



# Nutrition & Mealtimes Policy



The  
Little Green Frog  
Nursery & Pre-School

Meal times should be a happy, social occasion for staff and children alike. Positive interactions should be shared at these times and enjoyed.

The Little Green Frog Nursery is committed to offering children with healthy, nutritious and balanced meals and snacks which meet individual's needs and requirements and follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance.

This policy includes **Meals and Snacks Brought From Home Policy** and should be read in conjunction with the **Allergies and Allergic Reactions Policy**.

## Our approach to food and healthy eating

- A balanced and healthy breakfast, midday meal, tea and two daily snacks are provided for children attending a full day at the nursery
- Menus are planned in advance and in line with example menu and guidance produced by the Department for Education (copies can be provided on request). These are rotated regularly, reflect cultural diversity and variation and are displayed for children and families to view; families and children are involved in menu planning
- Menus include at least six servings of fresh fruit and vegetables per day
- We provide nutritious food at all snack and mealtimes, avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar, salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings
- Quantities offered take account of the ages of the children being catered for, in line with recommended portion sizes for babies and young children.
- Individual dietary requirements will be respected. We will gather information from families regarding their children's dietary needs including any allergies.

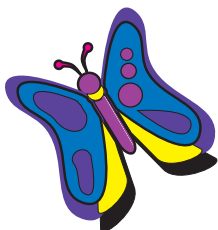
## Mealtime environment

- No child is ever left alone when eating or drinking to minimise the risk of choking, and a qualified paediatric first aider is always present during meal and snack times
- Staff set a good example, eat with the children, and demonstrate 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 meal and snack times children are encouraged to use appropriate table manners and staff promote conversation to support social development
- Staff use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drinks, and feeding themselves



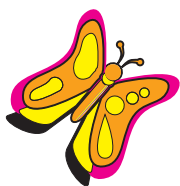


- Any child who shows signs of distress at being faced with a meal they do not like will have their food removed without any fuss. If a child does not finish their first course, they will still be given a helping of any second dish
- Children not on special diets are encouraged to eat a small piece of everything
- Children who refuse to eat at the mealtime are offered food later in the day
- Children are given time to eat at their own pace and are not rushed.



### **Drinks**

- Only milk and water are provided as drinks to promote oral health
- 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.



### **Baby feeding and weaning**

- We follow babies' individual feeding patterns following conversations with families. We regularly review these to ensure they continue to meet the baby's needs
- We feed babies responsively according to their needs and support mothers with breastfeeding, through providing suitable places to breastfeed in the setting and making provision for expressed breastmilk
- We prepare infant formula milk if required, following NHS guidelines
- Weaning is introduced in collaboration with families, including discussions about the stage their baby is at, the types of foods and textures their baby is eating at home and how these are presented to the baby; no assumptions are made based on the age of the baby
- The nursery provides families with daily records of feeding and meal time routines for children via the nursery software system.



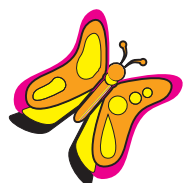
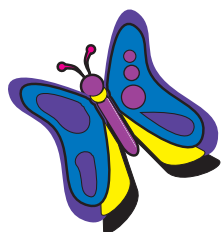
### **Management of food allergies and dietary needs**

- These will be recorded on the child's entry record when a child starts at nursery and the care bear will inform their care bear manager.
- In the event that an allergy or dietary requirement is reported verbally by a parent or carer, after a child has started, staff must ask the parent to provide this in writing via an e-mail to the office.
- The management team will then update accordingly, the child's dietary record on the nursery software system and will give a printed copy of the e-mail to the cook and to the child's care bear.
- The management team and care bear will decide together whether a risk assessment is required.
- If a risk assessment is required, the child's care bear will complete a risk assessment with the support of the management team, using information given by the parent, so that the child is seated safely at meal and snack times and the risk of them coming into contact with the wrong food is minimised.
- The completed risk assessment will be distributed to all staff.
- Copies of the risk assessments will be kept in an easily accessible file in both Sunbeams and Raindrops rooms so that they can be referred to by the nursery staff before giving any food to children with allergies and intolerances.





