



Nutrition and Mealtimes

EYFS: 3.47 – 3.49

At **The Village Nursery Group** we believe that mealtimes should be happy, social occasions for children and staff alike. We promote shared, enjoyable positive interactions at these times.

The policy shows how the nursery promotes health and wellbeing of the children and families through food within the setting. The food policy gives out guidelines that the nursery follows in connect with the Eat Better Do Better Early Years Voluntary Food Guidelines

The nursery meals and nutrition co-ordinator has work with the voluntary food guidelines, created a questionnaire for parents to share their views, current nursery menus are shared with parents.

Our nursery food policy will be shared with all parents and will be part of our nursery induction pack given to all new families. We will integrate the new food policy into a staff meeting where they will be updated on any changes and give opportunity for us to talk through as a team.

Parents are encouraged to share recipe ideas, home link focusing on baking and food activities in the home that we use to incorporate in our daily planning to support the child's interest. We will be creating a calendar of events for parents and children to attend focusing all around food e.g. cookery workshops, growing and planting in the garden, supporting 'fussy' eaters.

Food

Food is freshly prepared at nursery by our nursery meals cook. The food provides the children with a healthy balanced diet through fruit, vegetables, starchy foods, protein, milk and diary. The meals provide opportunity for the children in our care to explore new tastes, textures and colours. The meals offered to children meet the portion control guidelines set by Eat Better Do Better

Dietary and cultural needs of the children are met by the staff and nursery meals and nutrition co-ordinator. These are displayed in the kitchen area and in all rooms. Our menu reflects cultures are we plan a variation of meals and opportunities for children to taste a wide range of food from cultures through activities and experiences.

Supporting Documentation: Eat Better, Do Better Guidance, Allergy Paperwork, Allergy Charts, Staff Induction Paperwork



Drink

The children are offered and encouraged to drink water freely throughout the day. At meal times children are given milk, water or diluted fresh fruit juice. During the day children need to consume 3 x 100ml portions of milk at home and nursery. At nursery we give milk as a drink or within their food or snacks. In meeting the guidelines, we do not offer juice to children whilst at nursery.

Meal Times at Nursery

The nursery environment is differentiated to reflect mealtimes. The staff put table clothes down and play music in the background to create an inviting environment where children enjoy socialising with peers and trying new taste and textures with encouragement from the staff. Staff talk to the children about where food comes from and how it grows this giving them an understanding all about food.

Children have visual menus on the tables which enables opportunity for an in-depth conversation about the meal they are being served with staff. A helper is implemented within the Preschool age range who carries out lunchtime preparations with staff and helps to promote independence by carrying out activities such as setting tables, fetching lunchtime equipment from the kitchen and helping with self-serve. Children are encouraged to serve themselves during meal times with support from a familiar staff member, this encourages both physical skills and promotes independence. Children with dietary requirements are still offered the opportunity to self-serve their meal.

Celebrations/Cultures

When it is a time to celebrate birthdays in the nursery, we do not encourage parents to bring in sweets and cakes however we sing happy birthday to the children and make them feel special on their birthday. You are welcome to bring in a healthy food option to share with the children.

We engage in lots of cultural celebrations throughout the year our nursery cooks and the nursery menu and nutrition co-ordinator plan her menu to provide children with tastes from around the world. Staff also promote children in exploring cultures through activities and experiences.



Nutrition and Mealtimes

Cultural dietary needs are shared with staff and the nursery meals and nutrition co-coordinator as part of their induction. These needs are displayed in the kitchen and in all rooms with the kitchen staff meeting the requirements e.g. preparing food in a certain way or providing Halal meat and storing it correctly. We aim to provide an alternate that look as similar to their peers' meals.

“Fussy” Eaters

As children grow and develop, they can become reluctant to try new tastes and textures according to Eat Better Do Better children aged between 18months and 2years develop a fear of food. As a nursery we aim to support all children in exploring and trying new foods. At meal times we sit them with adults and peers who will role model eating foods. We encourage staff to eat with the children and engaging with the children talking about food and textures whilst offering lots of praise and encouragement and give stickers after trying new foods. We offer small tastes and portions building the child's confidence in changing their preferences, as it takes between 10-15 tastings before a child becomes to accept and like new food. Experiences are planned in the rooms for children to explore foods and try new tastes and textures.

