

Poppets Pre-School

Packed Lunch and Snack Policy

Introduction

At Poppets we are committed to children eating healthy, nutritious and balanced meals and snacks which meet individual needs and requirements, following the Department of Education nutrition guidance.

Parents are asked to provide packed lunches that comply fully with this policy. We reserve the right to remove food items that present an allergen or choking risk. Parents who regularly fail to meet the expected standards will be invited to discuss the issues to find joint solutions to ensure our policy is upheld.

Organisation

Children will always be within sight and hearing of a member of staff while eating and, where possible, an adult will sit facing children while they eat. A member of staff will be sat at every table at lunchtime/snack time, with a maximum of 8 children per table.

- We ask that all snacks, lunchboxes and water bottles are clearly labelled with your child's name.
- We ensure that fresh, plain tap water is always readily available. We ask parents to only send in water for their children to drink.
- We ask that children are only given fruit, breadsticks or rice cakes for snack time.
- We request parents use insulated lunch boxes and ice packs.
- We are not able to reheat food so suggest that parents provide warm food in a thermos container.
- We ask parents to ensure that all food provided is within the use by date.
- Cultural differences in eating habits are respected.

Allergies

We operate a strict nut free environment, the following items must not be included: whole nuts, products containing nuts and those that use nuts in preparation (for example, nut oil). Dependent on other children's allergies we may need to ban other food items eg sesame.

All staff are aware of children with food allergies or intolerances and individual dietary requirements are respected. Information from parents is shared with all staff members and displayed clearly in the kitchen.

Where appropriate, we will carry out a risk assessment in the case of a known allergy and work alongside parents to put in to place an individual dietary/allergy plan for their child. This will be regularly reviewed and any changes shared with all staff.

Children's lunchboxes will be reviewed prior to giving the contents to the children to manage any risks from potential allergens. We give careful consideration to seating to avoid cross contamination of food from child to child.

Where appropriate, discussions will also take place with children about allergies and potential risks to make them aware of the dangers of sharing certain food. Staff show sensitivity towards 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.

Choking

To reduce choking risks, we expect:

- Hard pips or stones to be removed from fruit; please consider removing the skin for very young children.
- Small round fruits (such as grapes, cherry tomatoes, cherries, berries) to be cut in to quarters lengthways.
- Vegetables such as carrots, celery and cucumber cut into narrow batons.
- Sausages/hot dogs peeled and cut into short thin strips.
- Meat/fish boned and cut into short strips.
- Cheese grated or cut into short strips.

We ask that the following products are not included in snacks/lunch due to their choking risk:

- Popcorn, chewing gum, marshmallows, raw jelly cubes, sweets.

If a child chokes whilst at Poppets, we will complete a choking record and ask parents to sign the record to confirm they have been informed. We will review the situation and make any changes as necessary.

Please see the Food Standards Agency 'Early years food choking hazards' advice for preparing food for babies and children under five years old:

<https://tinyurl.com/EYchokinghazards>

Healthy Eating

We are required to support you with information to help you provide healthy meals for your child to bring to nursery.

It is recommended that packed lunches should include the following on a daily basis:

- A minimum of two portions of fruit and vegetables.
- A starchy food for energy and concentration eg any bread, wrap, chapatti, pasta, rice, noodles, potatoes.
- Meat, fish, eggs or another plant based source of iron and protein eg lentils, kidney beans, chickpeas, hummus.
- Dairy or dairy alternative food eg cheese, plain unsweetened yoghurt or fromage frais.

Please see the information below for further packed lunch guidance:

NHS Healthier lunchbox recipes -

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

Food for Life's packed lunches guidance -

<https://bit.ly/4t3Jb9d>

This policy was adopted on: (date)

Signed on behalf of the pre-school:(owner)

Date for review: August 2027 (annually)