



Healthy Food and Healthy Living Policy Statement

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1. Introduction to Brookside Pre-school's policy on healthy food, healthy eating, and healthy living.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Brookside pre-school endeavours to maintain the highest possible food hygiene standards when purchasing, storing, preparing, and serving healthy food to children. We also actively promote the benefits of a healthy lifestyle through encouraging children to enjoy healthy foods and by being active.

2. Healthy Food and Healthy Eating Practices

2.1 Implementing Healthy Food Preparation

The management team of Brookside Pre-school and those responsible for food preparation understand the principles of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) as it applies to our pre-school. This is set out in our documentation to support "Safer Food Better Business" and by ensuring that all staff have completed the relevant food management training (e.g. Food Hygiene Level 2).

As part of our daily food preparation routine we carry out the following procedures.

- All staff follow the guidelines of "Safer Food Better Business".
- All our staff who are involved in the preparation and handling of food have received appropriate training to support their understanding of appropriate food preparation and food hygiene requirements.
- The health and safety representative carries out daily opening and closing checks on the kitchen to ensure the area meets with the required quality standards. These checks are recorded using the Safer Food Better Business diary sheets. Food preparation areas are cleaned before use as well as after use.
- Brookside Pre-school food is stored at correct temperatures and is checked to ensure it is in-date and not subject to contamination by pests, rodents, or mould, on a daily basis and also prior to use.
- Parents/carers are asked to provide a packed lunch for their child if they are staying for lunch. Information about healthy food choices is provided to parents as part of the pre-school 'welcome pack'.
- There are separate facilities for handwashing and for washing up.
- Hand washing / hand cleaning via the use of hand gel is used before children prepare or eat food. Children are supported to be as independent as possible in learning healthy living skills

Healthy food and Healthy Living

and are supervised by a member of staff while hand washing prior to eating or preparing food.

- All surfaces are clean and non-porous.
- Staff wear their hair tied back and wear a disposable apron whilst preparing food.
- All utensils, crockery etc. are clean and stored appropriately.
- Waste food and kitchen waste is disposed of daily.
- Cleaning materials and other dangerous materials/items are stored out of children's reach.
- Children do not have unsupervised access to the kitchen.
- When children take part in cooking activities, they:
 - are always supervised
 - understand the importance of hand washing and simple hygiene rules
 - are kept away from hot surfaces and hot water; and
 - do not have unsupervised access to electrical equipment such as toasters etc.

2.2 Serving Healthy Food Practices

As part of Brookside Pre-school's rolling snack and lunch times, we follow the following routines to ensure that a high level of food hygiene is maintained, and that children's dietary needs are met:

- Designated sinks will be used for hand washing. Children will be supervised as they clean their hands to support their skills and understanding of good hygiene practices.
- Snack food, drinks, cups, and other utensils etc. are prepared and organised by a member of staff into specific group serving trays/boxes. Where a child has a specific dietary requirement, this child's snack is prepared separately and highlighted using red plates and cups.
- Food provided by the setting which needs to be warmed such as beans or soup can be warmed for children's snack using a pan. Food is not to be heated in the microwave due to potential hot spots which can cause scalding. All food must be heated to above 63 degrees Celsius to prevent the excessive growth of bacteria. Hot foods can be kept below this temperature for a maximum of two hours before being used, returned to above 63 degrees Celsius or chilled. Food must be stirred whilst heating and the temperature must be checked with a thermometer.
- The member of staff leading snacks will support children to develop their physical, social and independence skills. For example, children are encouraged to make healthy choices, to try new foods, to feed themselves and serve their own food and drink.
- We support children to make healthy choices by putting their lunch boxes to one side serving savoury foods first. We do this as many children feel overwhelmed at all the different things in their lunchbox and the anticipation for a treat can discourage them to eat other foods first. We encourage children to fill themselves up first on their healthy foods then have their treats at the end. Staff members do not refuse a child food from their own lunchbox. However, we will spend some time persuading them to eat some more of their savoury foods before introducing other foods.

