

Nutrition and Mealtimes Policy and Procedure

At Townsend Montessori Nurseries Limited we believe that mealtimes should be happy, social occasions for children and staff alike. We promote shared, enjoyable positive interactions at these times.

We are committed to offering children healthy, nutritious and balanced meals and snacks which meet individual needs and requirements.

We will ensure that:

- A balanced and healthy breakfast, midday meal, tea and two daily snacks are provided for children attending a full day at the nursery
- Our midday meal is provided by 'Zebedees Lunch Box', a nursery meal provider. Further information can be found on the nurseries information board or by accessing their website (www.zebedees.co.uk) *
- Menus are planned in advance, rotated regularly and reflect cultural diversity and variation. These are displayed for children and parents to view
- We provide nutritious food at all snack and meal times, avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar, salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings
- Menus include a range of fresh fruit and vegetables per day
- Children's views are considered when planning tea menus
- Fresh drinking water is always available and accessible. It is frequently offered to children and babies and intake is monitored. In hot weather staff will encourage children to drink more water to keep them hydrated
- Individual dietary requirements are respected. We gather information from parents regarding their children's dietary needs, including any special dietary requirements, preferences and food allergies that a child has and any special health requirements, before a child starts or joins the nursery. Where appropriate we will carry out a risk assessment in the case of allergies and work alongside parents to put into place an individual dietary plan for their child
- It is recommended that children under 5 years old should not be given rice drinks. Children with allergies to milk will be provided with alternatives such as soya milk. If parents / carers wish for their child to have rice milk this will need to be put in writing by them and shared with the nursery.
- We give careful consideration to seating to avoid cross contamination of food from child to child. Where appropriate, age/stage discussions will also take place with all children about allergies and potential risks to make them aware of the dangers of sharing certain foods. Each table is supervised during meal times by at least one member of staff.
- Colour coded placemats are used (green for no allergies/requirements and red for allergies/preferences) to highlight any allergies and preferences. Detailed allergy charts are also used within the kitchen and rooms for information and reference

- Staff show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. They 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
- Children with severe allergies/requirements will be supported by a member of staff who will supervise them during snacks and meals. Coloured plates, cutlery, cups, aprons and flannels will also be used to easily identify which children have a severe allergy/requirement.
- Staff are personally responsible for any food that is given to children. Failure to meet a child's individual allergy needs will result in Gross mis-conduct and will lead to disciplinary action.
- Staff set a good example and show good table manners. Meal and snack times are organised so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate in small groups. During meals and snack times children are encouraged to use their manners and say 'please' and 'thank you' and conversation is encouraged
- Staff use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink, and feeding themselves. Staff support children to make healthy choices and understand the need for healthy eating
- We provide foods from the diet of each of the children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones.
- Any child who shows signs of distress at being faced with a meal he/she does not like will have his/her food removed without any fuss. If a child does not finish his/her first course, he/she will still be given a helping of dessert
- Children not on special diets are encouraged to eat a small piece of everything
- Children are given time to eat at their own pace and not rushed
- We promote positive attitudes to healthy eating through play opportunities and discussions
- The nursery provides parents with daily written records of feeding routines for all children aged under two, unless the parent requests not to receive this
- No child is ever left alone when eating/drinking to minimise the risk of choking (please see choking information below)
- We will sometimes celebrate special occasions such as Easter with the occasional treat of foods such as cake, sweets or biscuits. These will be given at mealtimes to prevent tooth decay and not spoil the child's appetite.
- We do allow parents to bring in cakes on special occasions; however, these are not given to the children during their nursery day. A celebration will take place and the cake is offered to the parents upon collecting the children. We ensure that all food brought in from parents meets the above and health and safety requirements and must be shop brought, in the original packaging
- All staff who prepare and handle food are competent to do so and receive training in food hygiene which is updated every three years. Additional Allergyn training is also provided for staff to support allergies.
- Information regarding our menu's and food containing allergens can be located on the nursery information board within the setting

- In the very unlikely event of any food poisoning affecting two or more children on the premises, whether or not this may arise from food offered at the nursery, we will inform Ofsted as soon as reasonably practical and in all cases within 14 days. We will also inform the relevant health agencies and follow any advice given.

** Midday meals at Port Regis are prepared and cooked on site*

Choking Information

1. Children under 4 years are susceptible to choking on food. It has been shown that children who eat while rushed, walking, running or laughing may have a tendency to choke. **It is critical that staff monitor children carefully during snack and meal times and that children are seated.**
2. Children should be allowed to finish their food at their own pace. Staff are role models for the children. **Staff should sit with the children at the table.** Not stand, sit on furniture or walk around.
3. **Food such as cucumber, bananas and sausages should be cut into strips not rounds.**

Food Product Information

1. Nuts – Nuts should not be used or stored in the nursery.
2. Fruits and Vegetables – Apples and carrots must be peeled. All others must be washed before being given to the children.
3. Apples – Apples should not be given to children under 1 years old. For older children the skins should be removed.
4. Carrots – Carrots must be peeled and cut lengthways.
5. Bananas – must be cut into lengthways, not rounds.
6. Grapes – are not used within the nursery due high choking risk.
7. Strawberries – Raw strawberries should not be given to children under two years due to allergies.
8. Kiwi – kiwis must not be given to children under two years due to allergies.
9. Meatballs – must be cut into small pieces.
10. Sausages – Sausages should be cut into lengths, not rounds.



This policy was adopted on	Date for review
23.12.19	December 2020