- The cooks will also be given their own paper copy of the risk assessments for the kitchen staff.
- In Sunbeams and Raindrops there are information displays of children's personal care needs including special diets and allergies. Care bears will continue to communicate with families to keep these up to date but always ask the parent to e-mail confirmation to the office of any changes to dietary requirements.
- The care bears will be responsible for updating these displays accordingly, whenever a risk assessment or e-mail from a parent is received.
- Each morning, the cook and acting room leader will check the registers, Allergy list and room displays together to establish the dietary needs of the children in nursery that day.
- The cook will refer to all necessary documents including the risk assessment when making decisions on what food to prepare for each child.
- The cook will fill in the Lunchtime and Teatime Arrangements form daily, listing ALL children's names who have allergies and or dietary requirements and clear instructions on what they are to be fed.
- If the cooks deviate from a recipe or the weekly menu, they will list the ingredients used and write this on the 'Lunch & Tea-time Arrangements form' in case anyone needs details of the ingredients.
- If it is deemed necessary, the management team and cook will agree whether risk foods (e.g. pear, butternut squash) may be temporarily removed from the menus until they are no longer a risk.
- Anyone covering the kitchen must ensure that all meals for the children with dietary needs are given to the rooms on a separate plate which is covered with cellophane and labelled with the child's name. The kitchen cover staff must also ensure that the Lunchtime and Teatime Arrangements document is fully completed. In the event that a staff member is handed a plate for a child with a dietary need, which is not labelled, they will question it and double check with the kitchen staff.
- Room staff will ensure that dietary meals are handed out first. No other meals to be handed out until all dietary requirements have been checked and the children with dietary needs have the correct meal in front of them.
- When children are transitioning between the rooms in nursery extra care will be taken to ensure dietary needs are communicated to the team in the new room.
- Individual dietary requirements are respected. Before a child joins the nursery, we gather information from families regarding their children's dietary needs, including any special dietary requirements, preferences and food allergies that a child has, and any special health requirements. All information is shared with staff involved in preparing and handling food
- Where appropriate, we will carry out a risk assessment in the case of allergies and work alongside families to put into place an individual dietary/allergy plan for their child. This will be regularly reviewed and any changes shared with all staff
- We give careful consideration to seating to avoid cross contamination of food from child to child. Adults sit with children during meals to ensure safety and minimise risks
- At each meal and snack time, we ensure a nominated practitioner is responsible for checking that the food being provided meets all the requirements for each child
- Where appropriate, discussions will also take place with children about allergies and potential risks to make them aware of the dangers of sharing certain foods
- 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 their diet or allergy.





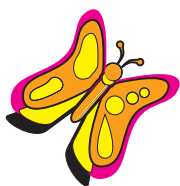
### **Provision for cultural and dietary preferences**

- Where possible, 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
- Cultural differences in eating habits are respected.



### **Learning about food and cooking with children**

- Staff support children to make healthy choices and understand the need for healthy eating
- We promote positive attitudes to healthy eating through play, growing, shopping and cooking opportunities and discussions.
- Children take part in growing food in the nursery garden, for example, potatoes, radishes and courgettes. Arrangements are made so that any food grown can be eaten.



### **Celebrations and special occasions**

- We will sometimes celebrate special occasions with treats such as cake, sweets or biscuits. These will be given at mealtimes to help prevent tooth decay
- We allow families to bring in cakes on special occasions. These must be supplied with a complete list of ingredients.
- We consider celebrating with alternatives such as stickers and badges, bubbles, fruit platters, choosing a favourite story, becoming a special helper, playing a party game, dancing and/or singing their favourite song, and so on
- We ensure that all food brought in from families meet health and safety requirements and that ingredients are listed, following the Food Information for Consumers (FIR) 2014.



### **Food safety and hygiene**

- All staff who prepare and handle food are competent to do so and receive training in food hygiene.
- All staff are trained in preparing foods safely to avoid the risk of choking, following the Foods Standards Agency guidelines
- All staff are aware of the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis
- All staff are aware of the differences between allergies and intolerances, including that they need to maintain vigilance as children can develop allergies at any time
- 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.





# Meals and Snacks Brought From Home Policy

All meals and snacks are included in our daily fee and are shown on invoices as one daily charge for "Consumables and Extras"

The nursery team are experienced in managing a wide variety of different dietary needs and we encourage all families to work in partnership with us so that we understand what individual children need and can supply this from the nursery kitchen.

When accessing their child's Free Early Education Entitlement hours families may choose to opt out of the nursery's voluntary consumables and extras charges and supply consumables and extras themselves.

If this option is chosen a balanced and healthy breakfast, midday meal, tea and two daily snacks should be provided from home for children attending a full day at the nursery. (Please see **LGF Parent Declaration Form** for other consumables and extras to be supplied from home)

All packed meals and snacks brought from home and consumed in nursery (or on trips) should provide your child with healthy and nutritious food for their growth and development while keeping all children safe from known food allergies.

