Food and Nutrition Policy

At Pomfret Woodland Community Nursery, food and nutrition is important to us. Children need energy to keep up an active lifestyle, and good food is essential to promote healthy growth and development. 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 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.
- Menus are planned in advance and in line with example menu and guidance produced by the Department for Education, these are rotated regularly and reflect cultural diversity and variation. These are displayed for children and parents to view and shared on our nursery Facebook page.
- We provide nutritious food at all snack and mealtimes, avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar, salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- Menus include a minimum of 3 portions of fresh fruit and vegetables per day towards children's recommended 5 portions a day.
- Where possible we encourage parents to have their say regarding our menu's. We do this through parent questionnaires that are sent out twice a year.
- 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. However, we recognise that not all children will drink water or milk. In such cases, the manager will decide in consultation with the child's parents, ensuring that the child's individual needs remain the priority.

- 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.
- In our baby room we work closely with parents to complete a feeding plan. This is an open document for staff and parents to continuously update as and when. (See weaning policy)
- We consider seating to avoid cross contamination of food from child to child. Each child with dietary requirement or allergy is given their own place mat with

their picture name and allergy listed, and provided each meal time with a different coloured bowl, plate, cup and cutlery to avoid mistakes. Where appropriate, an adult (Allergy person) wearing a green apron will sit with children during meals to ensure safety and minimise risks. 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.

- 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.
- Staff set a good example and eat with the children and show good table manners. Staff are asked when eating alongside the children to only consume healthy, appropriate snacks. 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, supporting them to serve a selection of their own food and drink, and feeding themselves.
- Staff support children to make healthy choices and understand the need for healthy eating.
- We provide a varied menu that takes into account all children's cultural backgrounds.
- Cultural differences in eating habits are respected.
- 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 offered an additional side dish e.g. starter or dessert.
- 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 not rushed.
- Quantities offered take account of the ages of the children being catered for in line with recommended portion sizes for babies and young children.
- 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 in the bumble bees group. In the other rooms staff verbally communicate how each child has done with their meals on request.
- No child is ever left alone when eating/drinking to minimise the risk of choking and every room has a first aider to support at every eating opportunity.
- We will sometimes celebrate special occasions such as birthdays with the occasional treat of foods such as cake or biscuits. These will be given at snack times to prevent tooth decay and not spoil the child's appetite. Where we have frequent birthdays and celebrations, we consider other alternatives options but this is to the discretion of the manager.
- In line with the EYFS Guidance we do not offer dried fruit as a snack only when accompanied with other foods.

- All staff who prepare and handle food are competent to do so and receive training in food hygiene which is updated every three years.
- 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.

This policy was adopted on	**Signed on behalf of the nursery**	**Date for review**
15.04.2026		*15.04.2027*