Busy Fingers

**Food and drink**

**Policy statement**

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 by providing parents with guidelines on what suitable snack and lunch items are.

**Procedures**

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

* Before a child starts to attend the setting, we ask their parents about their dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies. (See the 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 sign the form 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' wishes.
* 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 pouring their drink and feeding themselves.
* We have fresh drinking water constantly available for the children. We encourage children to bring in their own named water bottle.
* In order to protect children with food allergies, we discourage children from sharing and swapping their food with one another. We also operate a no Nut policy within the setting.

*Packed lunches*

We will:

* ensure perishable contents of packed lunches are refrigerated or contain an ice pack to keep food cool;
* inform parents of our policy on healthy eating;
* encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit, and milk based deserts, such as yoghurt.
* 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 as a last resort;

**Legal framework**

* Regulation (EC) 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Hygiene of Foodstuffs.

**Further guidance**

* Safer Food, Better Business (Food Standards Agency 2011)

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| This policy was adopted by |  |
| On (date) |  |
| Date to be reviewed |  |
| Signed on behalf of the provider |  |
| Name of signatory |  |
| Role of signatory |  |

**Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications**

* Nutritional Guidance for the Under Fives (Ed. 2010)
* The Early Years Essential Cookbook (2009)
* Healthy and Active Lifestyles for the Early Years (2012)