- Where a child has a specific food allergy or intolerance, additional precautions are taken to ensure they are kept safe and secure while eating (e.g. sat away from children who might have food which could cause an issue to them).
- Snack menus are carefully prepared to ensure that children are offered a variety of healthy, balanced foods. We keep in mind children's food allergies and avoid high risk foods on days when children with allergies attend the setting.
- We have a no nuts policy within the setting. Children are not served foods which contain nuts and parents are asked not to pack any food containing nuts in packed children's lunches. Staff members and visitors are also asked not to bring in foods which contain nuts.
- Children are always supervised while eating. The members of staff ensure children do not share and swap their food to protect children with allergies. We also aim to support children to understand the reason for this.
- Grapes must be cut in half lengthways, to minimise the risk of choking. If grapes are sent whole, then staff will chop them then ask the parent to do this in future.
- When children are taking part in a cooking/food preparation activity, they will be supported to understand healthy living practices, such as good hygiene and healthy eating. Children will wear aprons and have long hair tied back for these activities.
- Parents are welcome to heat food and put this in a thermos container for children's lunch. Please note that the preschool cannot be held responsible for the temperature of children's food when heated by parents. Parents take full responsibility of heating pre-cooked food for their child to a high temperature to ensure that it is reheated to the correct temperature. Thermos container lids are taken off a few minutes before children sit down for lunch to ensure that food is not too hot.

Further information can be found at:

- Information on regulation and legislation can be found on the Food Standards
- Agency website at www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/regulation

2.3 Reporting of food poisoning

- Food poisoning can occur for several reasons; not all cases of sickness or diarrhoea are because of food poisoning and not all cases of sickness or diarrhoea are reportable. If there is an incident where children and/or adults have been diagnosed by a GP or hospital doctor to be suffering from food poisoning and where it seems possible that the source of the outbreak is within the pre-school, the pre-school manager will contact the Environmental Health Department and the Health Protection Agency, to report the outbreak and will comply with any investigation.
- Brookside Pre-school's manager will notify Ofsted as soon as reasonably practicable of any confirmed cases of food poisoning affecting two or more children looked after on the premises, and always within 14 days of the incident. Additionally, if the food poisoning is identified as a notifiable disease under the Public Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 1988 the setting will report the matter to Ofsted.

2.3 Supporting Healthy Lifestyles

At Brookside Pre-school, we recognise the important relationship between a healthy diet, an active lifestyle and a child's ability to learn and develop to their full potential.

We believe that snack and mealtimes can play an important part in child's social, communication and physical development, as well as reinforcing children's understanding of the importance of healthy eating.

Additionally, we encourage children to enjoy being active, both in and outdoors, by providing them with opportunities to develop their physical skills and promote their confidence through taking risks in a safe, nurturing environment.

Brookside Pre-school aims to provide simple, nutritious snacks, which meets the children's individual dietary needs and the full requirements of The Early Years Foundation Stage. If we conduct a cooking/baking activity as part of our planned provision, we ensure that it supports the children's understanding of a healthy diet and lifestyle.

The pre-school is aware that the primary role in educating children about healthy lifestyles lies with parents/carers and families. We aim to build positive and supporting partnerships with our parents/carers to assist them in this task. We aim to provide parents/carers with information and guidance on healthy diets and lifestyle choices, for example, provide a healthy packed lunch for their child.

As part of our planned learning we will cover oral hygiene at an appropriate level for the children's understanding. There will be opportunities for hands on learning experiences about oral hygiene and information shared with parents.

The children at Brookside benefit from regular trips to our allotment, they observe growth of plants and help with gardening. We grow a variety of fruits and vegetables which are picked and taken back to preschool and prepared by the children for snacks or cooking. Our intention is to support children's understanding of where food comes from and by actively involving them in growing fruit and vegetables, we hope children will be more willing to try new foods.

2.5 Packed lunches

Brookside Pre-school is unable to provide cooked meals and children are required to bring packed lunches. Staff will:

- Encourage parents to provide the same or similar healthy food choices as the setting offers. This ensures that children receive consistent messages about healthy eating.
- Discourage packed lunch contents that consist largely of crisps, processed foods, sweet drinks, and an unbalanced number of sweet products such as cakes or chocolate. Staff members will discuss any issues with the contents of children's packed lunches with parents and offer information and ideas on healthy food choices. If issues with unhealthy food continue to occur, Brookside Pre-school reserve the right to return this food to the parent as a last resort.

- We do not accept sweets or chocolate within packed lunches since they hold no nutritional value.
- To support good oral health at pre-school children are to be offered milk or water only to drink. We do not offer the children juice and only water will be accepted in children's packed lunches.
- We will ensure staff sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.
- Lunch boxes are kept on our lunch trolley. Children's lunchboxes are on the trolley for less than four hours before lunch time which is a safe length of time for storage outside of a fridge. However, we do encourage parents to provide an ice pack in children's lunch bag, particularly during summertime.
- In order to protect children with food allergies, staff discourage children from sharing and swapping their food with one another.
- Parents are asked to adhere to our 'No Nuts Policy' by ensuring they do not send Nuts or foods containing nuts in their child's packed lunch.
- We are unable to re-heat food which children to bring in from home due to food safety risks. However, we welcome food such as pasta either as a cold meal or by bringing it ready heated in a thermos container.
- Cutlery will be provided by the setting if needed for children's packed lunch.
- Children's left-over food will be returned in the child's lunch box for parents to dispose of. We remind parents that perishable foods will need to be thrown away.
- In the instance of a child forgetting their packed lunch, we would firstly call parents and ask them to drop off their child's lunch. If the parent is unavailable, we would provide the child with a healthy lunch as a one-off gesture from our snack ingredients.

