



Foundations for Children
Nursery Schools Federation



Foundations for Children Food and Drink Policy

**Croyland Nursery School, Parklands Nursery School,
Camrose Early Years Centre and
Highfield Nursery School**

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1. Introduction

At Foundations for Children Nursery Schools Federation children are encouraged to eat healthy, well balanced meals in a pleasant, relaxed environment. We take care to provide healthy meals and snacks following the recommendations of the Food Standards Agency. Our overall daily meal and snack provision conforms to the balance of a good health profile. We want children to enjoy mealtimes and understand the importance of a healthy diet. This policy was devised following good practice guidelines from Council and discussion amongst all staff.

2. Our Nursery menus at Croyland and Camrose

Our menus are designed by our nursery Catering Officers following the guidelines. The menu changes seasonally. Parents are given copies of the menus and they are displayed in nursery. Parents are encouraged to contribute towards the meal planning.

3. Healthy Eating

Healthy eating guidelines are followed to ensure children receive a balanced diet that meets the needs of their age group. This means that processed food (such as sausages and fishfingers) is only served a maximum of once a week, oily fish is served once a week and grains are mainly wholemeal. Vegetables are served daily, the majority of which are fresh. Children are given a main course and a pudding, both parts of which make up a balanced meal. Children are encouraged to eat both courses. Water is served with the meals. Sweets, crisps and biscuits are not given as treats or rewards.

Cooked meals are provided at Croyland Nursery and Camrose Early Years for children who access the all day, all year provision with 30 hours options. At Highfield Nursery School and Parklands Nursery School the children that access the 30-hour option bring a packed lunch. The packed lunches will be clearly labelled with the child's name and left on a trolley by parents on arrival at nursery. The Nursery offers advice and guidance around healthy packed lunch choices. To ensure the safety of all children (as some children may have particular dietary requirements or life-threatening food allergies and must not be put at risk) the nursery will provide all snacks served to the children.



4. Snack

Children are offered a snack in the nursery during both a.m. and p.m. sessions. Snack consists of mainly fruit, vegetables or occasionally crackers or toast. Water and milk are also offered. Water is available all day. We are able to differentiate to meet the needs for those children who have special educational needs and spend the whole day in Nursery. Snack is offered over a period of time so that children can access when they feel hungry, helping them to recognise and manage their own needs.

Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the Nursery for special events such as Christmas parties where lists of food to be eaten will be provided. The staff will check products for any ingredients which may have an adverse effect on some children.

The children participate in cooking activities at nursery and will try the food they have prepared. Children are encouraged to bring in a named bottle from home that they can access throughout the session. Parents are asked to take these home and clean them ready for the following day.

5. Special Dietary Requirements

Admissions into Nursery

Details about special dietary requirements are gathered before children start at nursery completing an individual care plan on home visit. Children do not start attending until the SENCO/DSL and Catering Officer are assured that all staff are fully aware of the children's dietary needs and all procedures are agreed and in place.

We make provision for Special Diets at four levels: Each level is coded with a different colour to heighten awareness.

We currently operate a 4-tier system for our enrolled children with Dietary Requirements. They are explained as follows:

- 1) Allergy (red) is Life Threatening Food Hypersensitivity.
- 2) Intolerance (yellow) is Non-Life-Threatening Food Hypersensitivity
- 3) No Dairy Diet (orange) is now called Lactose Intolerance.



4. Choice Diets: These apply to diet requests based on religious or personal beliefs. There are no health risks involved, however there are religious and moral implications if diet not adhered to.

For children whose special requirements fall under levels one or two or three, a medical letter should accompany the information from parents. This should give dietary information and medical advice regarding the requirements for the individual child. Care is taken to provide alternative meals for these children.

This information is reviewed monthly: admin staff print an updated report monthly, or as needed, for each team of nursery practitioners. Copies are displayed prominently in the dining room, kitchen and each snack area, along with a visual display of photos and any medical protocols. If changes happen prior to the monthly review forms will be updated and communicated.

