



TWO HANDS
PRESCHOOL

Policy: Food

At Two Hands Preschool we are committed to offering children healthy, nutritious and balanced meals and snacks, which meet individual needs and requirements. We believe that mealtimes should be happy, social occasions for children and staff alike. We promote shared, enjoyable positive interactions at these times.

We partner with the Nursery Kitchen to:

- Provide a balanced and healthy breakfast, midday meal, dinner and two daily snacks are provided for children attending a full day at the preschool
- Rotate menus regularly and reflect cultural diversity and variation
- Display allergens alongside menus to show the contents of each meal
- Ensure our menus meet the requirements of optimum childhood nutrition
- Ensure that all food offered at the preschool meets Food Safety standards
- Quantities offered take account of the ages of the children being catered for in line with recommended portion sizes for young children

Drinks:

- Only water is provided as a drink to promote oral health, except where milk is offered during breakfast and the morning snack
- Fresh drinking water is always available and accessible. It is frequently offered to children and intake is monitored. In hot weather staff will encourage children to drink more water to keep them hydrated

Individual dietary requirements:

- Individual dietary requirements are respected.
- We gather information from parents regarding their children's dietary needs, including any special dietary requirements, preferences and food allergies that a child has and any special health requirements, before a child starts or joins the preschool.



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- Where appropriate, we will carry out a risk assessment in the case of allergies and work alongside parents to put into place an individual dietary plan for their child
- We give careful consideration to seating to avoid cross contamination of food from child to child. Where appropriate, an adult will sit with children during meals to ensure safety and minimise risks.
- Where appropriate, age/stage discussions will also take place with all children about allergies and potential risks to make them aware of the dangers of sharing certain foods
- Staff show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. They do 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

Family-style meals:

- Mealtimes are organised so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate in small groups
- Staff act as role-models during mealtimes and eat with the children, show good table manners. Cultural differences in eating habits are respected.
- During meal-times polite interactions and conversation are encouraged.
- Children are expected to stay seated at the table for the duration of a meal and staff will use positive, age-appropriate strategies to encourage this.
- Staff use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink, and feeding themselves
- Staff talk to children about nutrition, and talk about the health benefits of different types of foods in an age-appropriate manner. We avoid labelling food as 'healthy' or 'unhealthy', but talk about specifics instead.
- We provide children with familiar foods and introduce them to new ones.
- Any child who shows signs of distress at being faced with a meal they do not like, they will have their food removed without any fuss. If a child does not finish their first course, they will still be given a helping of dessert.
- Children not on special diets are encouraged to try new foods.



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- Children are given time to eat at their own pace and not rushed
- We promote positive attitudes to healthy eating through play opportunities and discussions
- The preschool provides parents with daily written records of feeding routines for all children during the settling in period. Thereafter, parents are informed if there has been a notable change to their child's consumption.
- No child is ever left alone when eating/drinking to minimise the risk of choking

Snacks:

- We have two dedicated snack times during the preschool day. Snacks are not offered at any other time of day. Children are reminded of this when they say they are finished at a mealtime so they know when their next opportunity to eat will be.
- We make the most of snack-times to promote independence with the children. They are encouraged to prepare their snack, serve each other and wash up after themselves.

Cooking:

- We recognise the benefits of children being involved in cooking and incorporate frequent opportunities for this in our curriculum.
- We have specific risk assessments in place for cooking activities to ensure these are safe experiences for all involved

Special occasions:

- We will sometimes celebrate special occasions with the occasional treat of foods such as cake, sweets or biscuits.
- These will be given at meal or snack times to prevent tooth decay and not spoil the child's appetite.
- Where we have frequent birthdays and celebrations we consider other alternatives such as celebrating through smiles and praise, stickers and badges, choosing a favourite story,



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becoming a special helper, playing a party game, dancing and/or singing their favourite song

Food safety:

- Staff lead children to wash their hands before any mealtime or snack or before they handle food in cooking sessions.
- We do not allow parents / carers to bring in food on special occasions or for any other reason.
- Staff who bring in their own food must leave it in the staffroom or clearly labelled if it is stored in the preschool kitchen.
- All staff who prepare and handle food are competent to do so and receive training in food hygiene which is updated every three years
- In the very unlikely event of any food poisoning affecting two or more children on the premises, whether or not this may arise from food offered at the nursery, we will inform Ofsted as soon as reasonably practical and in all cases within 14 days. We will also inform the relevant health agencies and follow any advice given.

This policy was reviewed on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
October 2023	J Shall	January 2026