

Jack and Jill Playgroup

Nutrition and Physical Activity - Policy and Practice

Jack and Jill Playgroup regard snack and meal times as an important part of the setting's session/day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about eating healthily and independence skills.

We have a named **PANCO** (Physical Activity and Nutrition Co-ordinator) who is responsible for co-ordinating our approach to nutrition, healthy eating and physical activity within the setting

To teach and promote healthy eating, we have several initiatives which include several visits throughout the term under the `Farm to Fork` directive by Tesco. In these sessions children are introduced to where food comes from, how it is grown and bought, cooked and produced and children have hands on experience of tasting, eating, preparing produce which includes a variety of fruits, vegetables, bread and cheeses from all around the world.

We have `Cooking Ted` an initiative from our local Children`s Centre to promote healthy eating and cooking with families. Our 3 bears are Jack, Andy and Jill and they have joined the setting to support young children and families to cook and eat well together. They take home a bear and a diary, cook with their families then share their recipes and experiences with us throughout the term.

It is important for children even of a young age to develop an understanding of what makes a healthy, balanced diet and enjoying eating and preparing foods with their families.

We have also included advice and support from Medway`s Food and Nutrition Support Programme working together with the Children`s Food Trust to develop the practice in our setting and keep our practice current.

At snack and meal times, we aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs.

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we find out from parents their children's dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies.
- Parents are on registering their child are shown the kitchen and given information on the range of snacks we provide the children. A basic weekly menu is also displayed on our outside and inside parent boards and on our website.
- We record information about each child's dietary needs in her/his registration record and parents sign the record to signify that it is correct.
- 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 up-dated record to signify that it is correct and is kept with their records.
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs in the snack room so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed. These are placed at the snack table and are also on each child`s place mat. A red placemat signifies a dietary need. A copy of this information is also kept in our registers.
- We implement systems to ensure that children receive only food and drink that is consistent with their dietary needs and preferences as well as their parents' wishes.
- We provide nutritious food at all meals and snacks, considering portion sizes and avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.

- We include a variety of foods including protein, dairy foods, grains, cereals and fruit and vegetables. Each snack session will include a choice of fruit. During the morning session the children will have a choice of cereals, toast with spreads, fruit etc. Afternoon snack consists of a varied menu of healthy snack choices fruit, vegetables, cheese, and yoghurt.
- We include foods from the diet of the children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones.
- We take care not to provide food containing nuts or nut products and are especially vigilant where we have a child who has a known allergy to nuts.
- We provide vegetarian/vegan alternatives.
- We require staff to show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. Staff do not use a child's diet or allergy as labels for the child or make a child feel singled out because of her/his diet or allergy.
- We organise meal and snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate.
- Children are encouraged to be independent in self-care with reminders to wash hands before meals.
- We use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and feeding themselves.
- 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 have fresh drinking water constantly available for the children. An appropriate covered jug and cups are kept at child level for easy access. Children are made aware of this verbally and visually and may ask for drinks.
- We inform parents who provide food for their children about the storage facilities available in the setting and suitable containers for food.
- In order to protect children with food allergies, we have rules about children sharing and swapping their food with one another.
- We provide training for staff in basic food hygiene and preparation so that staff are confident with handling and preparing food.

Packed lunches

When children are required to bring packed lunches, we:

- ensure perishable contents of packed lunches are refrigerated;
- Inform parents of our policy on healthy eating and give advice on what to provide, share literature and display literature regarding current guidelines and local and national nutrition guidance.
- inform parents of whether we have facilities to microwave cooked food brought from home;
- encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit, and milk based deserts such as yoghurt or crème fresh (petit filou). We provide the children with water, milk as a first choice, for those that do not drink milk or water an alternative is offered of weak sugar free squash.
- discourage packed lunch contents that consist largely of crisps, processed foods, sweet drinks and sweet products such as cakes or biscuits. We provide children bringing packed lunches with plates and cups and cutlery; and ensure staff sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.

- we remove unhealthy foods such as chocolate and high sugar drinks from lunches and replace with a healthy alternative informing parents of our reasons.

Physical Activity

- We provide all year round free flow to the outdoor physical play areas where children can exercise and play within a covered all weather area and access a large natural outdoor play park. Children will have regular robust physical exercise and play activities for a minimum of 1 hour per session.
- Sedentary activities will be kept to a minimum with children encouraged and supported to spend two thirds of their learning outside in a physical environment.

This policy includes all statutory framework requirements and was adopted at a meeting of the Jack and Jill Playgroup held on:

Signed on behalf of the management committee: _____

CHAIRPERSON