There is also a laminated copy in each area where food is served. All children with special diets have individual placemats stating the details of their diet. This is used in all provisions for food including snack times, mealtimes and outings. The practitioner serving the food is responsible for checking the sheet before placing it on the table so that it is visible for all to see. It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that they are aware of dietary information concerning the children. Staff members will follow the agreed special diets flowchart and the special diets procedures.

Review forms are stored in the medical folders and staff will complete alongside parents regarding reviews and any changes to procedures. This will then be shared with the SENCO/DSL and catering Officers.

Life threatening food hypersensitivity: Children will have an agreed medical protocol in place which all staff and parents have agreed prior to the child starting. The Serious Food Allergies book is completed daily with a record of all ingredients used, should the child experience a reaction this book can be taken to the hospital.



6. Role of the Staff

During mealtimes, the children are supported by regular staff who support all children every day. Staff are expected to act as good role models during mealtimes. Staff sit at the table with the children in a small group of 5 or 6 and may eat some of the meal with the children. Children are encouraged to have good table manners and to try new foods. A little of all of the food types should be served by the children on to their plates, they are encouraged to try a little of everything and praised for trying new foods. Staff talk to the children as they eat, as they would in a home situation, about the meal and also have normal day to day conversations. They talk with the children about why it is important to eat healthily. The children can be actively involved at meal times, serving their own food and then clearing their plates away.

One staff member is named at each mealtime as the named food server. They will undertake the special diets procedures and follow the special diets procedures as outlined in the booklet. Staff are to check each meal time which children have special diets and ensure their food is served first before all other children.

7. Food Hygiene

We adhere to very high standards of food hygiene as detailed in the Environmental Health and Safety regulations. Staff and children wash their hands before meal times and wear a meal time apron. At the end of the meal each child is given a clean, damp flannel and encouraged to wash their face and hands.

Reporting of food poisoning

- Food poisoning can occur for a number of reasons; not all cases of sickness or diarrhea are as a result of food poisoning and not all cases of sickness or diarrhea are reportable.
- Where children and/or adults have been diagnosed by a GP or hospital doctor to be suffering from food poisoning and where it seems possible that the source of the outbreak is within the setting, the Head Teacher or member of SLT will document the details and contact the Environmental Health Department and the Health Protection Agency, to report the outbreak and will comply with any investigation.
- If the food poisoning is identified as a notifiable disease under the Public Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 1988 the setting will report the matter to Ofsted.



Legal Framework

Regulation (EC) 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the hygiene of foodstuffs.

Further guidance

Safer food better businesses (Food standards agency)

www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/regulation

8. Working with Parents

Nursery staff offer feedback daily about the child's day, including the learning, interests and activities and experiences available. Staff will not formally feedback on a child's eating unless specifically requested by the parents/carers. Staff can signpost parents to the menus and give them a copy for reference. Nursery staff feedback verbally to all parents if the child's eating patterns change or are giving cause for concern and can offer support and advice; the Family Support Worker can be asked to become involved too.

9. Feeding Babies and Weaning

Our approach to feeding babies and to weaning is based on and compliant with the UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative and all subsequent guidelines. In 2012, UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative published revised standards for maternity, neonatal, health visiting (or specialist public health nursing) and the nursery (or equivalent early years' community settings) services. These were the result of a large consultation involving clinicians, academics, policy makers and mothers. These new standards incorporate the previous standards as specified in the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding and Seven Point Plan for Sustaining Breastfeeding in the Community, but update and expand them to fully reflect the evidence base on delivering the best outcomes for mother and babies in the UK. If a parent wishes to breastfeed their baby in the nursery they are most welcome to do so; a private space will be offered if this is their preference.

<http://www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/>

10. Learning through food

Food appears in many aspects of children's play. We aim to ensure our messages about healthy eating remain consistent whether in a play experience or at a meal time. Children are given opportunities to cook and try their food at nursery and be involved in planning and preparing their own meals during the year. Cooking and meal times may provide learning opportunities for all areas of the curriculum and may be recorded as evidence of learning. Children also learn firsthand about food and nutrition by growing, harvesting and cooking and eating their own food.



