



Pre-school

Beddington

## 09 Early years practice procedures

### 09.7 Prime times - Snack-times and mealtimes

Children are supervised during mealtimes and always remain within sight and hearing of staff and where possible should be sat facing children whilst they are eating so they can make sure children are eating in a way to prevent choking and also prevent food sharing and be aware of any unexpected allergic reactions. . A member of staff with a valid paediatric first aid certificate is always present at mealtimes and there is a named person responsible for ensuring that the food provided meets each child's needs.

#### Snack times

- A 'snack' is prepared mid-morning. Children have their own snack mat with their name on/picture and sit at the table in their groups (Kangaroos and Giraffes.). However, this can sometimes change e.g., one day snack might be a picnic on a blanket.
- Children take turns to help give out the cups and bowls to the other children on their table. Plastic jugs are provided with choice of semi-skimmed milk or water
- Children wash their hands before and after snack-time.
- Fruit or raw vegetables, such as carrot or tomato, are offered in batons, which children should be encouraged to help in preparing. Bananas and other foods are not cut as rounds but are sliced to minimise a choking hazard.
- Portion sizes are gauged as appropriate to the age of the child.
- Biscuits should not be offered, but toast, rice cakes or oatcakes are good alternatives.
- Staff join in conversation and encourage children's independence by allowing them to pour drinks, butter toast, cut fruit etc.

#### Mealtimes

- Tables are never overcrowded during mealtimes.



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- Children are always within sight and hearing of staff at mealtimes and where possible sat facing them while they are eating.
- There is a Paediatric First Aider present at children's meal and snack times.
- Tables are wiped down, and children's places are personalised with their name mats. As some children do not stay for lunch children do not sit in their groups but sit altogether.
- Children wash their hands and collect their lunch boxes from their baskets before sitting down.
- Staff have their lunch with children. Staff who are always eating with the children role-model healthy eating and best practice, for example not drinking cans of fizzy drinks in front of the children.
- Children are given time to eat at their own pace and are not hurried to fit in with adults' tasks and breaks. They are not made to eat what they do not like and are encouraged to try new foods slowly.
- To protect children with food allergies or specific dietary requirements, children are discouraged from sharing and swapping their food with one another.
- If children do not eat their sandwiches/savoury snack, they are not denied their treat. Food is not used as a reward or punishment.
- Mealtimes are relaxed opportunities for social interaction between children and adults.
- After lunch children are encouraged to put their rubbish in the bin and to put their lunch boxes back into their baskets.
- Information for parents/carers is displayed on the parent/carers notice board, including:
  - Ten Steps for Healthy Toddlers [https://infantandtoddlerforum.org/media/upload/pdf-downloads/HR\\_toddler\\_booklet\\_green.pdf](https://infantandtoddlerforum.org/media/upload/pdf-downloads/HR_toddler_booklet_green.pdf)
  - Daily snack menus including identification of any foods containing allergens