

EYFS: 3.48 - 3.50

At **Sawston Nursery**, we believe that mealtimes should be happy, social occasions for children and staff alike. We promote shared, enjoyable positive interactions at these times.

We are committed to offering children healthy, nutritious, and balanced meals and snacks, which meet individual needs and requirements.

We ensure that:

- A balanced and healthy menu is provided for children attending a full day at the nursery.
- Menus are planned in advance and in line with guidance from the Food for Life Framework. These are rotated regularly and reflect cultural diversity and variation. These are displayed for parents to view.
- We provide nutritious food at all snack and mealtimes, avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar, salt and artificial additives, preservatives, and colourings.
- Menus include at least **5** servings of fresh fruit and vegetables per day.
- Only milk and water are provided as drinks to promote oral health. Fresh drinking water is always available and accessible. It is frequently offered to children and babies and intake is monitored. In hot weather staff will encourage children to drink more water to keep them hydrated.
- Individual dietary requirements are respected. We gather information from parents regarding their children's dietary needs, including any special dietary requirements, preferences, and food allergies that a child has and any special health requirements before a child starts or joins the nursery. Where appropriate, we will carry out a risk assessment in the case of allergies and work alongside parents to put into place an individual dietary plan for their child. We use red cards on the back of a child's chair during the mealtimes, so staff are aware the child has dietary requirements.
- Where possible the Room Leader or Deputy Room Leader will serve food at mealtimes. When this is not possible the most senior late shift staff member should take responsibility for serving.
- Children with specific dietary requirements **MUST** be served their food before the other children in the room. **If this instruction is not carried out by staff, it could lead to disciplinary action.**

- Sawston Nursery is a 'Nut Free Zone', This means no food products containing nuts are brought into the building.
- 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 nut.
- We realise that many foods are labelled as having traces of nut or cannot guarantee nut free, which can be difficult to avoid. However, we do our best to ensure that food given to the children does not include nuts.
- We give careful consideration to seating to avoid cross contamination of food from child to child. Therefore, children with dietary requirements should be seated on a separate table. An adult will sit with children during meals to ensure safety and minimise risks. Where appropriate, age/stage discussions will also take place with all children about allergies and potential risks to make them aware of the dangers of sharing certain foods.
- Staff show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. They do 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.
- Staff set a good example and eat with the children and show good table manners. Meal and snack times are organised so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate in small groups. During meals and snack times children are encouraged to use their manners and say 'please' and 'thank you' and conversation is encouraged.
- Staff use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink, and feeding themselves.
- Staff support children to make healthy choices and understand the need for healthy eating.
- Where possible we provide foods from the diet of each of the children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones.
- Cultural differences in eating habits are respected.
- Any child who shows signs of distress at being faced with a meal he/she does not like will have his/her food removed without any fuss. If a child does not finish his/her first course, he/she will still be given a helping of dessert.
- Children not on special diets are encouraged to eat a small piece of everything.
- Children who refuse to eat at the mealtime are offered food later in the day.
- Children are given time to eat at their own pace and not rushed.

- Quantities offered take account of the ages of the children being catered for in line with recommended portion sizes for babies and young children.
- We promote positive attitudes to healthy eating through play opportunities and discussions.
- The nursery provides parents with daily written records of feeding routines for all children.
- No child is ever left alone when eating/drinking to minimise the risk of choking.
- When children have finished eating, staff must ensure they have been cleaned with a warm flannel, removing any food debris.
- A change of clothes should be carried out immediately if a child has spilt food or a drink on themselves.
- Cloth bibs must be changed immediately after eating and when they become wet during the day.
- We do not allow parents to bring in cakes on special occasions, but we do allow party balloons and stickers to be sent to nursery with your child.
- Nursery staff will sing happy birthday to your child to celebrate their special day.
- All staff who prepare and handle food are competent to do so and receive training in food hygiene which is updated every three years.
- In the very unlikely event of any food poisoning affecting two or more children on the premises, whether or not this may arise from food offered at the nursery, we will inform Ofsted as soon as reasonably practical and in all cases within 14 days. We will also inform the relevant health agencies and follow any advice given.
- We do not provide packed lunches for children in the Nursery.

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
October 2023	T. Spencer	October 2024