

Food & Nutrition Policy

Providing healthy, balanced and nutritious food ensures that all children:

- Get the right amount of nutrients and energy they need while they are growing rapidly. This can help prevent children from becoming overweight or obese.
- Develop positive eating habits early on. Children's early experiences with food can shape future eating habits. This can impact children's long-term health including maintaining a healthy weight, and good oral health. The early years are a crucial time to reduce health inequalities and set the foundations for a lifetime of good health.

At Worlebury Willows we include cooking sessions and discussions about healthy foods and oral health as part of our curriculum as they provide so many benefits for the children. We aim to encourage children to widen their diet; learn new vocabulary; develop fine and gross motor skills; practice practical maths and science; learn about other cultures; understand where food comes from; as well as feel good about themselves and working as part of a team.

Snacks

We supply a healthy snack every day, such as low-sugar cereals, wholemeal toast with scrambled egg or baked beans, yoghurt, a variety of fruit, cheese & breadsticks etc. We aim to cover the 4 main food groups across the week.

We supply only water or milk as an accompaniment.

Snack is a social time for the children to chat and practice waiting for their turn to and asking for things politely.

We encourage children to serve themselves and prepare their own snack as far as possible and e.g. cutting up a piece of banana with support.

Snack time is also a chance to practice maths skills by making sure that there are the right number of chairs and that each place has a corresponding cup & plate/bowl/spoon. As the children get older they are supplied with the wrong number of items to develop the concepts of more and less.

Safety

We collect details of any allergies, food tolerances or food preferences on our registration form. These details are displayed on our kitchen notice board, and it is the responsibility of the member of staff preparing snack to check that these requirements are met. This information is also displayed on our board in the preschool room.

Any special requirements are re-confirmed with parents at the beginning of each term, but more frequently if the need arises. Reminders are added to our termly newsletters about keeping us up to date.

All staff are required to have completed certified training on Food Safety to Level 2 and Paediatric First Aid, which includes being able to recognise and know the treatment for allergies and anaphylaxis; the differences between allergies and intolerances; and the fact that children can develop allergies at any time.

Staff are trained to deal with choking incidents and follow recommended guidance from the Food Standards Agency on how to prepare food to ensure it is as safe as possible. This information is displayed on our kitchen notice board and shared with parents. Any choking incidents are documented, including details of where and when it happened, the food, and the action taken. This information is stored and assessed to see if anything can be learned from the incident and shared with parents.

At Snack time, members of staff circulate the table, assisting the children and maintaining awareness of what and how much they are putting into their mouths. At lunchtime, staff sit at the table with the children. Staff seating positions are decided by a member of staff to ensure that there are enough staff positioned to be opposite all children giving a good line of sight.

Celebrations

We acknowledge that food should be pleasurable and include treats at times for a balanced and enjoyable diet.

We like to celebrate the children's birthdays by singing Happy Birthday, blowing out a candle and having a small cake at snack time.

We ask on our registration form if parents would like their children to participate in this. If there are any children whose parents do not wish them to participate, we will amend our birthday celebrations to singing Happy Birthday at Circle Time for the duration of their time with us.

The small cakes are provided by preschool so we are aware of the ingredients and can check that they are suitable for all children's dietary requirements.

Lunch Boxes

Worlebury Willows does not have the facility to supply a hot meal at lunch time. But we do have a regulatory obligation to provide healthy, balanced and nutritious food to children at snack time and to encourage healthier food choices for packed lunches.

We ask parents to ensure that food provided from home aligns with the healthy options offered by the setting, so that children receive consistent messages about nutrition. Where small 'treats' are supplied, we will ensure that children eat the healthy and nutritious foods first.

All foods brought from home will be checked for potential allergens so that the risk of cross contamination is reduced. The children will be consistently reminded that they can only eat food from their own lunch box, and this will be strictly monitored.

We are unable to store lunch boxes in the fridge so advise that insulated lunch bags are used for perishable items and that an icepack is included in all lunch boxes. If an icepack is not included we will use the 4 hour rule for perishable items.

We eat lunch from approximately 12.20pm.

This policy was written to follow current EYFS requirements, after discussion with staff. We share the reasons we are eating certain foods at snack time with the children and why we may need to check lunch boxes for allergens.