

HETTY Nutrition and Mealtimes Policy

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

We are committed to offering children healthy, nutritious and balanced meals and snacks, which meet individual needs and requirements. Staff will sit and support children at snack and mealtimes.

We ensure that:

- A balanced and healthy breakfast, midday meal, and 2/3 daily snacks are provided for children attending a full day at the nursery
- Menus are planned and in line with example menu and guidance produced by the Department for Education. These are rotated regularly, reflect cultural diversity and variation and are displayed for children and parents to view
- We provide nutritious food at all snack and mealtimes, avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar, salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings
- Menus include at least 3/5 servings of fresh fruit and vegetables per day
- Only milk and water are provided as drinks to promote oral health. Fresh drinking water is always available and accessible.
- Individual dietary requirements are respected. Before a child joins, 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, 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 children 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, discussions will also take place with 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 their diet or allergy
- Staff set a good example and show good table manners. Meal and snack times are organised so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate in small groups. During meal and snack times children are encouraged to use their manners and conversation is encouraged

- Staff use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drinks and feeding themselves
- Staff support children to make healthy choices and understand the need for healthy eating
- Where possible, we provide foods from the diet of each of the children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones
- Cultural differences in eating habits are respected
- Any child who shows signs of distress at being faced with a meal they do not like they will be encouraged to try a little. If that fails their food will be 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 eat a small piece of everything
- Children who refuse to eat at the mealtime are offered food later in the day
- Children are given time to eat at their own pace and not rushed
- Quantities offered take account of the ages of the children being catered for in line with recommended portion sizes for babies and young children
- We promote positive attitudes to healthy eating through play opportunities and discussions
- No child is ever left alone when eating or drinking to minimise the risk of choking
- We will sometimes celebrate special occasions such as birthdays with the occasional treat of foods such as cake, sweets or biscuits
- We do allow parents to bring in cakes on special occasions. We ensure that all food brought in from parents meets the health and safety requirements, and ingredients that are listed within the Food Information for Consumers (FIR) 2014 and detailed in the allergens policy and procedure. We encourage shop bought cakes so we can see all ingredients which allows us to make the right decision about who to serve the cake to.
- 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 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.
- Children's lunch boxes are checked prior to giving the contents to the children to ensure any risks from potential allergens or choking hazards are managed

Packed lunches

We do allow children to bring packed lunches into the setting.

We provide parents with guidelines for nutritious content and signpost to the NHS packed lunch guidance we suggest no nuts due to allergens. We understand that some children's diet may be restricted for those children with neurodiverse conditions.

(<https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes/>).