

# **LITTLE WILLOWS PRE-SCHOOL**

## **FOOD AND DRINK POLICY**

Little Willows Pre-School is committed to providing healthy, nutritious, balanced and tasty food and drinks for children during our sessions. The manager and staff will make every effort to ensure that food and drink is safely prepared and sensitive to the dietary, religious and cultural requirements of all the children.

Before a child is admitted to the setting the setting obtains information about the child's dietary requirements, preferences and food allergies that the child has and any special health requirements. The setting records and act on information from parents and carers about a child's dietary needs.

The pre-school requires that the parents and carers complete the Registration Form, including information about any special dietary requirements or allergies the child suffers from. The manager and staff will ensure that food and drink offered to children takes account of this information so as to safeguard their health, and meet – as far as possible – their particular preferences.

The manager and staff are mindful of their responsibilities and obligations under the Food Safety Act 1990. The setting is registered with the local authority to provide food. All staff who either handle or prepare food are fully aware of, and comply with, regulations relating to food safety and hygiene and hold a current Food Handling Hygiene Certificate.

### **Ingredients and Preparation**

When preparing food and drink, staff will be mindful of the provisions of the Hygiene policy so as to ensure that the safety of staff and children is paramount. In addition to these provisions, staff will be careful to ensure both the safety of themselves and children when using sharp or dangerous equipment in food and drink preparation.

### **Healthy Eating**

The setting recognises the importance of healthy eating and a balanced and nutritious diet.

Each child's dietary requirements are ascertained before the child starts attending the setting. Any specific allergies or requirements will be displayed on a list in the staff notice board. It is the key person's responsibility to ensure these lists are kept up-to-date.

Children are provided with a choice of fresh fruit, vegetables or toast with milk or water, throughout the session.

No child will ever be forced to eat or drink something against their will and the withholding or granting of food and drink will never be used as either a punishment or reward.

## **Snack/Lunchtime**

Little Willows Pre-School realises that mealtimes should be a happy, social occasion for both children and staff, and we aim to make sure that children's knowledge, experience and relationships with food are always positive.

Children and adults wash their hands before eating. If a child is staying for lunch club they are requested to bring in a healthy packed lunch from home to eat at a specific time in a large group. Staff supervise the children to promote happy and social occasions during snack and lunchtimes.

## **Cultural and Religious Diversity**

Little Willows Pre-School are committed to embracing the cultural and religious diversity of the families who use our setting. The manager and staff will work with parents/carers to ensure that any particular dietary requirements are met.

The setting is also keen to help introduce children to different religious and cultural festivals and events through different types of food/drink sessions.

## **Guidelines for Mealtimes**

Individual dietary requirements are respected.

Staff set an example of good table manners

Cultural differences in eating habits are respected

Children will be encouraged to say 'Please' and 'Thank you' and to sit at the table

Quiet conversation is encouraged

Any child who does not want to eat will not be forced to eat

Children will not be forced to eat meals or finish everything on their plate

Children will be encouraged where reasonably possible, to wait until everybody is finished before leaving the table