

Trinket Box Pre School

03 Food Safety and Nutrition Policy

Alongside associated procedures in 03.1-03.6 Food safety and nutrition, this policy was adopted by **Trinket Box Committee on 9th January 2025**

Aim

Our setting is a suitable, clean, and safe place for children to be cared for, where they can grow and learn. We meet all statutory requirements for food safety and fulfil the criteria for meeting the relevant Early Years Foundation Stage Safeguarding and Welfare requirements

Objectives

- We recognise that we have a duty of care for those who work in and receive a service from our provision, but individual employees and service users also have responsibility for ensuring their own safety as well as that of others. Risk assessment is the key means through which this is achieved.
- A kitchen procedure is followed for general hygiene and safety in food preparation areas.
- We provide nutritionally sound snacks which promote health and reduce the risk of obesity and heart disease that may begin in childhood.
- We ensure that children are supervised at mealtimes and that children are within sight and hearing of a member of staff.
- We follow the main advice on dietary guidelines and the legal requirements for identifying food allergens when planning snacks based on the four food groups:
 - Meat, fish, and protein alternatives
 - Milk and dairy products
 - Cereals and grains
 - Fresh fruit and vegetables.
- Following dietary guidelines to promote health also means taking account of guidelines to reduce risk of disease caused by unhealthy eating.
- Parents/carers share information about their children's particular dietary needs with staff when they enrol their children and on an on-going basis with their key person. This information is shared with all staff who are involved in the care of the child.
- Foods provided by the setting for children have any allergenic ingredients identified.
- Care is taken to ensure that children with food allergies do not have contact with food products that they are allergic to.
- We notify Ofsted of any food poisoning affecting two or more children in our care as soon as possible and at least within 14 days.
- Risk assessments are carried out at snack preparation and throughout snack and lunch time for each individual child who has a food allergy or specific dietary requirement.

03.1 Food preparation, storage and purchase

General

- All staff who prepare snack have up to date certificated training on food safety.

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- Staff carry out and record daily opening/closing checks, raising any issues to the management team.
- We have regard to Eat Better, Start Better (Action for Children 2017) and Example menus for early years settings in England (PHE 2017)
- The setting displays an allergy/dietary list with:
 - A list of all children with known food allergies or dietary is updated annually or more regularly should any circumstances change.
 - A record of what is served for snack along with any allergens. We also keep a record of resources containing any allergens in case of any reactions
- The setting manager is responsible for informing the trustees/directors of any food poisoning affecting two or more children looked after on the premises. Notification to Ofsted must be made as soon as possible and within 14 days of the incident.

Purchasing and storing food

- Food is purchased from reputable suppliers.
- Pre-packed food is checked for allergen ingredients so this can be communicated to parents.
- If food that is not pre-packed (described as 'loose food'), such as sandwiches bought from a bakery is served, then allergen information will have been provided by the retailer. This information must then be shared in the same way with parents.
- Parents are requested not to bring food that contains nuts. Staff check packets to make sure they do not contain nuts or nut products.
- Food is regularly checked for sell by/use by dates and any expired items are discarded.
- Items are not stored on the floor; floors are kept clear so they can be easily swept.
- Foods are stored at the appropriate temperature. Easily perishable fruits and vegetables are kept in the fridge at 1- 5 Celsius.
- Packaged frozen food should be used by use by dates.
- Fridge and freezer thermometers should be in place. Recommended temperatures for fridges are 37 degrees Fahrenheit (3 degrees Celsius), and freezers 0 degrees Fahrenheit (-18 degrees Celsius). Temperatures must be checked and recorded daily to ensure correct temperatures are being maintained.
- Staff's own food/drink is kept in a separate fridge.
- Items in fridges must be regularly checked to ensure they are not past use by dates.

Preparation of food

- Staff preparing snack check the content of food/packets to ensure they do not contain allergens.
- Food allergens must be identified on the snack menus and be available for parents.
- Food handlers wash hands and cover any cuts or abrasions before handling food.
- All vegetables and fruit are washed before preparing.

Serving Food

- Lunch is served for children in their individual packed lunch boxes.
- Staff risk assess the likelihood of children with dietary restrictions accessing the food of other children and must take appropriate action to prevent this from happening, for example:
 - Check the list of children's dietary requirements displayed in the food preparation area.
 - Vet the lunches of the children sitting on the same table.

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- Other methods as agreed by the setting manager.
- Children with allergies/food preferences are not made to feel 'singled out' by the methods used to manage their allergy/food preference.
- Food served to children with identified allergies is checked by staff to ensure that the meal (and its ingredients) does not contain any of the allergens for that child.
- Tables are cleaned before and after with a suitable non-bleach product.
- Members of staff serving food wash their hands and cover any cuts with a blue plaster.

03.2 Food for play and cooking activities

Some parents and staff may have strong views about food being used for play. It is important to be sensitive to these issues. For example, children who are Muslim, Jewish, Rastafarian, or who are vegetarian, should not be given any food to play with that contains animal products (Gelatine). Parents' views should be sought on this. In some cases, it is not appropriate to use food for play at all, particularly in times of austerity.

- Food for play may include play dough, corn flour, pasta, rice, food colourings/flavourings.
- Jelly (including jelly cubes) is not used for play.
- Food for play is risk assessed against the 14 allergens referred and is included in the written risk assessment undertaken for children with specific allergies.
- Staff are constantly alert to the potential hazards of food play, in particular choking hazards and signs of previously undetected allergies.
- Pulses are not recommended as they can be poisonous when raw or may choke.
- Dried food that is used for play should be kept away from food used for cooking.
- Foods that are cooked and used for play, such as forms of dough, have a limited shelf life.
- Cornflour is always mixed with water before given for play.
- Cornflour, playdough and cooked pasta are discarded after an activity owing to a high risk of bacteria forming.
- Utensils used for play food are washed thoroughly after use.

