



Charity Reg:1036951 Ofsted: 133471

## 09 Early years practice policy

### 09.8 Prime times – Snack-times and mealtimes

Children are supervised during mealtimes and always remain within sight and hearing of staff.

#### **Snack times**

- A 'snack' provided by the child's parent/carer is given mid-morning and can be organised according to the discretion of the setting manager e.g. picnic on a blanket.
- Small, lidded plastic jugs are provided with choice of milk or water.
- Children wash their hands before and after snack-time.
- As children attending our setting are all over 2 years they are offered semi-skimmed milk.
- Children bring their own snacks but on occasions when they are provided with snacks we ensure they are cut appropriately to minimise choking hazards.
- Portion sizes are gauged as appropriate to the age of the child.
- Staff join in conversation and encourage children's independence by allowing them to pour drinks, peel their own fruit, open containers etc.

#### **Mealtimes**

- Tables are never overcrowded during mealtimes. Some social distancing is encouraged even though it is acknowledged that children will play in close proximity for the rest of the session.
- The children are encouraged to collect their lunch boxes from the kitchen counter.
- Children wash their hands and sit down ready for lunchtime.
- Staff who are eating with the children role-model healthy eating and best practice at all times, for example not drinking cans of fizzy drinks in front of the children.
- Children are given time to eat at their own pace and are not hurried to fit in with adults' tasks and breaks. They are not made to eat what they do not like and are only encouraged to try new foods slowly.
- In order to protect children with food allergies or specific dietary requirements, children are discouraged from sharing and swapping their food with one another.
- Food is not used as a reward or punishment.

- Mealtimes are relaxed opportunities for social interaction between children and the adults who care for them.
- There are sometimes opportunities for children to eat with friends on other tables.
- After lunch children are encouraged to pack their lunch boxes.
- Children go to the bathroom and wash their hands after lunch.
- Information for parents is shared including:
  - Ten Steps for Healthy Toddlers [https://infantandtoddlerforum.org/media/upload/pdf-downloads/HR\\_toddler\\_booklet\\_green.pdf](https://infantandtoddlerforum.org/media/upload/pdf-downloads/HR_toddler_booklet_green.pdf)