

Little Rainbow Nursery

Mealtimes (Nutrition) Policy

At Little Rainbow Nursery, mealtimes are happy and a social occasion for staff and children alike. Positive interactions are shared at this time and enjoyed. Little Rainbow Nursery is committed to offering children with healthy, nutritious balanced meals and snacks which meet individual needs and requirements.

Staff at Little Rainbow Nursery follow the Caroline Walker Trust (Healthy Eating Scheme) to ensure that all children are provided with a healthy balanced diet.

Individual dietary requirements will be respected. We will gather information from parents regarding their children's dietary needs including any allergies. We aim to promote healthy eating that will lead to life long health and well-being. We also aim to ensure all aspects of food and nutrition in the setting work to promote the health and well-being of children, staff and visitors to the setting. At Little Rainbow Nursery, the lunches are catered by 'Golden Flakes'. This catering service has worked with Catherine Jones to help us achieve the three star award by providing healthy, nutritious food from the diet of each of the child's cultural background. We also provide children with familiar food as well as introducing them to new ones and ensure that cultural differences in eating habits are respected.

A balanced and healthy; breakfast, lunch, tea and snack are provided for children attending a full day at the nursery.

We provide nutritious food at all snack and meal times avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar, salt, artificial additives, preservatives and colourings. Menu's will be planned in advance and rotated regularly which reflect cultural diversity and variety. (These will be displayed for parents).

Staff will show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. They will not use a child's diet or allergy as a label for the child or make a child feel singled out because of his/hers allergy.

Eating environment

Staff will use snack and mealtimes as an opportunity to engage the children in conversation and encourage them to talk about the foods they are eating, ask questions about where food comes from and why the different foods that they are eating are good for us. Staff will also use mealtimes to help promote children develop independence through making choices, serving food, drink and feeding themselves. During mealtimes, children sit around the table according to key groups along with their key person. The key person of the child will provide parents with written daily records of feeding routines for the children.

Breakfast

Breakfast is served from 8:00-8:50am, which is a healthy and balanced meal providing the children with a variety of cereals, which include; Shredded Wheat, Puffed Wheat, Weetabix and Porridge (Oats). Children are also provided with a variety of breads; white and brown bread as well as English muffin.

At Little Rainbow Nursery, we offer certain types of spreads for toast, this include; margarine, marmite and jam which is offered once a week due to high sugar content.

Snack

Children are given a variety of healthy and nutritious snack throughout the day, Morning snack is ongoing until 11:15 and afternoon snack is from 5:00pm onwards. Snack includes; fresh fruit,

crackers, breadsticks, vegetables and soft cheese. Fresh drinking water will be available at all times and frequently offered to children and babies.

Lunch and Tea

At Little Rainbow Nursery, a balanced lunch is served from 11:30 and tea is served from 3:30pm. During mealtimes, children will not be rushed but instead will be given enough time to finish meals. During mealtimes, children are more involved in the preparation, i.e. helping lay out plates, cups and cutlery on tables as well as name cards. This will make mealtimes feel like more of a 'special occasion' and again promote independence by preparing the table settings themselves.

At Little Rainbow Nursery, we do not allow children/parents to bring food from home due to many reasons, i.e. equal opportunities, allergies and health and safety reasons.

If a child does not finish their first course, he/she will still be given a small helping of dessert. Children who refuse to eat at mealtimes will be offered food later that day. During mealtimes, classical music will be played in the background for a calmer environment.

At Little Rainbow Nursery, we believe that breastfeeding is significant for the early months of a child's life for a minimum of six months. At Little Rainbow Nursery, we encourage breastfeeding due to the benefits it brings to a child's health. Breast milk itself contains the perfect balance of nutrients, lower risk of coughs, colds and chest infections. We encourage parents to bring expressed breast milk for their infant in order to promote a healthy start to the child's life.

Children that are going through the weaning stages will be provided with the same food as the other children, but blended to an appropriate consistency.

Celebrations

At Little Rainbow Nursery, we ensure that children are provided with healthy balanced, nutritious snacks for special occasions such as; birthdays, leaving parties and cultural occasions etc. These snacks include; rice cakes, breadsticks and fruit salad. Nonetheless, we do not encourage parents to provide party food or cakes due to: allergies, dietary needs as well as high levels of sugar or salt content in foods. During special occasions, we organise activities, such as; games, singing birthday and leaving songs.

Curriculum

At Little Rainbow Nursery, we promote healthy eating through the curriculum and the activities that we provide and plan for.

We encourage children to participate in a variety of activities, for example; cooking activities, such as; preparing tea, cutting fruits, making sandwiches, growing activities, such as; planting, growing vegetables as well as creative activities i.e. potato printing and fruit printing.

Signposting

At Little Rainbow Nursery, practitioners work closely with their key children's parents/carers and also provide feedback on their child's eating habit, health and development throughout the day.

Parents are made aware of the early start community service by signposting on the parent's notice board, displayed in the reception area. They are also made aware during parent's evenings or via discussions with parents. Parents are referred to nutritious services, if required or if interest is indicated.

This policy was adopted on: April 2020
Date for review: April 2021