

**Food Policy**

Eating together as part of a group helps develop the child’s communication, mathematical, personal and social skills. Therefore, we make snack and mealtimes an important part of our day. Healthy eating is promoted through encouraging the children to try different fruit and vegetables, discussions and regular cooking activities.

All staff will have completed a food hygiene certificate.

Allergies or food intolerances are recorded on the children’s records, updated when necessary and a list is kept at the front of the records folder . When a child with food preferences, e.g. is vegan or has allergies, is present we provide safe ingredients for them. If possible, the whole group will use only safe ingredients during the session to avoid the risk of cross contamination. When this is not possible e.g. multiple different allergies and food preferences for different children, we will use separate cooking utensils and equipment to minimise the risk of cross contamination. Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring their children use safe ingredients when cooking.

We do not offer regular cooked lunches and families bring their own food and drinks for sessions. Parents/carers are responsible for the storage of these. We recommend an ice pack is used to keep lunches cool.

Water is available for the children to drink throughout the day, and hot chocolate, warm fruit juice or fruit tea are offered in colder weather.

Children and staff wash their hands with soap and running water before eating and after going to the toilet.

Fish and meat are not brought raw to the site for cooking.

**Preparing Food**

* Long hair is tied back
* Hands are washed with soap and running water
* Cuts are covered with a coloured plaster
* Surfaces are cleaned
* Cooking instructions are checked
* Fruit and vegetables are washed
* Other food that is offered eg breadsticks, are in their original packaging so that ingredients can be checked for potential allergens and ‘best before’ or ‘use by’ dates are checked
* Children are encouraged to help with preparation when possible
* All equipment is stored in secure, clean conditions and only used for food preparation
* Dustbins are emptied daily; rubbish is removed from site and disposed of appropriately

**Storing Food**

* Check ‘best before’ and ‘use by’ dates
* Only buy the amount of food needed for the activity
* No food is stored on site but is brought in on the day of the session.
* Food that requires chilling or freezing is to be kept in the shade in a cool box

**Serving Food**

* Wash hands with soap and running water
* Ensure that children have their own clean cutlery, plate, bowls, and cups as necessary
* Children must sit down and not be left unattended when eating
* Make sure the food and drink are not too hot for the children, but also make them aware that it is warm
* Food is appropriately covered/ wrapped for children to take home

**Foraged Food**

Our leaders use the Seek app and knowledge gained from certified courses to identify plants and fungi. All foraged food must be agreed safe to eat by a Forest School Leader.

Created: January 1st 2025 by Nicola Townsend

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