11. Monitoring and Evaluation

Food hygiene standards and nutritional content are monitored externally by the relevant assessment body.

12. Storing and Handling Foods

The Nursery is fully compliant with relevant legislation and documents issued by the Food Standards Agency:

<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/sfbb>

The Early Years Foundation Stage document requires providers to have an area which is adequately equipped to provide healthy meals, snacks and drinks for children as necessary. There are suitable facilities for the hygienic preparation of food for children, including suitable sterilisation equipment for babies' food.

13. Staff and Staff Training

Meals are prepared at Croyland Nursery School and Camrose Early Years Centre by the catering officers. They hold a current food hygiene certificate. Cleanliness together with fridge and freezer temperatures are monitored and recorded every day. All curriculum staff, who prepare snacks, have current food hygiene and food allergy awareness training certificates too. If staff are unwell, they do not handle food. All staff, who handle and prepare food in the Nursery kitchen have up to date food hygiene certificates. Other staff, who prepare snacks, etc. have on-line training and the associated level 2 certificate. New staff members do not undertake food serving or food preparation until they have completed a mentoring session with line manager and spent time alongside the Catering Officer regarding food handling and hygiene.

14. Appendices

1. Special diets and allergy training booklet
2. Food server- special diets flowchart
3. Blank version of placemat and table.
4. Serious food allergy record book
5. Pre-made food items from home record book
6. Care plan and medical protocol- also in H&S Policy



15. Linked Policies

- Health and Safety Policy
- Induction and mentoring
- Admissions Policy
- Administering Medicines and Medical needs Policy

Updated October 2024



1. Allergy Training and Special Diet procedures.

Food hypersensitivity is when the body's immune system reacts unusually to specific foods. Although allergic reactions are often mild, they can be very serious.

In the most serious cases, a person has a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis), which can be life threatening.

*

Food Hypersensitivity happens when the immune system – the body's defenses against infection – mistakenly treats proteins found in food as a threat.

As a result, a number of chemicals are released. It's these chemicals that cause the symptoms of an allergic reaction.

Almost any food can cause an allergic reaction, but there are certain foods that are responsible for most food allergies.

Foods that most commonly cause an allergic reaction are:

Celery, Cereals containing Gluten, Crustaceans, Eggs, Fish, Lupins, Milk, Molluscs, Mustard, Nuts, Peanuts, Sesame Seeds, Soya, Sulphur Dioxide/Sulphites

To safeguard the children in our care we operate a 4 tier Special Diet Procedure, colour coded to the traffic light system,

To highlight dietary needs and to enable staff to confidently provide safe meal times.

This booklet has been put together to outline our Special Diet Procedure, to give basic instructions of how to recognise a special diet child and how to safeguard special diet children at meal times.



Special Diets.

We currently operate a 4 tier Special Diet Procedure based on the Traffic Light Colours

1. Life Threatening Food Hypersensitivity-**RED**
2. Non-Life-Threatening Food Hypersensitivity-**Yellow**
3. Lactose Intolerance (No Dairy)-**Orange**
4. Choice- **Religious or Parental Choice**

Before a child attends Nursery their dietary requirements are recorded on the Contract/Registration form.

This information is then transferred on to the Special Diet Sheets found on each dining room table, above the service area in the dining room, in the kitchen and each snack area around the building. These lists are updated every month or as and when necessary. A daily list is given to the kitchen to ensure they know which special diets will be eating that day.

A photo of the child with their name and dietary requirement is displayed prominently in the dining room, and in the Baby Room.

A place mat with the child's photo, name and dietary needs is to be used at all meal times. The current menu is well displayed in the dining room with a recipe breakdown and all allergens highlighted for both the staff and Parental use.

An area on the food trolley is dedicated to Special Diets at meal times and all alternative dishes must be placed there at service times.

Special Diet Children are always served first.

Way markers point Parents to the dietary information by the use of highlighted allergens on the menus, recipe breakdowns and allergens sheets displayed in the dining room and the use of social media when the menus seasonally change.

