

Food and drink

(September 2025)

Policy statement

This setting regards snack and meal times as an important part of the setting's day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults, and helps children to learn about healthy eating.

Procedures

We follow these procedures to promote healthy and safe eating in our setting. We also take account of the Food and Nutrition Guidance (Sept 2025).

We have a member of staff delegated to check food brought into the setting, considering allergens and foods imposing a choking risk. Any allergens will be removed and returned to parent/carer. Any foods imposing a choking risk will be made safer by e.g. chopping up into smaller pieces.

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we find out from parents/carers their children's dietary needs, including any allergies, preferences, special and cultural diets
- We record information about any child's dietary needs.
- We ask parents to ensure that records of their children's dietary needs, are up-to-date and must inform us of any changes.
- We display current information in our kitchen area about individual children's dietary needs so that all staff and any volunteers are fully informed about them.

- We implement systems to ensure that children receive only food and drink that is consistent with their dietary needs and preferences as well as their parents' wishes.
- An individual risk assessment will need to be carried out for a child with any allergies or medical needs.
- We require staff to show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies and staff 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.
- Withdrawing food will never be a consequence of unwanted behaviour.

Snacks, meals and drinks

- All children will be asked to wash their hands prior to eating and/or drinking
- We organise snack and meal times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate.
- We encourage children to talk to each other at snack and meal times and use polite table manners
- Tables will be cleaned prior to use.
- We encourage independence with eating and drinking considering the ages and stages of the children.,
- Staff are always within sight and hearing of the children at snack and meal times
- There will always be a first aid trained member of staff present at snack and mealtimes and training will have included choking.
- All staff have food hygiene certificates which are renewed every 3 years.
- At least one member of staff has also undertaken an Allergy Awareness course and they will cascade their learning to other members of staff.
- At snack times, we aim to provide nutritious food, which also meet the children's individual dietary needs.
- Parents are also asked to contribute to snacks, by bringing in from time to time a chosen healthy snack.
- We take care not to provide food containing nuts or nut products and are especially vigilant where we have a child who has a known allergy to nuts.

- We request parents do not provide foods containing nuts for snacks or in packed lunches.
- Whilst we encourage healthy snacks we recognise that children enjoy bringing in home-made buns, biscuits and celebration cakes and other foods etc.
- We ask parents to supply us with information regarding ingredients so that allergies and food preferences can be taken into consideration before serving.
- We welcome any foods from other cultures, providing children from different cultural backgrounds familiar foods and introducing others to new ones. Again, requesting ingredients to be listed.
- We provide a drink choice of water or semi-skimmed cow's milk at snack times.
- We ask parents/carers to provide a milk substitute if their child doesn't drink cows milk for any reason. e.g. oat milk, soya milk, rice milk etc and store appropriately.
- For children staying all day-a packed lunch is required.
- We ask that all containers and bottles are clearly labelled with child's name.
- Upon arrival at preschool all packed lunches are deposited into a large lidded container along with large ice packs.
- We ask parents to provide healthy, balanced lunches prepared ready to eat.
- We have information available for parents/carers on providing balanced, nutritious and healthy lunches should they require it.
- To minimise a choking hazard -we request that if grapes and other items such as round fruits, berries, cherry tomatoes and hot dog sausages etc are included in lunch boxes- these are already cut lengthways in half and preferable quarters.
- We encourage children to eat as much as they can and eat the "main" (sandwich, pasta etc) before other extras and we would not force them to eat all the food if no longer hungry.

Children can return to their lunch boxes later in the day provided that they wash hands first and a member of staff is sat with them to ensure safe eating.

- We have fresh drinking water constantly available for the children. We inform the children about how to obtain the water and that they can ask for water at any time during the day.

- We use snack and meal times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving drinks and feeding themselves.
- We provide children with utensils that are appropriate for their ages and stages of development and we also take account of the eating practices in their cultures.

This policy was adopted at a committee meeting of Addingham Pre School	Date
Signed on behalf of the committee	
Name of signatory	
Role of signatory	