies and dietary needs**

- Individual dietary requirements are respected. Before a child joins the nursery, we gather information from parents regarding their children's dietary needs, including any special dietary requirements, preferences and food allergies that a child has, and any special health requirements. All information is shared with staff involved in preparing and handling food
- Where appropriate, we will carry out a risk assessment in the case of allergies and work alongside parents to put into place an individual dietary/allergy plan for their child. This will be regularly reviewed and any changes shared with all staff
- We give careful consideration to seating to avoid cross contamination of food from child to child. Where appropriate, an adult will sit with children during meals to ensure safety and minimise risks
- At each meal and snack time, we ensure a nominated practitioner is responsible for checking that the food being provided meets all the requirements for each child
- Where appropriate, discussions will also take place with children about allergies and potential risks to make them aware of the dangers of sharing certain foods
- Staff show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. They 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.

**Provision for cultural and dietary preferences**

- Where possible, we provide foods from the diet of each of the children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones
- Cultural differences in eating habits are respected.

**Learning about food and cooking with children**

- Staff support children to make healthy choices and understand the need for healthy eating
- We promote positive attitudes to healthy eating through play, growing, shopping and cooking opportunities and discussions.

**Celebrations and special occasions**

- We will sometimes celebrate special occasions with treats such as cake, sweets or biscuits. These will be given at mealtimes to help prevent tooth decay and not spoil the child's appetite
- We do allow parents to bring in cakes on special occasions
- We consider celebrating with alternatives such as stickers and badges, bubbles, fruit platters, choosing a favourite story, becoming a special helper, playing a party game, dancing and/or singing their favourite song, and so on
- We ensure that all food brought in from parents meet health and safety requirements and that ingredients are listed, following the Food Information for Consumers (FIR) 2014.

**Food safety and hygiene**

- All staff who prepare and handle food are competent to do so and receive training in food hygiene which is updated every three years
- All staff are trained in preparing foods safely to avoid the risk of choking, following the Foods Standards Agency guidelines
- All staff are aware of the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis
- All staff are aware of the differences between allergies and intolerances, including that they need to maintain vigilance as children can develop allergies at any time
- In the very unlikely event of any food poisoning affecting two or more children on the premises, whether or not this may arise from food offered at the nursery, we will inform Ofsted as soon as reasonably practical and in all cases within 14 days. We will also inform the relevant health agencies and follow any advice given.