All these steps have been put into place to safeguard the child and to protect the staff from what could be potentially fatal mistakes.



Meal Time Special Diet Procedures

- Wash hands thoroughly in the Kitchen hand wash sink before serving ANY foods especially special diets to prevent any possible cross contamination.
 - Put on a blue disposable apron.
- When the children are seated, check for any diets using the Special Diet Sheets found on the table and/or the photograph board. Make yourself aware of any child's particular requirements.
 - Ensure each Special Diet has their colour coded personal place mat.
- Serve the Special diet children first, taking the appropriately labelled plates from the dedicated food area ONLY
- Red Diets (Life Threatening Food Hypersensitivity) food must be collected from the kitchen (please see separate procedure)
- Monitor the children on your table so that there is no chance of them eating unsuitable foods.
 - Repeat this procedure when serving dessert and at tea times.
- Special Diets who are able to eat the Main Nursery Meal will still have a labelled plate, but will also have a label saying the main meal is safe for them. This is simply to encourage continuity across the special diet routine. Special diets are served first regardless of whether they have a special meal or not.
- **NEVER EVER ASSUME**, if you are not 100% certain about any food item to be served, check, double check and ASK! it is everyone's responsibility to safeguard in the dining room.



Life Threatening Food Hypersensitivity (Red Diets)

When dealing with RED special diets that are recognised to have a life-threatening reaction to certain foods, we operate a much tighter procedure for obvious reasons.

- All foods are prepared away from other foods to prevent cross contamination.
 - The plates are covered and labelled with its contents.
- The Red Diet Booklet must be filled out, detailing every food item to be served.
 - The food must be collected from the kitchen.
- The plates must be checked against the paperwork with the person who prepared it and the person serving it.
- If everything is correct the server must sign before taking the food away. You are signing to say you have understood the process and you are confident to serve that meal
 - Food is served removing any plate covering at the table to prevent possible cross contamination.
- The Red Diet Booklet must remain in the kitchen and be readily available should there be an emergency.
- Monitor the children on your table so that there is no chance of them eating unsuitable foods.
- **NEVER EVER ASSUME**, if you are not 100% certain about any food item to be served, check, double check and ASK! it is everyone's responsibility to safeguard in the dining room.



Premade Foods from Home.

Now and Again a parent may feel it is more appropriate to provide food from home. While we do not actively encourage this, we can and do accommodate. We have a 'Pre-made Food from Home' Booklet which we ask parents to fill out detailing every food item they send in. This enables us to monitor the child's diet and to take precautions should any food stuffs be a threat to the Special Diets Children. No 'Premade Foods from Home' should be served in the dining room without this information, this to safeguard the child, the surrounding children and staff in case there are unknown allergens present.



Protocols.

A Protocol is an official procedure or system of rules to be followed.

Each Special Diet Child should be given a protocol to follow in the event he/she ingests a prohibited food item/items.

A list of basic instructions for each child can be found displayed in the dining room. Please speak to either the child's key worker or a member of the SMT team to familiarise yourself with the necessary steps to be taken should an accident happen.

Red Diets, administer epi pen if prescribed and call 999



Hints, Tips and Useful Advice.

- Never Rush dealing with Special Diets, that's when mistakes can happen. Be methodical and follow the Special Diet procedure.
- If a mistake happens, speak up the moment you realise, with Life threatening Food Hypersensitivity time is critical and every second counts.
 - No one minds questions, far better to ask.
- Routine, establish a good routine, that way no vital steps will be missed that could lead to a mistake being made.
- Be diligent to what is going on around you, you may well have a better view of a child than the adult supervising that table does.
- Don't panic. That doesn't help anyone and only goes towards fueling people's worries and unease. If procedures are followed correctly it will give you the confidence to safeguard Special Diet children.
- Further training. The Food Standards Agency offer free online training in Food Allergens. I recommend it to strengthen your knowledge and your confidence.
<https://allergytraining.food.gov.uk/>
- Information can be found on the NHS website <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/food-allergy/>