



FOOD & NUTRITION POLICY

Statement of Intent

At Threemilestone Pre-school we believe in providing healthy and nutritious snacks which contribute to a balanced diet as well as meeting children's individual dietary needs. All our staff are competent in preparing and handling food and hold a Level Two Basic Food Hygiene Certificate which is renewed every three years.

Aim

Our Policy considers the guidance recommended in the Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance to ensure that all children get the right amount of nutrients and energy they need while growing rapidly and to help children develop positive eating habits. This can shape future eating habits and impact children's long-term health including maintaining a healthy weight, and good oral health.

We aim to make children, parents and staff aware of the importance of developing these healthy habits in a variety of ways to promote this aspect of their development. We also encourage eating to be a social time for children to engage with their peers and adults.

Methods

- Our Registration Form asks all parents/carers to complete written records giving details of any medical conditions, allergies, intolerances, special dietary requirements and preferences before attending the Pre-school.
- We check all registration forms and if a child has an identified food allergy, intolerance or medical condition such as coeliac disease, we will complete a Risk Assessment and an Allergy Action Plan/Healthcare Plan in conjunction with parents/carers and other healthcare professionals, where possible. These Plans will set out our procedures for meeting the child's needs within the setting to ensure that the child has full access to provision within the setting, without compromising their health and safety. This information is reviewed regularly with parents/carers.
- The Pre-school has a separate Allergy Policy.
- All staff are then made aware of children who have food allergies, intolerances, medical conditions, special dietary needs and preferences. A list is displayed in the kitchen, together with an Allergy Action Plan if relevant and staff sign the Risk Assessment.
- We also implement systems to ensure that children receive only food and drink that is consistent with their dietary needs and preferences as well as their parents' wishes.

- We include foods from different cultural backgrounds in special activities which provides children with both familiar foods and introducing them to new ones. In these circumstances we take into account known allergies, special dietary requirements, preferences and medical conditions.
- We are respectful of dietary rules pertaining to religious groups, cultural backgrounds, vegetarians and vegans and take this into account in the provision of food and drink.
- We provide children with a healthy snack at mid morning and mid afternoon based on the Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance. At snack times children are offered a choice of semi-skimmed milk, (or an unsweetened calcium fortified non-dairy alternative), or water. We participate in the 'Cool Milk' scheme.
- Food handlers wash hands and cover any cuts or abrasions before handling food. Separate boards and knives are used for chopping to meet the dietary requirements of children and every effort is made to prevent cross-contamination.
- All vegetables and fruit are washed before preparing.
- We display a copy of our snack Menu on our Noticeboard for parents to see.
- Food is regularly checked for sell by/use by dates and expired items are discarded. Food products are dated and used within the recommended times specified on the products.
- In line with the EYFS Framework, we ensure that children are supervised at snack and lunch and that children are always within sight and hearing of a member of staff by an adult sitting with them at the table. The adult ensures that the children are eating in a way that prevents choking and prevents food sharing so that the staff can be aware of any unexpected allergic reactions.
- We organise snack/lunch times so that it is a social occasion in which children and staff participate.
- A fully qualified paediatric first aider is available at every snack/meal times.
- We use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and feeding themselves.
- It is the responsibility of parents to provide their child with a packed lunch. In order to ensure that food provided encourages healthier food choices, our registration pack includes a Healthy Lunchbox Leaflet giving parents useful information on what constitutes a nutritious lunchbox, portion size, foods to avoid and how to prepare certain foods to reduce the risk of choking.
- We do not provide refrigeration for packed lunches of children so we suggest that parents/carers pack foods than can be safely kept at room temperature.
- For perishable items that should be kept cool, parents can pack food in insulated sealed bags. If ice packs are unavailable, then the '4-hour rule' can be applied which allows food to be stored outside of chilled conditions for up to 4 hours but this should only be done once during the entire storage.
- The setting does not reheat food brought in by children but parents/carers can use food flasks if this is necessary to meet special dietary needs.

- At lunch times, it is preferred that children drink water as a healthy choice instead of diluted juices. If your child will only drink juice, we recommend that this is diluted as much as possible and is 'sugar free'.
- Parents should clearly label their child's name on lunch bags and drinks bottles.
- We have ongoing discussions with parents/carers about children's eating habits, considering individual children's developmental needs, particularly regarding introducing solid foods and the textures they are familiar with.
- The staff eat their lunch with the children and work hard to ensure that all children do not run around with food in their mouths as this is a potential choke hazard. The setting will, if necessary, sit children safely in a low seated highchair to eat if they are unable to sit independently.
- We follow the advice produced by the Foods Standards Agency when preparing snacks to children to avoid choking hazards and follow the guidance found in the Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance when choosing foods to offer children at snack times.
- Staff also follow the guidance set out by the Food Standards Agency and the Department for Education to minimise the risk of a child choking by checking the lunchboxes provided by parents daily to ensure items are cut appropriately by size and shape.
- If a child chokes at a mealtime and intervention is given, we record details of the incident and ensure that parents/cares are informed.
- Staff also check all foods brought in from home for potential allergens so that any cross contamination is reduced for those children who are at risk.
- Fresh water is always available for children, and they are encouraged to ask at any time during the session if they require a drink.
- Some children may have a specific dietary need because of a physical, sensory or developmental delay and if a child struggles to eat a healthy balanced diet, we work with parents/carers/outside professional to overcome these difficulties.
- If there is an identified need, we have ongoing discussions with parents regarding the stage their child is at in relation to introducing solid foods including the textures the child is familiar with.
- We work in partnership with parents and other health professionals, if appropriate, to help children move on to the next stage of weaning at a pace that is right for the child and ensure food is prepared in line with the child's individual developmental needs. The NHS has provides advice parents may find helpful to refer to at [Weaning - Best Start in Life - NHS](#)
- We promote health by taking the necessary steps to prevent the spread of infection and take appropriate action when children are ill. The Pre-school has a separate Sick Child Policy.

- If there is an outbreak of food poisoning affecting two or more children looked after at the setting, we will notify OFSTED as soon as possible, and within 14 days of the incident to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework.

Signed for and behalf of the pre-school

Trustee (Sarah Wallis)
Threemilestone Preschool CIO