



## 09 Early years practice procedures

### 09.8 Snack-times and mealtimes

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

We ask that no nuts, nut derivatives or food items that contain nuts are brought into the setting.

#### **Snack times**

- A healthy snack, such as suitably cut fruit or vegetable, need to be provided from home each day in a named container.
- In addition, preschool provide a selection of fruit for the children to try each day.
- Snack time is mid-morning and usually takes place at the tables, with one member of staff per table.
- The special helper/s for the day help to prepare the tables and cut the additional fruit / vegetable to be shared with the children.
- Fruit or raw vegetables, such as carrot or tomato, are offered in batons, with grapes being cut lengthways. Bananas and other foods are not cut as rounds, but are sliced to minimise a choking hazard.
- Children wash their hands before and after snack-time.
- Children have their water bottles from home, which can be topped up from our water dispenser if required, which is freely available throughout every session.
- Staff advise children when it is snack time but children are not made to leave their play if they do not want to have a snack.
- Staff join in conversation and encourage children's independence.

#### **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.
- Lunches are provided from home, with parent's encouraged to include a balanced selection of healthy food types to provide needed nutrients and energy to support their child's development.
- Children wash their hands before and after lunchtime.



- Staff have their lunch with the children and role-model healthy eating and best practice at all times, for example not drinking cans of fizzy drinks in front of the children.
- Children are given time to eat at their own pace and are not hurried to fit in with adults' tasks and breaks.
- Children are encouraged to eat their sandwiches, or alternative, first followed by vegetables / fruit before their yoghurt and other items.
- In order to protect children with food allergies or specific dietary requirements, children are discouraged from sharing and swapping their food with one another.
- Mealtimes are relaxed opportunities for social interaction between children and the adults who care for them.
- After lunch children are encouraged to tidy up after themselves and to pack their lunch boxes away.
- Children go to the bathroom and wash their hands after lunch
- Information for parents is shared online, including:
  - Ten Steps for Healthy Toddlers [https://infantandtoddlerforum.org/media/upload/pdf-downloads/HR\\_toddler\\_booklet\\_green.pdf](https://infantandtoddlerforum.org/media/upload/pdf-downloads/HR_toddler_booklet_green.pdf)