

First Friends Food and Nutrition Policy

Mealtimes should be a happy, social occasion for children and staff alike. Positive interactions should be shared at these times and enjoyed. First Friends is committed to offering children healthy, nutritious and balanced meals and snacks which meet the children's individual needs and requirements.

We will ensure that:

- A balanced and healthy breakfast, midday meal, tea and two daily snacks are provided for children attending a full day at nursery
- Children are encouraged to develop their independence during mealtimes i.e. self-serving, preparing snacks, setting tables, taking their plates away and making choices
- Menus will be planned in advance, rotated regularly and reflect cultural diversity and variation. These will be displayed in the entrance hall for parents/carers to see.
- We provide nutritious food at all snack and meal times, avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar, salt, artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- Menus will include at least 6 servings of fresh fruit and vegetables per day
- We will also respect parents/carers views on the menus, ie any suggestions and requires will be reviewed.
- Fresh drinking water will be constantly available and frequently offered to the children
- Individual dietary requirements will be respected and shared with all staff to maintain consistency. We will gather information from parents/carers regarding their children's dietary needs including any allergies. Where appropriate we will carry out a risk assessment in the case of allergies and work alongside parents/carers to ensure an individual dietary plan is put into place
- Staff will show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. They would 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 will set a good example and eat with the children to show good table manners. Meal and snack times will be organised so they are social occasions in which children and staff participate in small groups. During meals and snack times children will be encouraged to use their manners, say 'please' and 'thankyou' and conversation will be encouraged.
- Staff will support children to make healthy choices and understand the need for healthy eating
- We provide foods from the diet of each of the children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar food and introducing them to new ones. Cultural differences in eating habits will be respected. Each month we will explore different multi-cultural foods for the children to try.
- All children will be encouraged to try new foods, however if they refuse to eat their food an alternative will be arranged with the nurseries cook. This will be monitored to identified children's likes and dislikes towards all food.

- Children will be given time to eat at their own pace and not rushed
- Quantities offered will depend on the child's age, however second helpings will be offered. First Friends ensures to follow the guidance of the Caroline Walker Trust scheme to ensure portion sizes are suitable for each age of children
- We will promote positive attitudes to healthy eating through play opportunities and discussions
- The nursery will provide parents/carers with daily written records of what food consumptions their child has eaten throughout the day
- No child is ever left alone when eating/drinking to ensure that there is no risk of choking.