

# Food and Drink Policy

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**Little Pippins is committed to providing healthy, nutritious and tasty food and drinks for children during our sessions. The Manager and staff will make every effort to ensure that food and drink are safely prepared and sensitive to the dietary, religious and cultural requirements of all the children. We regard snack and mealtimes as an important part of the session as it represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy and balanced eating.**

The safety of the staff and children is paramount. When preparing food and drink, staff will be mindful of the provisions of the Hygiene Policy. In addition to these provisions, staff will be careful to ensure both the safety of themselves and children when using sharp or dangerous equipment in food and drink preparation. Hot drinks for staff, which will be drunk outside the kitchen, must be served in safe thermos mugs. Visitors in the play areas must take drinks in the kitchen area only.

The Manager and staff are mindful of their responsibilities and obligations under the Food Safety Act 1990. Little Pippins is registered with the local authority to provide food. All staff who either handle or prepare food have up to date Food Hygiene and Safety Certificates and are fully trained in food storage, preparation, cooking and food safety. Students, volunteers and parent helpers may be asked to help with preparation of snacks, but this will always be under the supervision of a member of staff who has received food hygiene training.

No child will ever be forced to eat or drink something against their will and the withholding or granting of food and drink will never be used as either a punishment or reward.

We show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. We 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.

We organise lunch and snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and adults participate. Staff sit with the children at lunchtimes.

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

For children who attend lunch club, parents should include a cool block in their child's lunch box/bag to ensure the packed lunch is kept cool. Lunch bags should be clearly named with the child's name.

## Allergens

When a child starts at Little Pippins, parents and carers are required to complete the Child Information & 'Permissions' Form, and if necessary, an

Allergy Form or Health Care Plan including information about any special dietary requirements or allergies the child suffers from, along with their food and drink preferences. We display current information about individual children's allergies and dietary needs in the kitchen so that all our staff and volunteers are fully informed about them. The Manager and staff will ensure that food and drink offered to children takes account of this information so as to safeguard their health and meet – as far as possible – their particular preferences.

We rely on parents to keep us informed of any changes in their child's dietary requirements or if they are sensitive or allergic to any of the allergens listed below. In addition, we carry out an annual review of the information we hold to ensure it is up to date.

Allergens that we may use in ingredients or may be in food provided are:

- Cereals containing gluten e.g. wheat, rye, barley and oats and their hybridised strains – in breakfast cereals, bread, breadsticks, crackers and biscuits.
- Eggs – Breakfast Club and in cooking and snacks.
- Fish – unlikely but possible in cooking.
- Soya – unlikely but possible in spreads and yogurts.
- Milk – daily in drinks and cooking.
- Celery – rarely but possibly at snack time and in cooking.
- Mustard – unlikely but possible in cooking.
- Sesame – unlikely but possible in snacks.
- Sulphur dioxide/sulphites – unlikely but possible in drinks/food contributed to Christmas party etc.

No nuts or nut products are used within the setting and we are especially vigilant where we have a child who has a known allergy to nuts. Parents and carers are made aware of this so that no nuts or nut products are brought in to the setting in lunchboxes or snacks.

## **Healthy Eating**

Little Pippins recognises the importance of healthy eating and a balanced and nutritious diet. Because of this, we ask parents/ carers to provide a portion of healthy snack, such as fruit, to be shared with the group at snack time.

For children who attend Lunch Club, we encourage parents and carers to provide their child with a healthy, balanced packed lunch. We discourage packed lunch contents that consist largely of crisps, processed food, sweet drinks, cakes and biscuits.

Key Persons are able to provide information to parents on healthy eating if required, for example, plenty of fruit and low fat/salt/sugar food. They will also notify parents if their child does not eat their packed lunch.

At Breakfast Club, healthy cereals, fruit, fruit juice, yogurts and a choice of breads or toast are available depending on a child's preference.

We recognise that food is neither 'good' nor 'bad' rather it should be eaten in balance. Therefore, fruit and crackers will form the mainstay of our snack provision, however, there may be occasions when cake and biscuits are appropriate.

Parents should provide a flask of fresh drinking water every day. In warmer weather, we also provide a drinking station trolley that can be wheeled outside with fresh water that children can help themselves to. The children can drink from their flask or the water station, or ask for water, at any time of the day. There will also be fresh water and milk available at snack and lunch times.

## **Cultural and Religious Diversity**

Little Pippins and its staff are committed to embracing the cultural and religious diversity of the families who use our services. The Manager and staff will work with parents/carers to ensure that any particular dietary requirements are met.

Little Pippins is also keen to help introduce children to different religious and cultural festivals and events through different types of food and drink.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Pippins Management Committee

Held on: 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee: *Kieran Dee*

Role of signatory: Chair

Review date: March 2022

## **Related Policies**

Hygiene  
Health, Illness and Emergency