



General Welfare Requirement: Safeguarding and Promoting Children's Welfare.

The provider must promote the good health of the children, take necessary steps to prevent the spread of infection, and take appropriate action when they are ill.

### Promoting health and hygiene

#### Food and Drink

At Cherry Blossom Nursery and Preschool it is our aim - through food and drink - to actively encourage and support the health and well being of all of the children in our care and their families. We believe that mealtimes should be happy social occasions for children and staff alike. We promote shared, enjoyable positive interactions at these times.

#### Policy Statement

Research is clear and has proven beyond doubt that healthy eating and establishing good eating habits in the early years is crucial to academic achievement, to growth and development and to health and well being.

Therefore, it is important that Cherry Blossom Nursery and Preschool introduces children and their families to healthy foods and drink. We will provide nutritious, balanced meals and snacks which meet individual needs and requirements. At mealtimes we will encourage good manners, independence and social skills as set out in the EYFS.

Healthy choices encourage healthy lifestyle and Birkdale Nursery supports this through their food and drink policy.

This policy applies to all the meals and snacks that are cooked, planned and provided by Birkdale Nursery.

It applies to all children who attend and staff are asked to adhere to healthy choices when eating in front of the children.

#### Procedures

- Our meals and snacks are planned using the national guidelines from Eat Better Start Better - helping us to meet the nutritional requirements of the children in our setting.
- Babies under a year - we follow instructions from parents and we can offer them a meal from Zebedees.
- It has been agreed that East Sussex settings will be encouraged to provide water/milk only
- We use a wide variety of foods to ensure a better balance of nutrients is provided from the four main groups, as well consideration given to texture, colour and taste.
  - Fresh fruit and vegetables are an important part of the meals and snacks provided.
  - We avoid large quantities of sugar, salt, additives, preservatives and colourings.
  - We list all ingredients and allergens and these are displayed alongside the menus.
    - We have a separate policy for allergies.
- The children enjoy breakfast, morning snack, lunch, afternoon and late tea. These are planned at regular intervals throughout the day.
- Ongoing communication with our staff/parents and children help us to continually develop our menus, changing as/when required - self evaluating as we go.

- We share our food policy and menus with our parents. When joining they receive this policy and its contents are discussed. Letters/newsletters also go home to parents/carers keeping them updated with latest healthy choices. Parents evenings, suggestion boxes allow for further informal discussions.
- Displays in and around nursery convey information regarding healthy eating and drinking.
  - We provide food bags and recipes for parents to use with their children.
- Our food policy is on our website and in nursery, it is updated and reviewed yearly. This is done by taking into account information from parents, staff and children. We regularly check to ensure we continue to meet the guidelines of Eat Better Start Better.
- Our children eat together, sometimes mixing ages so that they are encouraged to help each other - to pour, use cutlery, share, to clear away and to become independent in self care - this includes hygiene eg washing hands prior to eating
  - Tables are cleaned and appropriate cutlery, plates are used. The children are given sufficient time to enjoy their meal, and encouraged to independently clear away afterwards.
  - Aprons are worn by all staff at mealtimes.
- Children that require extra support are closely supervised by their key person/buddy so that their needs are met.
- Children are never denied food or drink eg if they have not eaten their first they will still be given their second course and if they are still hungry they can have one extra portion
  - a) If available and b) of an appropriate food group.
- Children are given choice. They are not made to finish and meal times are a positive, social occasion where good manners are taught and expected.
- We have children from different cultures/countries. These families are encouraged to share their traditions with us and on admission their dietary requirements are noted. We are sensitive with regard to the preparation, habits and customs that are important to them.
- We provide foods from ZEBEDEES for lunch and late tea - which caters for every age and preference/allergy
  - We provide snacks - guided by Eat Better Start Better
- We like to incorporate outings in buying our snacks so that children can learn about money, number etc
- We like to produce food at nursery ie strawberries, carrots - so that children can learn about growing and sustainability
- We like to invite parents to donate food to our food bank, this way children can become part of the local community.
  - Cultural differences in eating habits are respected
- We do enjoy celebrations eg birthdays at nursery where children are able to bring in cake from home. Permission is sought from all parents for sharing. This treat would be enjoyed appropriately at a meal time or cake taken home and allergies noted and checked. We like to consider other alternatives such as smiles and praise, stickers and badges, choosing a favourite story, becoming a special helper, playing a party game, dancing or singing their favourite song.
- Children that have special dietary requirements are identified at the very beginning and their details recorded in their notes. If a special diet is required for medical reasons, we request written confirmation from their GP or other medical professional to ensure the child is not having foods removed from their diet without a diagnosed medical need. If

allergy/special diet is confirmed a notice is put in every classroom plus the kitchen and the office to inform all staff of the foods/allergies/preferences of individual children.

- Where appropriate - with a serious allergy - we will carry out a risk assessment and work alongside parents/carers to put in place a plan eg to avoid cross contamination, staff sitting with child at mealtimes, discussions with other children about sharing foods etc
- Staff to show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies so they do not feel singled out.
- Children that are fussy eaters are helped using simple strategies eg modelling good eating and praising for trying new foods.
- The key person liaises with parents/carers if there are any concerns about mealtimes and diet.
- The children are served appropriate portions and a reasonable second helping if they so wish.
- Attention to wastage is important therefore any untouched food is shared or sent home with staff/parents.
  - A suitable environment is provided for all, light, airy and clean.
- Fresh water is always available throughout the day and children are encouraged to pour their own. It is frequently offered to children and babies and intake is monitored. In hot weather staff will encourage children to drink more to keep them hydrated.
  - Full fat milk is provided for the under fives.
  - Menus are available to view in reception.
- Staff where/when possible sit with the children at mealtimes, this allows for further discussions about healthy choices etc and to encourage good manners.
  - When eating with the children staff are required to eat a healthy diet.
- The nursery informs the parents of how well they have done at meal times via family app
  - No child is ever left alone when eating/drinking to minimise the risk of choking
- Parents that are breastfeeding can feed at nursery where a comfortable, quiet place can be used. Expressed breast milk (EBM) can also be given providing it is labelled and stored appropriately.
- We are mindful of children who appear overweight and whose diet seems unhealthy, the 27 month progress check allows us to 'flag up', any concerns to the health visitor. We aim to help and support these families to make healthier choices.
  - Most staff have received training in food safety and hygiene. Courses attended are cascaded to other members of the team.
- Cherry Blossom Nursery and Preschool uses 'Safer food, Better business', all staff read this and sign to say they have understood before preparing food.
- At Cherry Blossom Nursery and Preschool there are endless opportunities to learn about food and link it to the EYFS, mealtimes, cooking activities, growing our own fruit and vegetables...plus we are always open to new ideas.
- In the very unlikely event of any food poisoning affecting two or more children on the premises, 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 advices given.

This policy ensures that everyone understands our approach to food and drink. It ensures that all parents/carers are given the correct information about the food and drink provided by Cherry Blossom Nursery and Preschool and finally it ensures that children are given consistent messages about healthy eating and healthy choices.

Date: 08/10/2025

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