

Excellence in Crewe Ltd

Food and Nutrition Policy

Statement of intent

EIC Ltd regard snack and meal times as an important part of our setting's session/day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy lifestyles, including a healthy diet and good eating habits. Excellence in Crewe Ltd promotes healthy eating through partnerships with parents and carers, early years staff and health professionals.

Aim

At snack and meal times, we aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs. We aim to meet the full requirements of The National Standards for Day Care on Food and Drink (Standard 8).

Methods

- Before a child starts to attend our settings, we find out from parents their children's dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies.
- We record information about each child's dietary needs in her/his registration record and parents sign the record 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 up-dated record to signify that it is correct.
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed about them; a photograph of any child with a special dietary requirement or allergy will be displayed in the food preparation area.
- 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 plan menus in advance, involving children and parents in the planning.
- We display the menus of meals/snacks for the information of parents. Nursery recipes will be available on request.
- We provide nutritious food at 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 are especially vigilant where we have a child who has a known allergy to nuts.
- Desserts will be fruit or milked based and low in added sugar.
- Children will still receive dessert if they refuse their main course.

- Through discussion with parents and research reading by staff, we obtain information about the dietary rules of the religious groups to which children and their parents belong, and of vegetarians and vegans, and 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 require staff to show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. Staff 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 staff participate.
- We use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and feeding themselves.
- Children will be encouraged to develop good eating skills and table manners and will be given plenty of time to eat.
- 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 session/day.
- In accordance with parents' wishes, we offer children arriving early in the morning - and/or staying late - an appropriate meal or snack.
- In order to protect children with food allergies, we have rules about children sharing and swapping their food with one another.
- Milk or water will be served with morning and afternoon snacks.
- Milk, water or diluted fresh fruit juice will be served with the main meal.
- For children who drink milk, we provide whole pasteurised milk.
- Parents/carers will be advised if their child is not eating well.
- For each child under two, we provide parents with daily written information about feeding routines, intake and preferences.

Packed lunches

When complying with parents wishes to provide their own food and drink for their children we will:

- discuss the importance of providing safe food, taking into account the storage facilities available.
- ensure perishable contents of packed lunches are refrigerated;
- inform parents of our policy on healthy eating;
- inform parents 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 desserts such as yoghurt or creme fresh (petit filou) where only cold food from home can be provided. We discourage sweet drinks and can offer children 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 as a last resort;
- provide children bringing packed lunches with plates and cups and cutlery; and
- ensure staff sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.



Staff Development and Training

The staff development programme will assess the training needs of all staff and carers and offer appropriate training. Healthy eating will be an integral part of this training to enable staff to develop an understanding of the nutritional needs of pre-school children and support the implementation of this policy.