

Mealtimes and Food play policy:

Mealtimes:

At the Meadows, we aim to make mealtimes an enjoyable time of the day, children will have the opportunity to learn life skills and independence.

During mealtimes, staff will adhere to the statutory EYFS (early years foundation stage). Throughout the day children are provided with snacks twice a day and have the opportunity for breakfast, lunch and dinner, depending on the hours they attend nursery. All children can bring in their own healthy food from home or they can purchase nursery meals from The Meadows Nursery at an additional cost.

Fresh drinking water is always also available to the children throughout the day.

We encourage children (if age and stage appropriate) to help serve up their food and help to clean away their plates during mealtimes. We also encourage children to help pour or fill their own drinks/bottles. We will support all children during mealtimes when needed and follow the food hygiene standards when conducting mealtimes.

Staff are to ensure they are encouraging children to not talk with their mouth full and encourage children to show that their mouth has no food in before getting down from the table (especially those going down for a nap).

Only staff members with their food hygiene training can handle food. All meals throughout the day are to be uploaded to the child's profile via the Family app by the end of the day. In the event the app is not working we will inform parents on handover and update the app asap.

Allergies, intolerances, preferences and any other dietary requirements will be catered for however, we cannot provide any Halal products.

Allergy boards are to be on all tables that are being used at mealtimes and staff members are to ensure that any children with allergies (who are having our meals) have a red plate/bowl for their food. The allergy boards have a picture of the child, their name, and dietary requirements.

A staff member (*who is paediatric first aid trained*) is to sit with the children during meals times to ensure we are minimising risks such as cross contamination and choking. Food for the children is to be cut to smaller sizes (when needed) to reduce the risk of choking.

The children in the baby room will have a one-page profile completed on them when they first start which will include what stage of weaning they are at and how their food needs to be prepared. This information will be given to the nursery chef to follow the child's weaning requirements when preparing their food. The chef and staff will complete the eat safe crib sheet daily for the children who are under stage 7 on the weaning chart (unless needed for example due to SEND or medical needs).

Staff are to review the weaning stages with parent's as and when needed. When the child is at stage 7 of the weaning chart, the food will no longer need to be recorded on the 'eat safe crib sheet'.

We ask all parent/carers if providing a lunch box for their child to ensure food is healthy and that grapes are cut in half to reduce the risk of choking. The nursery is also a nut free zone; please can we ask all parents/carers to ensure that children's lunch boxes do not have any food which contain nuts.

Any choking incidents are to be logged through an incident form and parents are to be called to be informed of the incident before the form is completed. Any back blows and marks are to be recorded on the incident form as accurately as possible. With any near misses (where a child is needing back blows or had mild choking) staff are to recommend highly that parent's seek medical advice to get the child checked that day either by a GP or urgent care.

In any event of choking or near misses, management is to be called straight away in the moment (as a medical emergency) to assess if a call to 999 is needed and support with first aid treatment.

Staff will follow their training from their Paediatric first aid course, in the event the food/item will not dislodge staff are to use our LifeVac anti-choking device (valid UKCA or CE mark and is registered with the MHRA in accordance with the UK MDR 2002) when needed. Spare staff are to retrieve the life-Vac and the DeFib if a child is choking to have this ready in case needed. Staff are to check if the parents have given permission for the Life-Vac to be used via the Famly app permissions section.

Staff will call emergency services for support if the food/item will not dislodge and call parents/carers. In the event the Lifevac has been used on a child/adult the nursery will ask for them to seek medical attention as a precaution.

Management are to report all serious choking incidents to RIDDOR and to check if any near miss incidents need to be reported depending on the severity and first aid needed in the moment. All choking and near miss incidents are to have incident forms completed and parents are to be notified straight away.

If a child is expressing that they do not like a particular food a staff member will encourage the child to try the food. If the child does not eat the meal staff will offer fruit alternatives and parents will be notified on handover.

All food is freshly made on site and made by our lovely cook Trudy; we offer a wide range of healthy foods to the children and staff. On special occasions such as birthdays, Christmas, Diwali, Chinese new year's, Halloween etc we may have the occasional treat such as cakes, sweets and party food!

We do allow parents/carers to bring in a cake for their child to celebrate their birthday, however we do ask that cakes are shop bought and still in packaging when arriving at nursery as well as nut free.

Other food safety precautions:

- Remove any stones or pops from fruits before serving (excluding if children are eating an apple whole)
- Cut small round foods (such as grapes and strawberries) lengthways and into quarters.

- Cut large fruits, hard fruit, vegetables and cheeses into slices instead of small chunks.
- Raisins are not to be offered to children under 12 months.
- Sausages are to be cut into thin strips and not chunks.
- Breads to be cut into strips for younger children (especially those still weaning).
- Popcorn is not to be given to children as a snack.
- Marshmallows or jelly cubes are not to be given to the children to eat or use as play as this can become lodge in their throat.
- Children are not to be given hard sweets.

Food play:

Within our setting, we like to encourage children to learn through their curiosity of the world around them. We also aim to provide them with a range of experiences, activities and materials to further their exploration.

Some activities we may use food items, staff are to check before using them if the children have any Allergies, intolerances, preferences and any other dietary requirements before use.

The foods we allow children to play with are:

- Lentils
- Gloop (corn flour)
- Flour
- Rice (that has been coloured) – aged 2 and above only.
- Pasta
- Food Colouring
- Playdough (in house made)

These are to be used for focused small group activities or any craft activities such as playdough, threading, and artwork. Children are to be supervised at all times when taking part in food related play/activities.

If staff would like to use other foods for food play, they are to discuss this with management first.

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