**The Berrypatch Nursery and Out of school club**

Food and nutrition policy.

This policy is for all children attending The Berrypatch – There is a specific section for children under 2

We have a statutory duty as part of The Early Years Foundation stage safeguarding and welfare requirements to ensure that the snacks and drinks we provide are healthy, balanced and nutritious.

This policy has been written using information , advice and guidance from The Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition guidance April 2025.

We do not provide meals at The Berrypatch , therefore it is the responsibility of the parent to provide meals for their children eg a packed lunch. Any cultural or dietary preferences can be catered for by parents. In order to keep all children and staff safe we ask parents to inform us if any of the main allergens as below are present in the food that is sent in :

Main allergens

• celery

• cereals containing gluten (such as wheat, barley and oats and some flours)

• crustaceans (such as prawns, crabs and lobsters)

• eggs

• fish

• lupin (such as bread made using lupin seeds)

• milk

• molluscs (such as mussels and oysters)

• mustard

• peanuts

• sesame

• soybeans

• sulphur dioxide and sulphites (sometimes found in dried fruits and fruit juices)

• tree nuts (such as almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, brazil nuts, cashews, pecans,

pistachios and macadamia nuts).

Staff will obtain information from parents/carers to whether their child has any allergies or intolerances before the child starts the setting. Parents are asked to keep staff updated on any changes to their child’s dietary needs.

We ask that parents follow our healthy, balanced and nutritious policy when they are sending in food for their child. Examples of foods are given in the welcome pack and are available on our website. It is our aim to educate parents and support them in providing their child with a nutritious diet. We expose children to different foods via cooking with them , trying new and different foods and discussing where the food comes from . This is done taking into account children’s allergies, intolerances, cultural preferences.

Parents are asked to think about perishable items that should be kept cool. They can be packed in insulated sealed bags with ice packs to maintain their freshness.If ice packs are unavailable, the ‘4-hour rule’ can be applied ,food can be stored outside of chilled conditions for up to 4 hours.

We do not permit the following for children :

Fizzy drinks

Whole nuts

Eating area- There are designated areas of each room where children will eat ,where there are minimal distractions . Children and staff will eat together as we recognise that mealtimes are important social interactions. Staff will face children so that they can quickly spot any allergic reactions or choking. Children Under 2 will be seated in appropriate sized highchairs.

Allergies -If a child has a known allergy then parents will be required to complete an allergy action plan from The British Society for Allergy & Clinical Immunology with the child’s key person before they start at the setting or as soon as the allergy is confirmed . This information will be displayed in the kitchen and shared with all staff across the setting.

All staff have received information about allergies and the symptoms to be aware of and treatment of Anaphylaxis from the NHS guidance which can be found here:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/anaphylaxis/>

The child’s key person will be responsible for checking each child’s food and that it meets their dietary requirements. In the event of the key persons absence the Manager or Deputy Manager will be responsible for this.

Choking – All staff, as part of their Paediatric first aid training , know what to do in the event of a child choking. In addition to this staff are refreshed yearly with information with regards to the response and treatment of a choking child. Any incidents of choking are recorded and shared with parents. Such records are reviewed after the event and periodically to address any preventable issues.

Snacks are provided by The Berrypatch and are prepared by staff who have completed food hygiene training ( refreshed every 3 years) . Snacks include toast, cereal, fruit, rice cakes, breadsticks. Water and semi skimmed cows milk is provided for children by The Berrypatch.

Staff will follow the Food Standards agency guidance on ‘How to prepare food safely’ which is available here and is also displayed in both kitchens.It is also shared with parents.

<https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/Early%20Years%20Choking%20Hazards%20Poster_English.pdf>

Birthdays and celebrations -If parents would like to send in food items to celebrate we do ask that they check with staff first so that we can ensure any allergies, intolerances, dietary requirements are still met. We would welcome food alternatives such as stickers, bubbles etc

**Information specific to children under 2**

Parents/carers are required to send meals/milk into the nursery for staff to give to the children. Before starting parents are given an information pack which gives advice on:

Milk preparation

Weaning

Choking hazards

Providing a balanced diet

Commercial baby foods

**Weaning** – Staff will work alongside parents to established what stage of weaning the child is at. Parents are guided to <https://www.nhs.uk/start-for-life/baby/weaning/> which provides lots of information about weaning babies.

Staff have also received the same information and discussions will be had with parents on their child’s individual needs regardless of age.

When providing children’s food/ milk parents must clearly label the containers with their child’s name. The food/milk will be reheated using a microwave, where needed. Staff will then check the temperature of the food using a probe.

If preferred, a cold packed lunch can be provided, which also needs to be clearly labelled with the childs name.

**Commercial baby food and drink-**We do not encourage the use of commercial baby foods eg jars, pouches as research has shown that these can have very low nutritional value, high sugar content and contain a lot of water. However we do appreciate that such products are very convenient for busy families and we are happy if they are provided for your child occasionally.