Children's cooking activities

- Before undertaking any cooking activity with children, members of staff should check for allergies and intolerances by checking children's records.
- Children are taught basic hygiene skills such as the need to wash hands thoroughly before handling food, and again after going to the toilet, blowing their nose or coughing.
- The area to be used for cooking is cleaned.
- Children should wear aprons that are used just for cooking.
- Utensils provided are for children to use only when cooking, including chopping/rolling boards, bowls, wooden spoons, jugs, and are stored in the kitchen.
- Members of staff encourage children to handle food in a hygienic manner.
- Food ready for cooking or cooling is not left uncovered.
- Cooked food to go home is put in an appropriate food bag and refrigerated until home time.

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- Food play activities are suspended during outbreaks of illness.

03.4 Menu planning and nutrition

Food supplied for children provides a healthy and balanced diet for healthy growth and development. Foods that contain any of 14 allergens identified by the FSA are identified on our snack menus. The setting follows dietary guidance to promote health and reduce risk of disease caused by unhealthy eating. Menus are clearly displayed so that parents and staff know what is being provided.

- Foods that contain any of the 14 major allergens are identified on the menu that is displayed for parents.
- Parents must share information about their children's particular dietary needs with staff when they enrol their children and on an on-going basis with their key person.
- Key persons regularly share information about the children's levels of appetite and enjoyment of food with parents.

Packed lunches

Where children have packed lunches, staff promote healthy eating, ensuring that parents are given advice and information about what is appropriate content for a child's lunch box. Parents are also advised to take measures to ensure children's lunch box contents remain cool i.e. ice packs, as the setting does not have facilities for refrigerated storage.

The setting is a 'nut free' zone and therefore any products containing nuts are prohibited. The item is removed and placed in the manager's office until the child is collected. If the item was a staple part of the lunch the manager will ring the parent to ask them to provide an alternative.

03.5 Meeting dietary requirements

Snack and mealtimes are an important part of the day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating. We aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs and preferences.

- Staff discuss children's dietary needs, allergies and any ethnic or cultural food preferences with their parents/carers. The parent ensures that this information is provided on the enrolment form and information is shared with all staff.
- If a child has a known food allergy, procedure 04.4 Allergies and food intolerance is followed.
- Up-to-date information about individual children's dietary needs is displayed so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed.
- Staff ensure that children receive only food and drink that is consistent with their dietary needs and cultural or ethnic preferences, as well as their parent's/carers wishes.
- The menus of snacks are displayed in the foyer and fire door window for parents to view. Foods that contain any food allergens are identified.
- All staff show sensitivity in providing for children's diets, allergies and cultural or ethnic food preferences. A child's diet or allergy is never used as a label for the child, they are not made to feel 'singled out' because of their diet, allergy or cultural/ethnic food preferences.
- Fresh drinking water is available throughout the day. Staff inform children how to obtain the drinking water and that they can ask for water at any time during the day.
- Meal and snack times are organised as social occasions.

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Fussy/faddy eating

- Children who are showing signs of 'strong food preferences, or aversions to food' are not forced to eat anything they do not want to.
- Staff recognise the signs that a child has had enough and uneaten food can remain in the lunchbox so the parent/carer is aware. Staff may also issue an advice note if certain foods were unsuitable or the quantity is too much/little.
- Children are not made to stay at the table after others have left if they refuse to eat certain items of food.
- Staff work in partnership with parents/carers to support them with children who are showing signs of 'food preferences, or aversion' and sign post them to further advice, for example, How to Manage Simple Faddy Eating in Toddlers (Infant & Toddler Forum) <https://infantandtoddlerforum.org/health-and-childcare-professionals/factsheets/>

03.6 Breast feeding

We recognise the important benefits of breastfeeding for both mothers and their babies. All mothers have the right to make informed choices and staff will ensure that clear and impartial information is available to all mothers. Staff will fully support parent's choices.

At the pre-school age range, children are not normally breastfed in the settling unless a parent is visiting with a smaller sibling. Therefore:

- Mothers are enabled and supported to feed their babies within the setting. Every effort will be made for mothers who wish to feed their babies in private to do so.
- Toilet and baby changing areas are not offered as areas for breastfeeding as these cannot offer a hygienic environment.
- If a visitor to the setting objects to a mother breastfeeding, the 'complainant' will be moved to an area where s/he can no longer view the mother. The mother will not be disturbed.

Further guidance

- *Safer Food Better Business* for Caterers (Food Standards Agency) <https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/safer-food-better-business-for-caterers>
- Eat Better, Start Better (Action for Children 207) www.foundationyears.org.uk/eat-better-start-better/
- Example Menus for Early Years Settings in England (PHE 2017) www.gov.uk/government/publications/example-menus-for-early-years-settings-in-england
- Allergen information for loose foods (Food Standards Agency 2017) www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/loosefoodsleaflet.pdf
- Campylobacter (Food Standards Agency) www.food.gov.uk/news-updates/campaigns/campylobacter/fsw-2014
- Breastfeeding and bottle-feeding advice (NHS) www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/breastfeeding-and-bottle-feeding/

Food allergy/anaphylaxis guidance

<https://www.bsaci.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/BSACIAllergyActionPlan2018NoAAI2981-2.pdf>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/anaphylaxis/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/food-allergy/>

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