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Gina's Montessori Nursery School

Healthy Eating and Dietary Requirements

At Gina's Montessori Nursery School nursery we encourage children to develop a positive attitude to food and healthy lifestyles. This is achieved through adopting a whole setting approach which encompasses children, their families and staff. 'Good health in the early years helps to safeguard health and wellbeing throughout life. It is important that children develop healthy habits when they first learn about food and activity' (Early Years Foundation Stage, DfES, 2008)

Early years is an important time to shape food preferences and habits, by allowing children to make their own selections through guided choice, this can have a positive impact on health in later life.

Tips for keeping your lunch box safe and cool:

- insulated boxes, small ice packs and mini cool bags will help
- encourage children not to keep their lunchboxes near radiators or hot pipes
- don't forget to clean out your lunchbox / bag after use
- a frozen carton of drink can double up as an ice pack and ice lolly and when thawed makes a delicious cool drink
- try to chill your sandwiches before packing and use ingredients from the fridge where possible
- **Keep the lunch box cool - keep the bacteria out!**

Staff will be good role models for healthy eating.

In the interest of safety grapes, cherry tomatoes, olives should be halved. Nuts and kiwi are not permitted in the lunch boxes due to allergies.

Meal times

Nursery staff will pro-actively involve children at meal times to create a social occasion which provides opportunities to promote children's social and educational development as well as encourage good eating habits and table manners.

If a child refuses the main course a portion of dessert will still be offered

Children will be given as much time as they need to finish meals.

Fruit will be offered between meals to ensure children receive appropriate levels

of energy and nutrition, for example at mid morning and mid afternoon.
Children will have access to drinking water at all times (EYFS).

The only drinks provided throughout the day at any time other than with meals will be milk and water.

Good Practice

We use wipe clean table cloths or place mats to create a 'dining room' environment at meal times.

We use child sized cutlery and crockery.

We involve children in table setting and clearing away after meals.

Meal times can be used as an opportunity for children to learn about healthy eating and socialising.

Dietary Requirements

Before a child starts we find out from parents their child's special dietary requirements, including any cultural, religious or medical reasons; preferences or food allergies. Parents complete admission forms containing this information, and discuss with the practitioners / key person, children's dietary need. This information is then shared with the relevant persons.

This policy was adopted on Signed on behalf of the nursery Date of review
