



Early Years Practice

09.08 Prime times – Snack-times and mealtimes (older children)

Children are supervised during mealtimes and always remain within sight and hearing of staff.

Snack times

- Parents are asked to provide a fruit or vegetable 'snack' which is given mid-morning and mid-afternoon depending upon the child's attended session. Snack time can be organised according to the discretion of the setting manager e.g. picnic on a blanket.
- Children are provided with choice of milk or water.
- Children wash their hands before and after snack-time.
- After the age of two, children can move to semi-skimmed milk as a main drink, as long as they are eating a varied and balanced diet.
- Portion sizes are gauged as appropriate to the age of the child.
- Staff join in conversation and encourage children's independence by allowing them to retrieve and return their own snack, where appropriate.

Mealtimes

- Tables are never overcrowded during mealtimes. Some social distancing is encouraged even though it is acknowledged that children will play in close proximity for the rest of the session.
- Children wash their hands and sit down as food is ready to be served.
- Packed lunches provided from home are given to each child.
- Food is checked to ensure it is nut/nut environment free, in accordance with our 'nut free' policy.
- Children are given time to eat at their own pace and are not hurried to fit in with adults' tasks and breaks. They are not made to eat what they do not like and are only encouraged to try new foods slowly.

- In order to protect children with food allergies or specific dietary requirements, children are discouraged from sharing and swopping their food with one another.
- Mealtimes are relaxed opportunities for social interaction between children and the adults who care for them.
- Children go to the bathroom and wash their hands after lunch.
- Information for parents is displayed on the parent's notice board, including:
 - Ten Steps for Healthy Toddlers https://infantandtoddlerforum.org/media/upload/pdf-downloads/HR_toddler_booklet_green.pdf

This policy was adopted by Acorn Playgroup and Pre-school on 01 September 2023