Families are asked to provide packed lunches that comply fully with this policy. We reserve the right to remove food items that present an allergen or choking risk. Families who regularly fail to meet the expected standards will be invited to discuss the issues to find joint solutions to ensure our policy is upheld.

We are required to support you with information to help you provide healthy meals for your child to bring to nursery. To meet our statutory welfare requirements, we avoid foods which are high in saturated fat, salt, and sugar as these are proven to negatively affect children's health, development and overall well-being. We wish for food brought from home to align with the healthy and nutritious meals we provide, so children are receiving consistent messages about healthy eating.

## Our facilities

- We operate a strict nut free environment
- We ensure that fresh, plain tap water is always readily available
- We work with families to ensure that packed meals and snacks abide by the standards listed below
- We provide families with guidelines for nutritious content and signpost to the NHS packed lunch guidance:

NHS Healthier lunchbox recipes -

<https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes/>

Food for Life's packed lunches guidance - <https://bit.ly/4t3Jb9d>

- We request families use insulated lunch boxes and ice packs
- We do not provide cooking/reheating services for children's packed meals and snacks.





### Packed lunch guidelines

Home prepared food is not permitted. Please bring all foods (other than raw fruit and vegetables) pre-packaged with allergens clearly labelled.

All food for the day must be brought on a daily basis to ensure freshness and manage storage space.

It is recommended that packed meals and snacks should include the following on a daily basis:

- A minimum of five portions of fruit or vegetables
- A starchy food for energy and concentration, e.g. any bread, wrap, chapatti, pasta, rice, noodles, potatoes
- Meat, fish, eggs or another plant-based source of iron and protein, e.g. lentils, kidney beans, chickpeas, hummus
- Dairy or dairy alternative food, e.g. cheese, plain unsweetened yoghurt or fromage frais.

To reduce risks of allergens or choking, the following items must not be included:

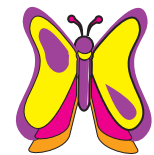
- \*Nuts – whole nuts, nut products including those which use nuts in preparation (for example, nut oil)
- Any drinks other than plain water. Fresh water is provided for all children and alternative drinks will not be served to the children
- Flavoured dried rice, pasta and noodle products, e.g. packets and pots of instant noodles, pasta or rice
- Popcorn, chewing gum, marshmallows, raw jelly cubes, sweets (boiled, hard, gooey or sticky).
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### Organisation

See the Food Standards Agency 'Early years food choking hazards' advice for preparing food for babies and children under five years olds: <https://tinyurl.com/EYchokinghazards>

To reduce choking risks, we expect:

- Hard pips or stones removed from fruit; consider removing the skin for very young children
- Small round fruits (such as grapes, cherry tomatoes, cherries, berries) cut into quarters lengthways
- Vegetables such as carrots, cucumber and celery cut into narrow batons
- Sausages/hot dogs peeled and cut into short thin strips
- Meat/fish boned and cut into thin strips
- Cheese grated or cut into short strips.
- Use easy-to-open containers/packaging where possible, to promote your child's independence
- Ensure all food is within the use-by date
- Ensure all lunchboxes/containers/bags are clearly marked with your child's name.





## Management of food safety, allergies and dietary needs

- All staff are aware of children with food allergies or intolerances and individual dietary requirements are respected. Information from families is shared with staff involved in preparing and serving food
- Where appropriate, we will carry out a risk assessment in the case of known allergies and work alongside families to put into place an individual dietary/allergy plan for their child. This will be regularly reviewed and any changes shared with all staff
- Children's lunch boxes will be reviewed prior to giving the contents to the children to manage any risks from potential allergens or choking hazards
- We give careful consideration to seating to avoid cross contamination of food from child to child
- Children will always be within sight and hearing of a member of staff while eating and, where possible, an adult will sit facing children while they eat, to minimise risks from choking and allergic reactions. In addition, a member of staff with a full and valid paediatric first aid certificate will be in the room, where possible
- At each meal and snack time, we ensure a nominated practitioner is responsible for checking that the food being provided meets all the requirements for each child
- Where appropriate, discussions will also take place with children about allergies and potential risks to make them aware of the dangers of sharing certain foods
- Staff show sensitivity towards 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 their diet or allergy
- Cultural differences in eating habits are respected.

Our policy is developed in partnership with families, staff and children and reviewed on a regular basis.

