

## **Food and Drink Policy**

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### Version Control Log

Date	Date agreed with Managers	Overview of changes
May 2018	May 2018	Revised policy to reflect improved practice after receiving constructive feedback from a parent.
March 2019	March 2019	Review of policy in conjunction with up to date policy from the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

# Food and Drink Policy

## Policy statement

At Little Owls, 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 where appropriate. At snack and meal times, we aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs.

## Procedures

We follow these procedures to promote healthy eating in our setting.

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we ask their parents/carers about their dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies. (see our '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/carers 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'/carers wishes.
- We plan menus in advance and where appropriate involve children and parents/carers in the planning.
- We display the menus of meals/snacks for parents/carers to view.
- We provide nutritious food for all meals and snacks, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- We include a variety of foods from the four main food groups:
  - Meat, fish and protein alternatives;
  - Dairy foods;
  - Grains, cereals and starch vegetables; and
  - Fruit and vegetables.
- 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 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/carers and research reading, we obtain information about the dietary rules of the religious groups to which children and their parents/carers 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 provide a vegetarian alternative on days when meat or fish are offered and make every effort to ensure halal meat or kosher food is available for children who require it.
- 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 her/his 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 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 day.
- In accordance with parents/carers wishes, we offer children arriving early in the morning, and/or staying late, an appropriate meal or snack.
- We inform parents/carers who provide food for their children about the storage facilities available in our setting.
- We advise parents/carers 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.
- For young children who drink milk ,we provide whole pasteurised milk and, on occasions, semi-skimmed milk depending on the age of the child.
- For each child under two, we provide parents with daily written information about feeding routines, intake and preferences.

### **Packed lunches**

At Little Owls children are required to bring packed lunches. We:

- ensure perishable contents of packed lunches are refrigerated or contain an ice pack to keep food cool;
- inform parents/carers of our policy on healthy eating;
- inform parents/carers of whether we have facilities to microwave cooked food brought from home;
- encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit, and milk based deserts, such as yoghurt or crème fraîche, where we can only provide cold food from home. 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/carer as a last resort;
- provide children bringing packed lunches with plates, cups and cutlery; and
- ensure adults sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.

Legislation has identified [14 allergens](#) (listed below) and requires all settings provide information to parents/carers about the food we normally provide for snacks, cooking activities etc. At Little Owls we will provide packaging labels as and when necessary so parents/carers know exactly what is in the food we provide for children. For further information regarding the above, please visit the following website:

<https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/loosefoodsleaflet.pdf>

The 14 Allergen Types:

- Cereals containing gluten, namely: wheat (such as spelt and Khorasan wheat), rye, barley, oats
- Crustaceans for example prawns, crabs, lobster, crayfish
- Eggs
- Fish
- Peanuts

- Soybeans
- Milk
- Nuts; namely almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, cashews, pecan nuts, Brazil nuts, pistachio nuts, macadamia (or Queensland) nuts
- Celery (including celeriac)
- Mustard
- Sesame
- Sulphur dioxide/sulphites, where added and at a level above 10mg/kg in the finished product. This can be used as a preservative in dried fruit
- Lupin which includes lupin seeds and flour and can be found in types of bread, pastries and pasta
- Molluscs like clams, mussels, whelks, oysters, snails and squid