



# Regent House Preschool

---

## Menu Planning & Provision of Food and Drink (Healthy Eating and Drinking) Policy

At Regent House Preschool we believe balanced nutrition is essential for good health and effective teaching and learning. Settings play an important role in establishing and maintaining life-long healthy eating and drinking habits. At Regent House Preschool all messages about food and drinks should be consistent and positive in approach.

In addition to promoting healthy eating through snacks, drinks, and special occasions, the Preschool emphasises the many aspects of learning, (in particular, Personal, Social and Emotional Development) which evolve through eating together at snack and lunch times.

Snack will be provided by Regent House Preschool from the academic year 2023 - 2024. Parents/Carers will be required to provide a packed lunch.

### Aims

- To encourage the desire to make a healthy choice.
- To involve the whole community in developing and maintaining healthy eating and drinking habits.
- To have a pleasant and sociable dining experience which enhances the social development of all children.
- To encourage foods that are rich in vitamins, iron, calcium.
- To encourage a balanced diet.
- To offer milk and water to drink.
- To encourage fluid intake with an easily accessible water supply throughout the day.
- To take into account and accommodate dietary requirements.
- To ensure high standards of hygiene amongst the children.
- To develop healthy eating habits that will last a lifetime.
- To integrate healthy eating and drinking habits in all aspects of Preschool life.

### Statement of Intent

Regent House Preschool will promote healthy eating at all times, ensuring the children are aware of the need to be conscientious about their choices of food. We

aim to educate the children through a child-friendly method appropriate of age. Our children will also be educated to understand the importance of daily exercise, promoting healthy bodies and helping them to carry this through into their adulthood.

### **Procedures**

- Regent House Preschool will therefore ensure its commitment to provide snacks that are healthy, nutritious and help to provide children with the energy and nutrients they need.
- Before the child attends the Preschool, Management will discuss with Parents/Carers the child's dietary needs, including any allergies and make appropriate arrangements to meet these.
- Menus are planned in advance and food offered is fresh, wholesome and balanced.
- A diet encompassing food from a range of cultures ensures that children from all backgrounds encounter familiar tastes and that all children have the opportunity to try unfamiliar foods.
- The dietary rules of religious groups and also of vegetarians / vegans are known and met in the appropriate ways.
- Water is always available.
- Menus are shared with Parents/Carers.

### **Preparing & Serving Food**

At Regent House Preschool we believe that all messages about nutrition need to be consistent. Food is ordered, stored and prepared by a general assistant who is employed by the Education Authority for Regent House Preparatory Department. Food and drinks are prepared and stored according to Environmental Health guidance. Individual dietary needs are catered for within the framework of nutritional standards. Children are encouraged to drink water or milk with snack. Portion sizes are according to guidelines.

### **Breakfast**

Recognising parental responsibility and school/Parent/Carer partnership, children are encouraged to have breakfast before leaving home. This will be done through discussion at snack time and the Personal, Social and Emotional curricular area.

### **Snack**

All children are encouraged to participate in the snack routine and the drinks and snacks provided comply with the nutritional information contained within 'Nutrition Matters for the Early Years.' Milk or water is on offer at snack time. A selection of healthy options is offered for snack. These include fresh fruit / vegetables / a variety of breads / crackers / cheese / yoghurt. Parents/Carers will receive a menu of snacks on offer.

A buffet-type snack is offered daily for all children in the Preschool. Children enjoy a range of healthy options.

Some examples are as follows:

- \* Fruit (daily)
- \* Brioche
- \* Small pancakes
- \* Rice Cakes

\* Carrot sticks

- Children are given a choice of water or milk. Fizzy drinks and juices are not routinely offered.
- Where possible snacks are sugar free, to avoid causing damage to teeth.
- Children are encouraged to serve themselves at snack time, such as by pouring their own drink, buttering their toast, clearing away their cup and plate, thereby developing and reinforcing a range of self-help and independence skills.

### **Celebrations**

To celebrate their birthday, children will be permitted to bring in a nut-free cake or buns to share with the class at snack time. If you do not wish for your child to be given cake/treats brought into the setting for special occasions, please contact the Preschool Manager (Miss C. Auld) prior to your child commencing Regent House Preschool.

### **Drinks**

All children and staff have free access to water throughout the day. Children are encouraged to bring in their own water bottles and these can be refilled throughout the session as required.

### **Sweets**

Parents/Carers and children are asked not to bring or send sweets into school.

### **Teaching and Learning**

Staff will sit with children during mealtimes to provide a good role model, encourage good manners and lead conversation. Food and cooking activities are used in a variety of ways to widen the children's experience as they are given the opportunity to touch, taste, smell and feel a variety of foods. A healthy lifestyle is promoted through a variety of activities including active play, cookery, stories, music etc.

### **Parental involvement**

A copy of the Healthy Eating and Drinking Policy can be found on the school's website and is available from the School Office on request.

### **Equal Opportunities**

The healthy eating and drinking systems and strategies in our Preschool will be accessible to all children and staff regardless of race, gender or Special Educational Need.

### **Health and Safety**

Food will be stored according to instructions on packaging and using common sense. Advice will be sought from the Environmental Health Agency if necessary.

### **Allergy/Intolerance Procedures**

We follow the procedures below to promote health & safety for all children at Regent House Preschool:

- Before a child commences Preschool, Parents/Carers must provide details on their child's individual dietary needs, including any allergies and intolerances (if there are any). This is recorded in the Pupil Profile Booklet. In partnership with the child's Parents/Carers we will create an Individual Care Plan. We also ask Parents/Carers to advise us of changes to their child's dietary needs throughout the year.
- We display information (e.g. behind a closed door) about individual children's dietary needs to ensure all staff, students and volunteers are fully informed about allergies/intolerances.
- We aim to ensure that children receive only food and drinks that are consistent with their dietary needs and preferences as well as the wishes of their Parents/Carers.
- 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 nuts. We ask Parents/Carers not to provide packed lunches/food for special occasions that include nuts or nut products (e.g. snack bars, peanut butter, pesto, kiwi, coconut, Nutella) to avoid exposure to nuts in another child's lunch).
- In order to protect children with food allergies/intolerances, we discourage children from sharing and swapping their food with one another.

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

The Preschool staff, in conjunction with the general assistant will monitor provision for healthy eating and drinking.

This policy will be reviewed and monitored in line with the Preschool's policy review schedule.

Reviewed:

16/05/23 - 23/08/23

Approved by BOG:

21/09/23