



03 Food safety and nutrition procedures

03.4 Meeting dietary requirements

Snack and mealtimes are an important part of the day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating and foods from other cultures. We aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs and preferences. We will follow strict rules in order to keep children safe where they have specific allergies and/or dietary requirements.

- ❖ Staff discuss and record children's dietary needs, allergies and any ethnic or cultural food preferences with their parents.
- ❖ If a child has a known food allergy, procedure 04.4 Allergies and food intolerance is followed.
- ❖ Staff record information about each child's dietary needs using information from the child's Family Information Form; parents sign the form to signify that it is correct.
- ❖ Up-to-date information about individual children's dietary needs is displayed so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed.
- ❖ We regularly consult with parents to ensure that our records of their children's dietary needs, including any allergies, are up-to-date. Parents sign the updated record to signify that it is correct.
- ❖ Staff ensure that children receive only food and drink that is consistent with their dietary needs and cultural or ethnic preferences, as well as their parent's wishes.
- ❖ The snack menu is displayed on the parent notice board for parents to view.
- ❖ Foods that contain any of 14 allergens identified by the FSA are identified on the snack menu. The 14 allergens are: **celery**, **cereals containing gluten** (such as wheat, barley and oats), **crustaceans** (such as prawns, crabs and lobsters), **eggs**, **fish**, **lupin**, **milk**, **molluscs** (such as mussels and oysters), **mustard**, **peanuts**, **sesame**, **soybeans**, **sulphur dioxide and sulphites** (if the sulphur dioxide and sulphites are at a concentration of more than ten parts per million) and **tree nuts** (such as almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, brazil nuts, cashews, pecans, pistachios and macadamia nuts).
- ❖ We have a 'no nut' policy in place and we are especially vigilant where we have a child who has a known allergy to nuts.
- ❖ In order to protect children with food allergies, we discourage children from sharing and swapping their food with one another.
- ❖ We provide nutritious food for our snack bar, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- ❖ We invite parents to provide fresh fruit, breadstick or dried fruit to contribute to the snack for the group.


- ❖ We include a variety of foods such as:
 - Cheese, milk, margarine
 - Cereals, bread, breadsticks or crackers
 - Fruit and vegetables
- ❖ Staff aim to include food diets from children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones.
- ❖ Through on-going discussion with parents and research reading by staff, staff obtain information about the dietary rules of the religious groups to which children and their parents belong, and of vegetarians and vegans, as well as about food allergies. Staff take account of this information when providing food and drink.
- ❖ Staff provide a vegetarian alternative when meat and fish are offered and make every effort to ensure Halal meat or Kosher food is available to children who require it.
- ❖ Where it is not possible to source and provide Halal meat or Kosher food, a vegetarian option is available; this will be discussed and agreed with parents at the time of the child's registration.
- ❖ All staff show sensitivity in providing for children's diets, allergies and cultural or ethnic food preferences. A child's diet or allergy is never used as a label for the child, they are not made to feel 'singled out' because of their diet, allergy or cultural/ethnic food preferences.
- ❖ We provide children with utensils that are appropriate for their ages and stages of development and that take account of the eating practices in their cultures.
- ❖ We provide opportunities to try new foods through cooking and to experience different cultural foods.
- ❖ Fresh drinking water is available throughout the day. Staff inform children how to obtain the drinking water and that they can ask for water at any time during the day.
- ❖ Children are provided with a choice of either whole pasteurised milk or water.
- ❖ Meal and snack times are organised as social occasions in which children and adults participate.
- ❖ We use snack and lunch times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food, drink and feeding themselves and selecting their names to put in the Munching Monster box once they are finished.

Fussy/faddy eating

- ❖ Children who are showing signs of 'fussy or faddy eating' are not forced to eat anything they do not want to.
- ❖ Staff recognise the signs that a child has had enough and remove uneaten food without comment.
- ❖ Children are not made to stay at the table after others have left if they refuse to eat certain items of food.

- ❖ Staff work in partnership with parents to support them with children who are showing signs of 'faddy or fussy eating' and sign post them to further advice, for example, How to Manage Simple Faddy Eating in Toddlers (Infant & Toddler Forum)

<https://infantandtoddlerforum.org/health-and-childcare-professionals/factsheets/>

This policy was adopted by	Abinger Common Nursery
On	March 2024
Date to be reviewed	March 2025
Signed on behalf of the provider	
Name of signatory	Mrs Emma Powell
Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)	Nursery Chair Person