

Food and Drink Policy and Procedure

Gina's Montessori Nursery

"Where children are provided with meals, snacks and drinks, they must be healthy, balanced and nutritious." EYFS 2017 (3.47)

Gina's Montessori's key priority at all times is the health, safety and wellbeing of the children in our care, their families and our staff. In specific regard to the current pandemic, we are operating to our own comprehensive and regularly updated COVID-19 policies regarding infection control, and we will also continue to introduce additional measures in line with the latest guidance from the NHS, Public Health Bodies, and government. See our COVID-19 Policy.

Mealtimes should be a happy, social occasion for children; with positive interactions shared and enjoyed. We are committed to encouraging the provision by parents of healthy, nutritious and balanced meals and snacks which meet their children's individual needs and requirements.

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the Childcare Register, we:

- Obtain information about any special dietary requirements, preferences and food allergies that your child has, and any special health requirements, before the child starts at our setting.
- Make parents aware of the 14 food allergens.
- Parents are required to inform me if any of the 14 allergens are contained in any packed lunches or snacks that they supply for their child.
- We make sure fresh drinking water is available and accessible at all times. Promoting children's independence where possible.
- Record and act on information from you about your child's dietary needs.
- Make available information about the food and drinks that we provide for your children. Parents provide packed lunches. Nursery provides fresh water throughout the day and cream crackers at the end of the day.
- Notify Ofsted of any food poisoning affecting two or more children looked after on the premises within 14 days.

We will ensure that:

- Our care promotes the good health of children.
- Children are provided with meals, snacks and drinks that are healthy, balanced and nutritious.
- Children know the importance of a healthy diet for good health.

- Involve children in the preparation of food.
- We make children aware of 14 allergens where appropriate.
- We have a positive and welcoming eating environment to encourage children to eat well, and develop good eating habits and social skills.
- The children and staff wash our hands before the preparation of food and eating.
- We cater for the dietary requirements of all children, ensuring that any food allergies/intolerances are catered for, as well as children from all cultures and religions being able to enjoy appropriate meals and snacks - recorded this information on the 'child record' form.
- Cultural differences in eating habits and the different ways people eat their food will be respected.
- Food is never used as a punishment, or as a reward.
- Ensure adequate equipment including seating arrangements, cutlery is available for all children attending my setting.
- Register with the Local Authority Environmental Health Department, and have completed the Level 2 Food Hygiene Course on (*September 2021*).
- We have the "Safer Food Better Business" pack

Learning about and through food

It is a requirement under Learning and Development that we help children understand the importance of making healthy choices in relation to food. We do this through the seven areas of learning:

Learning about food is an important part of children's development and is integrated into the seven areas of learning. The examples given below show how learning about and through food can be linked to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

Personal, social and emotional development

Meal times offer children experiences to taste different foods, overcome dislikes and learn how to share. Sitting around a table eating food together is a good way to teach social skills. Cooking activities offer opportunities for learning through working with others and increasing self-esteem.

Physical development

Fine and gross motor skills can be developed through activities such as using knives and forks, preparing food, and washing up. Mealtimes can be used to help children to make healthy food choices.

Communication and language

Sitting around a table eating food together is a good way to teach conversation. Language can be developed and senses explored through discussing and describing the taste, texture, size, look and smell of food.

Literacy

Many stories involve food. They can teach children about ingredients, where food comes from and about food for special occasions and from different cultures.

Mathematics

Activities such as counting out spoons and pieces of fruit when setting the table or at

snack time can be used to support numeracy skills. Sorting and matching foods into different types can help promote organisational skills and reasoning.

Understanding the world

Food tasting activities teach children about ingredients, the seasons and where food comes from including food from different cultures.

Growing fruit and vegetables teaches children about where food comes from, about life cycles, about gardening and how to look after plants. Many vegetables and herbs can be grown on window sills and in pots or bags, which children can be involved in.

Expressive arts and design

Art activities can engage children with food and alert them to colours and shapes.

(Adapted from the Voluntary Food and Drink Guidelines for Early Years Settings in England – A Practical Guide)

Name of Childminder:.....

Signature of Childminder

Date: