St. Nicholas
Nursery & Preschool

MEETING DIETARY REQUIREMENTS, including allergies and food intolerances POLICY

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. We aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs and preferences.

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 Allergies and food intolerance is followed.

Staff record information about each child's dietary needs in the individual child's registration 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.

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 menus of meal and snacks are made available for parents to view. Foods that contain any food allergens are identified.

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.

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.

Meal and snack times are organised as social occasions.

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/

Allergies and food intolerance

When a child starts at the setting, parents are asked if their child has any known allergies or food intolerance. This information is recorded on the registration form.

If a child has an allergy or food intolerance, Generic risk assessment form is completed with the following information:

- the risk identified – the allergen (i.e. the substance, material or living creature the child is allergic to such as nuts, eggs, bee stings, cats etc.)

- the level of risk, taking into consideration the likelihood of the child coming into contact with the allergen

- control measures, such as prevention from contact with the allergen

- review measures

- Health care plan form must be completed with:

- the nature of the reaction e.g. anaphylactic shock reaction, including rash, reddening of skin, swelling, breathing problems etc.

- managing allergic reactions, medication used and method (e.g. Epipen)

- The child's name is added to the Dietary Requirements list.

- A copy of the risk assessment and health care plan is kept in the child's personal file and is shared with all staff. This is then summarised and passed to kitchen personnel.

- Parents show staff how to administer medication in the event of an allergic reaction.

- No nuts or nut products are used within the setting.

- Parents are made aware, so that no nut or nut products are accidentally brought in.

- Any foods containing food allergens are identified on children's menus.

Oral Medication

- Oral medication must be prescribed or have manufacturer's instructions written on them.

- Staff must be provided with clear instructions for administering such medication.

- All risk assessment procedures are adhered to for the correct storage and administration of the medication.

- The setting must have the parents' prior written consent. Consent is kept on file.

For other life-saving medication and invasive treatments please refer to Administration of medicine.

This policy was reviewed by Anjana Shah in September 2026. Date of next review will be in September 2027.