

Refreshments Policy

All children over 18 months are provided with a cooked lunch of completely fresh food from a very local restaurant called 'Royal Buffet', who have experience and knowledge around providing healthy, balanced meals for young children and adhere to the Government Eat Better, Start Better Guidelines. **Our nursery lunches are vegetarian based.** The lunches provide a balance of nutrients, including protein, which is found in in the form of cheese, beans, pulses, lentils, soya, Quorn and other plant-based proteins. We find that the provision of vegetarian lunches is more inclusive to all children, a healthy option and is more environmentally friendly than meat- based meals. **Children are welcome to bring foods that contain meat for tea.** Children under 18 months bring in their own lunch and tea as their nutritional needs vary so much depending on their age and stage of development. Younger children's lunches can be heated up in order to provide a substantial cooked meal for them. All children are required to bring in their tea from home. The nursery advises parents to bring in healthy meals/ snacks for the children so that children have a balanced diet, full of the essential nutrients required for healthy growth. A nutritional, healthy, balanced diet helps children to play productively, sleep well and also helps them to be emotionally and physically healthy.

We can provide you with guidance on food that can be brought from home.

We ask parents to kindly donate snacks for mid-morning and mid-afternoon time. Snacks can be fresh fruit or any other healthy snack. Each room has their own fruit bowl.

Children have access to water and milk throughout the day. We ask that parents bring in a water beaker for the child which will be left at the nursery for everyday use.

When children join the nursery, parents are required to provide information regarding food allergies or special dietary requirements relating to their child. It is important that this information is shared from the onset and that the information is clear. We ask that if you believe your child to have a food intolerance or any type of allergy that you obtain verification of this from your G.P. We can then be absolutely clear about what your child can and cannot have at nursery.

If children are having a food tasting session, as part of a theme or celebrating a festival and experiencing new foods, then the nursery will ensure that permission has been sought on the parental consent form for food tasting, which is usually completed when the child starts nursery.

Unfortunately we are unable to accept homemade food at nursery, for the children's consumption, as we are required to check the written ingredients on food packaging in accordance with children that have food intolerances or allergies.

Please do not provide your child with nuts for their lunch or tea. It is recommended that children under three years old do not eat nuts as they can choke on them. Also, other children in the setting may have nut intolerances or nut allergies, therefore we would like to minimise the risk to these children coming into contact with nuts (please refer to our separate nut policy found on our website). Children under 12 months are not permitted to bring any fruits that are considered to be a choking hazard for babies, for example, whole apples or oranges.

Please note that if children do not finish any food, at nursery and the packaging has been opened, then it will be disposed of, due to hygiene and health reasons.

Thank you for your attention to this policy. If you have any comments regarding anything included here, we will value your input. Please speak to your child's key person or the nursery manager. Many thanks.