2.7 Encouraging fussy eaters to eat well

- Setting staff will pro-actively involve children at mealtimes to create a social occasion which provides opportunities to promote children's social and educational development as well as encourage appropriate eating habits.
- Fussy eaters will be encouraged **but never forced** to eat.
- Praise will be given when the child eats, food will be removed without judgement if the child refuses food.
- We encourage children to eat their savoury foods before moving on to 'sweet foods', however if the child refuses the savoury food, we will not refuse their 'sweet food'.
- Children will be given as much time as they need to finish meals. Up to a maximum of 45 minutes.
- Staff 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.
- Staff inform parents who provide lunches for their children about the storage facilities available in the setting.
- There is fresh drinking water constantly available for the children. Staff inform the children about how to obtain the water and that they can ask for water at any time during the day.

2.8 Celebrations and Special occasions

Food and drink play an important role at special occasions and events. These occasions are also useful to provide opportunities for children to learn about food and drink from different religions and cultures.

- Children will be rewarded without the use of confectionary or other foods e.g. praising children and stickers etc.
- The manager will encourage staff to be innovative in the way birthdays and festivals are celebrated e.g. without the use of foods high in added sugar and salt.
- Birthdays will be celebrated without sugary foods and cakes to encourage healthy eating and good oral hygiene. However we will celebrate children's birthdays in a fun way with singing, using our birthday hat and sharing news.
- Parents are welcome to bring in some pre-packaged fruit for the children to share at snack time. However, we cannot accept or hand out sweets, chocolate, biscuits, birthday cake or any other sugary foods.

2.9 Dietary requirements

As part of our registration process, we ask parents/carers to detail if their child has any specific dietary needs, particularly if they have any known allergies. Children's medical and personal dietary requirements are respected and met as outlined by their parent/carer.

Information about specific children's dietary needs is retained in their records and on display in the snack area so that all staff members are fully informed about their needs.

Children with severe allergies or Anaphylaxis must have a medical risk assessment completed in consultation with their parents to highlight foods or activities involving food which might pose a risk to the child. The manager will make suggestions on any adaptations to practice for example, avoiding baking activities for a child with anaphylaxis which involve using eggs during their days off attendance. This risk assessment must be read and signed by all staff members.

Parents must provide any required medication for allergies which is kept onsite at preschool. Any medication must be prescribed by a doctor and needs to be provided before the child to be left in our care.

3.1 Procedure for preparing snack for children with dietary needs.

- To avoid any mistakes in identifying food which is prepared specifically for children's dietary needs; we use only red plates and cups for children with allergies. Children's 'free from' food is put onto the plate in advance. The child will then be supervised as they choose some fruit from our snack table and pour themselves a drink.

- It is the responsibility of the staff member or the staff member preparing the snack to check the ingredients of the snack foods by checking the allergen information on the back of the packaging.
- When preparing snacks, the food for children with allergies should be prepared first to avoid any cross contamination. For example, toast will be prepared with dairy free butter before the other toast is made.
- Children's name cards must be used to label their food. The cards are highlighted in red to remind staff of children's allergies.
- Children with allergies will be carefully positioned at the table to avoid mix up of food or airborne allergic reactions. Where possible we will sit children together with similar allergies.
- For a child with anaphylaxis we may need to sit them slightly away from others during lunch time to avoid allergic reactions. However, we will ensure the child doesn't feel excluded by joining a small table for them onto another table with their friends. This will ensure a safe distance but doesn't exclude the child from this important social time.
- We do our very best to provide the closest alternative foods for children during snack times to ensure that children don't feel they are at a disadvantage due to their medical needs.
- We generally do not serve any meat products at our setting, however, if we were to have a special event such as Christmas dinner or a religious celebration, we would serve a Quorn or vegetarian alternative for those with dietary preferences.
- All children are supervised at mealtimes and there is strictly no sharing of other children's food.
- Our youngest children or those with additional needs who also have dietary requirements may need to be carefully placed and supervised during mealtimes due to the risk of them taking other children's food.
- The same procedure applies for picnics, however, if plates are not being taken for children with allergies, food can be just packaged separately providing it is clearly labelled with their name and contents. Please note that EpiPen's and other allergy medications must be provided by the parent and must be taken along by staff to any trips particularly those involving food.