

Hemingford Grey Playgroup

Policy: Food and Drink

February 2018

Introduction

Hemingford Grey playgroup regards snack and meal times as an important part of the Playgroup session/day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about the importance of good nutrition.

Procedures

During snack times, we aim to provide nutritious food across the major food groups, which meet children's individual dietary needs. We aim to meet the full requirements of OFSTED's Care Standards on food and drink.

- Before a child attends the Playgroup, we ask parents/carers to provide and record details of their child's dietary needs on the registration form. This includes any allergies and/or religion based dietary requirements.
- We regularly consult with parents/carers to ensure that the records we have of their child's dietary needs are up to date. Parents/carers sign amendments to their child's records.
- We list current information about individual children's dietary needs, so that all staff are fully informed and can ensure that children receive only food and drink, which is consistent with their dietary needs and their parent's/carer's wishes.
- Children are supervised at snack and meal times and are not allowed to share and swap food with one another. We take particular care to ensure that children with food allergies are not introduced to inappropriate foods.
- In accordance with national advice regarding nuts in the under fives, nuts and products containing nuts are not provided for snacks and parents/carers are asked not to include them in packed lunches.
- We may provide foods for the children to sample that are associated with a particular topic, culture or festival. When doing this we take into consideration those children who have dietary restrictions.
- Parents/carers may provide treats on special occasions, such as their child's birthday. When such food is shop bought, we require it in the original packaging in order that we can identify all ingredients. When such food is homemade we ask parents/carers to list all ingredients. If children have been given additional foods in Playgroup, parents/carers are advised accordingly. Alternatively, such

food may be shared out at the end of a session in the presence of parents/carers.

- We require staff to show sensitivity in providing for children's dietary needs. Staff are careful not to make a child feel singled out because of any restrictions.
- We organise meal and snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate.
- We operate a 'snack bar' system which allows children greater freedom to choose when they have their snack and what they eat. This helps children develop independence.
- Lunchtimes also promote independence and provide an opportunity to discuss healthy eating; children learn how to manage their packed lunches in order of nutritional importance and to understand the relative importance of different foods. We encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit and milk-based deserts, such as yoghurt. We discourage sweet drinks and can provide children with water or milk.
- Hot meals are also provided if parents wish to purchase them. The catering company used is Aspen's. The menu can be found outside playgroup and is also on the website.
- We have fresh drinking water available for the children throughout the session. Children are free to help themselves to water or to ask for water at any time.
- For children who drink milk, we provide semi-skimmed, pasteurised milk.
- We inform parents/carers who provide food for their children about the storage facilities available in Playgroup and pass on advice about packed lunch boxes. The use of an ice-pack is strongly recommended in the hotter months, via newsletters, e-mail reminders and notes attached to lunchboxes where applicable.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Hemingford Grey Playgroup Management Committee, held on 5th October 2009, and reviewed at a meeting on 6th July 2011 and 15th July 2014. It was then reviewed again at a playgroup management meeting in February 2018.

Signed by the chairperson on behalf of the Committee:

.....(Chairperson's name -block capitals)

.....(Chairpersons signature)

..... (Date)