



Menus and Food

A menu for the day will be displayed on the notice board, and uploaded onto the EyLog system, outlining what the children will be eating, this may be subject to change. We will be encouraging children to enjoy a variety of eating experiences and we would value your ideas in updating the menu regularly. The nursery strives to offer children the chance to enjoy food from a wide range of cuisines. Respect for any cultural preferences or special dietary requirements will be considered and adhered to where possible.

The nursery will work closely with our catering team where possible to cater for children with special diets.

If it is impossible to provide a certain diet we will discuss this with parents and discuss ways in which we can resolve them.

Water will be available throughout the day. Drinks will also be available at Breakfast, Lunchtime and snack time. Breakfast is served within the nursery between 8.30am and 9.30am. The children will also be given an afternoon snack at around 3.30pm.

Any children attending afternoon session at 1.00pm will have needed to have eaten prior to nursery arrival.

The nursery must inform Ofsted of any food poisoning affecting two or more children within the nursery.

Healthy Eating Policy

Nursery staff will promote a healthy eating regime within the setting. Children within the setting will be encouraged to eat healthily throughout the day and menus will be devised ensuring healthy and cultural variations are available to the children. Meals provided will be nutritionally balanced and will provide 4 portions of fruit or vegetables out of the recommended 5 daily portions.

Parents/ carers will be encouraged to provide a nutritionally balanced packed lunch for their child if necessary.

Children will be provided with a drink of either, water, or milk at breakfast, dinner and snack times.

Children will be offered a drink of milk at least once a day and water is available freely throughout the day and is easily accessible for the children.

Mealtimes and serving of snack policy

Meal times and serving of the snacks should be sociable, relaxing and enjoyable to both children and adults. Children learn so many social skills and have a great opportunity to try new tastes and foods, when sharing the experience with other children.

‘MEALTIMES MUST BE WELL THOUGHT OUT AND NOT JUST ANOTHER THING TO GET THROUGH AS PART OF THE DAYS ROUTINE’.

We need to consider many points prior to the serving of the food and work as a team to ensure mealtimes are always a positive experience.

1) Preparing the children

Children need to tidy up and get ready for mealtimes, children need to be supervised with toileting and hand washing, and babies must have a hygiene routine. Also a quiet time is advisable prior to going to the table, maybe to discuss what is going to happen next or to talk about the food to be offered,

2) Area where the food is to be served

This should be cleared of toys, in case of accidents. There must be plenty of space around the table for the children or adult to move. Make sure there are no obstacles close to the chairs as children can lose their balance. Have the tables spaced out.

3) Furniture

All furniture should be child size related. It is advisable to have smaller tables rather than larger tables of children. The chairs should fit comfortably under the table, making sure each child does not sit with a table leg between their legs. As an adult, please don't loom over the table.

4) Children should assist

Children should be involved in the setting of the table, putting out place mats, cutlery, beakers, water jugs etc. This can be a learning time as they are matching 1-1 cutlery, counting number of children to chairs, other concepts should be – What is heavy and light.

Each table will have their own bowls of food that are to be dished up by the children, with some support from the adult when required.

5) Keeping clean

Children need to be protected from spills and food. It may be helpful to push up the sleeves of jumpers.

Younger children will need a bib at meal times. We must remember the feeling we all get when we have spilled food on ourselves and how self-conscious we feel about it.

Clear any spillages on the table away immediately. If a child has food spillage on their clothes, you could offer clean clothes after the meal. A child or a parent could feel embarrassed if in 'food splattered clothing'.

6) The Staff's Role

A member of staff should set a good example, by keeping the noise level at an appropriate sound, so quiet conversation can be used.

The staff's role is to introduce and help serve food to the children.

To participate in listening to the child's likes and dislikes, encouraging each child to try new foods. If a member of staff feels that the child has not had enough food, then encourage the child to eat a little more or offer the child a vegetarian alternative. No child should be hungry or thirsty at Little Professors Nursery.

Children should sit at the table with their key groups, this allows staff the opportunity to talk to their children during meal times, and allow keyworkers the opportunity to get to know their children's eating habits.

If a keyworker only has a very small group of children then it might be nice for the child/children to join another group, as this will allow the child the opportunity to join in and eat with their peers.

7) Choice of foods

If children find eating food in their whole form difficult, could the staff cut them into small thin strips before serving. All food must be served attractively and not always mashed up. It is nice for foods to be kept in separate serving dishes, so each child can identify new foods.

Children should make their own choices and even serve themselves where possible. Please remember a child is not expected to clear their plate, you should 'respect' a child when they say that they have had enough...

Remember a child's appetite may vary from day to day too.

8) Manners

It is never too early to encourage good table manners; these will stay with a child and must be a big part of mealtimes.

Some ideas we should incorporate are:

- We should always encourage 'Please and Thank you'
- Under no circumstances should mealtimes become a battle ground
- No nagging under any circumstances
- Always treat each child with respect and listen to what is said. Each child's point of view is important.
- Always ask a child, don't presume you know what they want. You may know what the child said yesterday, but today it may be a different answer. We should go on today's answer, not yesterday's.
- When serving a meal, make sure cutlery is set out correctly for the child to use. Do not put cutlery on the plate and hand it to the child.
It is nice to invite a child to come and join you at a table too,
- Communication and language should be low pitched and respectful,
- Talking with food in the mouth is just bad manners, but also a safety concern,
- It is impolite to eat noisily or slurp food,

- Food should be brought up to the mouth rather than the child bending over and shovelling the food in.
- Encourage the child to pass objects to each other rather than stretch across,
- When a child finishes their meal, encourage a child to put their knife and fork together on their plate in front of them, as far as possible the child should be encouraged to wait for others to finish (within reason).
- Do not make a fuss or threaten child if they haven't finished their food. Show a child how to place food to the side of the plate, along with the presentation of the knife and fork. It shows the course is complete.
- At the end of the meal the child should be encouraged to say 'Thank You' for the food and ask to leave the table.

Mealtime policy – staff

Drinks

There are facilities within the nursery for staff to make themselves a hot drink., and take them into the playrooms where simple safety rules must apply:

- Hot drinks are only allowed into the play rooms when the children are sitting down
- All hot drinks to be put into secure thermal mugs.
- Hot drinks are to be kept at a safe height away from all children
- Staff must go to their drinks, and not sit at the table, on the floor, computer etc.
- Never carry the drink around

We would encourage staff to drink water whilst in the play rooms, as we are trying to promote healthy eating to our children we would discourage staff from drinking squash, or fizzy pop within the playroom.

Meals

- Staff must provide their own lunch. This can either be cold, or if you would prefer a hot meal, microwaves are available. These are to be eaten during allocated break times or with the children during their dinner time.
- Staff may also have snacks during the day. Please make sure that your snack time corresponds with the children's snack time, and ensure that your snacks are healthy.
- Please do not eat crisps, sweets or any other unhealthy snack in front of the children.
- Please be conscious that the food you eat will not affect a child with any kind of intolerance.