



Healthy Food and Drink Policy

Reviewed on	Approved by
06.05.2021	N. Crump
18.03.2025	S. Crump

LEGISLATION

Charters Ancaster Nursery and Forest School complies with the Food Standards Act 1999 and Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 1995. We currently hold a food hygiene rating of 5.

The Food Safety Act 1990 covers all aspects of food preparation/production and service which offer food for human consumption- whether carried out for profit or not.

TRAINING STAFF

It is the responsibility of the Management to ensure that the nursery cook holds a current Level 3 in food hygiene and all staff within the nursery complete a mandatory food safety certificate every 3 years.

The Nursery will ensure that any member of staff responsible for handling food will have received appropriate training and more knowledgeable colleagues to cascade experience and expertise.

STORAGE OF FOOD

Fridges used for the storage of food should be checked each day to ensure that the temperature in the fridge falls under 5+degrees centigrade and in the freezer stays below -18degrees centigrade so to prohibit the growth of unhealthy bacteria.

Food will be stored in appropriate containers and clearly labelled with date, ingredients and used by date.

The fridge/freezer will be defrosted and cleaned regularly to maintain hygienic storage conditions.

USING FOOD FOR LEARNING

At Charters Ancaster Nursery and Forest School we often use food in play to promote healthy eating and to promote a healthy relationship with foods and textures. Food products will be used in daily provision or as part of an activity in tuff trays e.g. 'Where our food comes from' or 'On the farm'. At Forest school and in classes they children may grow vegetables and sample them or a child's specific interest may create opportunities for food play.

The children are given opportunities to cook throughout their time here at Charters Ancaster, this includes preparing hot and cold meals or treats which have been sparked by the children's interests e.g. pancake day, stir fry's, birthday cakes etc. Hygiene is paramount to these activities and the children are supported by practitioners to wash hands etc.

Cooking plays an important role in nursery activities and is used to teach children about the benefits to them, such as keeping them healthy, giving them energy and caring for their teeth etc.

Parents are asked to sign the permissions on Family to confirm participation in these activities. An allergen card will be sent to parents/carers via Family prior to such activities to inform them of what is being made/tried.

DIETARY REQUIREMENTS

We are a nut-free nursery, this is to avoid any danger associated with nut allergies.

It is the parent's responsibility to inform and update the nursery of any specific dietary requirements. Stringent measures are put in place to ensure that all alternative diets are catered for and adhered to.

The parent/carer should provide medical evidence if their child needs a special diet.

This could include, but is not limited to gluten, dairy, sugar, egg, lactose, soya, shellfish and so on.

We also cater for religious, cultural, personal and lifestyle dietary considerations.

We like to encourage the children to try a wide variety of foods, and we work closely with parents/carers and our local authority guidance (HALO) to ensure that dietary requirements are met, whilst encouraging a healthy balanced diet.

Staff update 'Family' to keep parents informed on what their children have eaten during the day.

DRINKS AVAILABLE

Water is always available for children to drink. Parents are requested to provide their child's water bottle daily. Milk is available at snack times, this includes oat, soya and lactose free alternatives.

We have a NO juice rule and encourage parents to support us with this.

FOOD AVAILABLE

Lunch & Tea

Our Nursery cook plans a seasonal menu on a three-week rota. These meals are planned in accordance with NHS and Government approved menus. Parents can request a copy of these menus from the room leaders, unit leads or the office.

Meals are cooked on site using locally sourced products. We work closely with the local HALO (Healthy Active Little Ones) team to offer a well-balanced, nutritious and varied menu for all meals and snacks consumed on the premises.

The children are encouraged to eat their meals in a social and educational way through using cutlery, table manners and engaging in conversation with friends at the table. We encourage and support washing hands before eating food. If water is not available e.g. at forest school, hygienic wipes are used to clean hands.

Please refer to the Children's Eating, Drinking and Swallowing Policy for information on textures, size and consistency of food offered along with seating arrangements.

Food timings

8.00 - 9.00am Breakfast

10.00 -11.00am Mid-morning Snack (rolling snack opportunity)

12.00 pm Lunchtime (earlier in younger age groups)

2.00-3.00pm Afternoon Snack

4.30pm- 5.00pm Tea

(N.B. These are approximate times as classes vary their routine and may have a 'rolling snack'.)

SNACK TIME

Each unit devises a snack menu on a three-week rota to reflect the needs of the current COHORT.

The snacks are prepared by staff with the children's involvement where possible, following hygienic guidelines in eating and serving areas. The menu consists of a selection of fruit, veg, carb and dairy. They are encouraged to be independent by clearing and stacking bowls once they have finished.

If parents choose to provide snack from home, it is requested that the nursery snack menu is mirrored as closely as possible to provide ONLY fruit/veg carb and dairy.

BIRTHDAYS AND TREATS

Parents may provide their child with a birthday cake. However, the cake will not be eaten at nursery but given to children to take home so each child's parents can decide whether their child should eat it or not. Sweets are also sent home if given as treats or prizes. The nursery has a policy of NOT using food as rewards.

PACKED LUNCHES

If you choose to provide a packed lunch for your child, you are requested to adhere to our healthy food and drink policy and provide a cold, balanced and healthy lunch. We are unable to heat food from home due to health and safety regulations and staff ratios.

Please note that we are a nut free setting. We also will not allow grapes or popcorn. We ask that similar shaped foods i.e. cherry tomatoes, olives, blueberries, cocktail sausages are chopped up (halved and quartered).

We ask that sugary treats and crisps/biscuits are kept to a minimum and form a small part of a well-balanced meal.

We have limited storage for chilled items so please provide an ice pack, inside your child's lunch box, to keep your child's food fresh.

STAFF FOOD

Any food brought into the nursery by staff for their own consumption, is not the responsibility of the nursery. The equipment provided i.e. fridge, microwave and cooker etc are used at their own risk and compliance to Health and Safety regulations must be adhered to.

Staff are requested to refrain from bringing in foods containing nuts, and to avoid eating their own food whilst supervising the children.

For safeguarding and moral reasons, staff are asked to never bring treats, crisps, processed foods or choking hazards e.g. grapes into the rooms where the children eat or play.

If staff do eat whilst with the children, they should role model healthy eating and abide by the same balanced and healthy options as the children.