

Food and drink

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Health

Where children are provided with meals, snacks and drinks, they must be healthy, balanced and nutritious.

6.5 Food and Drink

Policy statement

GSC regard snack and mealtimes as an important part of the day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating. Staff promote healthy eating. At snack and mealtimes, aiming to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs.

Procedures

GSC follow these procedures to promote healthy eating in our settings.

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, parents are asked about their dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies. (See the Managing Children who are Sick, Infectious or with Allergies Policy.)
- GSC record information about each child's dietary needs in the Registration Form and parents sign the form to signify that it is correct. We also have a quick access book kept near the register which is updated regularly- this book explains a child's needs fully to staff.
- Although it is the parents responsibility to up-date their child's information, GSC staff will regularly ask parents if there are any changes 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.
- GSC display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed about them.
- Staff ensure that children receive only food and drink that is consistent with their dietary needs and preferences, as well as their parents' wishes.
- Children's preferences are incorporated in the planning of menus.
- Staff display the menus of meals/snacks for parents to view.
- Food we provide is nutritious, we avoid large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings. Our foods are from the four main food groups:
 - meat, fish and protein alternatives;
 - dairy foods;
 - grains, cereals and starch vegetables; and
 - fruit and vegetables.
- Staff will try to include foods from the diet of each of the children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones.
- Staff 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 ask parents also follow this policy
- Through discussion with parent's information is obtained and accounted for in GSC s provision of food and drink. For example, dietary rules of the religious groups to which children and their parents belong, and of vegetarians and vegans, as well as about food allergies. If a child requires specific foods GSC may ask the parent to provide this, for example - vegan cheese.

- An alternative food which we will try to offer to the child who cannot eat (for what-ever reason) the foods on the menu provided.
- Staff are sensitive to food related issues and will not use a child's diet or allergy as a label for the child, or make a child feel singled out because of her/his diet or allergy.
- At any mealtime/snack GSC encourage staff to join children, this supports our belief that mealtimes are social occasions in which children and adults participate.
- Staff use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and feeding themselves.
- Children are provided with utensils that are appropriate for their ages and stages of development and that take account of the eating practices in their cultures.
- Milk is served as well as fresh drinking water which is always available and easily accessible.
- GSC staff will not allow children to share and/or swap their food with one another, this furthermore protects children with any food allergies
- No child will be forced to eat.

Packed lunches

- For each child who brings a lunch box staff will send this home as it is at the end of the session therefore parents will be able to see the amount their child has eaten
- Parents are informed packed lunches will need to have an appropriate icepack in warm weather as GSC have limited refrigeration space.
- Parents know about GSC policy on healthy eating.
- GSC staff encourage parents to provide their children with healthy packed lunches. Consequently we ask parents to not include sweets and/ or nuts or too much cake and biscuits (these foods will be returned to the parents un-opened)
- Adults sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.

Preschool

GSC Preschool provides children with fresh drinking water constantly. However, children are still encouraged to bring their own labelled water bottles - like school. Children will enjoy a mid-morning snack designed to promote our policy on Healthy Eating. At lunch time staff support all children whether they have brought their own packed lunch or have a hot meal from the school kitchen when available. Children will have a further mid-afternoon snack before the session ends.

Breakfast Club / Holiday Club

Children are given the option of breakfast, designed to promote Healthy Eating. (Holiday Club - children will be offered a mid-morning snack).

Afterschool / Holiday Club

Children will be offered a drink and biscuit on arrival (Holiday club - mid-afternoon snack)
Staff will prepare a two-course snack - depending on availability there may be 'seconds'. As always children's choices will be adhered to and an alternative to any unwanted meal will be offered.

Legal framework

- Regulation (EC) 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Hygiene of Foodstuffs.

Further guidance

- Safer Food, Better Business (Food Standards Agency 2011)

This policy was adopted by	GSC Ltd
On	May 2021
Date to be reviewed	May 2022
Signed on behalf of the provider	Gaddesby School Community
Name of signatory	L Dunmore
Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)	Manager