Food and Drink Policy

Statement of intent

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 comply with food safety and hygiene regulations when storing and preparing food as assessed in Feb 2016 by Environmental Health.

Aim

At snack and meal times, we aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs and guidelines of the Food Standards Agency. We meet the full requirements within the Statutory Guidance of the Early Years Foundation Stage, Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements

COVID UPDATE:

The nature of our 'normal' food service would compromise children and staff in being Covid secure. For the foreseeable future, food served at The Den will be adjusted to provide a more structured approach whilst trying to maintain our high standards of healthy eating. Fruit will always be available to children.

Method

We follow the procedures below to promote healthy eating in our setting:

- Before a child attends, we find out from parents their children's dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies.
- We record information about each child's dietary needs in his/her registration form and parents sign the record 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 up-dated record to signify that it is correct.
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed about them.
- We follow the Food Standards Agency guidelines on Allergens by keeping records of the products used and making children and families aware of allergens in food products when asked.
- 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 plan menus in advance, involving children in the planning.
- We follow the lead of the school lunches menu so that children get a varied food experience during a day and food is not replicated.
- We display the menus of meals/snacks for the information of parents.
- We provide nutritious food at all meals and snacks, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- We include a variety of food from the four main groups.
- We 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 take precautions 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.
- Through discussion with parents and research reading by staff, we obtain information about the dietary rules of the religious groups to which children and their parents belong, and of vegetarians and vegans, and about food allergies. We take account of this information in the provision of food and drinks.
- We provide a vegetarian alternative on days when meat or fish are offered.
- We require staff to show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. Staff 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 organise meal and snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate.
- We use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and feeding themselves.
- We provide children with utensils that are appropriate for their ages and stages of development and that take account of the eating practices in their cultures.
- 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 session/day.

- We inform parents who provide food for their children about the storage facilities available in the 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.

Storage and preparation of Food and Drinks

- Staff who prepare and handle food receive appropriate training and understand and comply with food safety and hygiene regulations. (Regulation (EC) 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Hygiene of Foodstuffs replaces previous Food Safety Regulations and the requirements are set out in Safer Food Better Business obtainable from the Food Standards Agency).
- The kitchen is a locked facility.
- - All food and drink is stored appropriately.
 - Adults do not carry hot drinks through the play area(s) and do not place hot drinks within reach of children. Sealed cups are provided to staff.
 - Children do not have unsupervised access to the kitchen.
 - All staff who prepare food have a Food Hygiene acreditation
 - All staff follow the guidelines of Safer Food Better Business (Obtainable form the Food Standards Agency).
 - The person in charge and the person responsible for food preparation understands the principles of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) as it applies to their business. This is set out in Safer Food Better Business. The basis for this is risk assessment as is applies to the purchase, storage, preparation and serving of food to prevent growth of bacteria and food contamination.
 - The person responsible for food preparation and serving caries out daily opening and closing checks on the kitchen to ensure standards are met consistently (see Safer Food Better Business).
- All surfaces are clean and non-porous.
- There are separate facilities for hand-washing and for washing up.

This policy was adopted by: The Den	
Date: 01.09.20	Signed: AGriffin