Food from Home

We do not encourage children/parents to bring in food from home to be consumed within the nursery due to the setting having to meet allergy guidelines. If food is bought into the setting it needs to be clearly labelled with the children's name and given to a practitioner. No food should be stored in children's bags due to food hygiene regulations. If you need to provide food for your child whilst they are at nursery, we ask that they meet the Eat Better Do Better voluntary food guidelines.

Learning about food

Link to EYFS :

Meal times support children in building positive relationship with peers and practitioner as they engage with each other. Children learn how to share with others.

Cooking activities give the children opportunity to work with others and support them in building their own self-esteem and independence.

- Physical – Gardening, preparing food fine and gross.
- Literacy – stories cultures, language

Supporting Documentation: Eat Better, Do Better Guidance, Allergy Paperwork, Allergy Charts, Staff Induction Paperwork



Nutrition and Mealtimes

- Maths – counting as they prepare snack, numeracy weighting, sorting and matching support organisational skills
- Communication and language – conversation and social skills
- UW – food tasting teaches children about season where food comes from and culture. Growing fruit and veg, gardening life cycle nurturing plants
- Expressive Art and Design colours and shapes

Cooking with Children

We provide opportunities for the children to engage in cooking with the staff or nursery meals and nutrition co-ordinator. The experiences provide children with opportunity to mix, combine and assemble food to achieve an individual outcome for each and every child.

When cooking we provide children with soft fruit and veg enabling them to cut and prepare with ease using child cutlery that are easy for small hands to hold and use appropriately. When engaged in cooking activities we provide the children with their own utensils to allow independence they are also age appropriate to ensure safety through the activity and the children are supervised throughout.

Staff carry out visual risk assessment making sure the area is safe, free from hazards and cleaned ready to start the activity. Staff and children are encouraged to wash hands before preparation begins and this prompts conversation giving the children a basic understanding of looking after their bodies.

Staff role:

- Carry out visual risk assessment of the area being used removing potential hazards
- Clean and wipe down area
- Tie hair back
- Wear blue apron
- Wash hands
- Allow plenty of time for the activity to be completed
- Be prepared for mess it is part of the fun!!
- Cooking activities should be sweet and savoury. Anything cook sweet should be sent home to eat as part of a meal.



Food Safety and Hygiene

Children are taught basic food hygiene to prevent illness and a risk of food poisoning. Children taught not to eat food that has fallen on the floor, washing hands with soap and water before mealtimes, handling animals and after using the toilet.

Staff have food hygiene training and we have been awarded 5-star rating from the food environmental health. The nursery chef and staff use the safer food and better business pack to ensure food is stored, prepared and cooked following strict guidelines.

Staff are encouraged to complete an allergy awareness course as part of their induction when starting at the setting.

Sustainability

As the nursery is following and implementing the eat better do better guidelines we have a reduction of food waste after each meal. Where possible, the nursery uses the local farm shop to source fresh meat, fruit and vegetables. The nursery uses seasonal fruit and vegetables.

Protecting children's health

We understand the importance of baby's intake in nutrients provided from their mum that help develop their immune system. We welcome mums who are breastfeeding they can come into nursery to feed their baby in a calm and quiet area. Parents who are working can express their milk and bring it into the nursery clearly labelled with the child's name and stored safely ready to use.

We provide children with experiences of engaging in being healthy:

- Engaging in physical activities and play such as Play makers outdoor play.
- The children engaging in growing foods outdoors.
- We provided opportunity for children to rest and sleep
- We promote healthy practice such as hand washing oral hygiene
- Provide low sugar foods

Our Parent partnerships allow staff and parents to talk about concerns or issues with regards to child's health and we offer support through obtaining formation from health professions such as health visitor, dieticians etc

Supporting Documentation: Eat Better, Do Better Guidance, Allergy Paperwork, Allergy Charts, Staff Induction Paperwork



Evaluating our approach to food and drink within the nursery

Our nursery meals and nutrition co-ordinator and nursery cook, evaluates the food and drink provision by completing the code of practice checklist and menu planning checklist when menu planning.

We involve parents by asking for feedback from them and the children each time we plan the season menus. This provides us with feedback on current provision and identifies areas we need to develop.

We keep up to date with current good practice on meeting the welfare requirement of food and drink in accordance to the EYFS and Eat Better Do Better. New information is always shared with the team and parents. We look into how other nurseries are approaching their own food and drink provision Staff training on Safer Food Better Business, Eat Better do better will be reviewed and updated

We review the policy annually however it is amended if information and guidelines are changed before the renewal date.

This policy was reviewed on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
Dec 18		Jan 2020