



Nutrition and Mealtimes

EYFS: 3.47 – 3.49

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

Children at nursery are very busy and active so we ensure they eat every two hours to maintain their energy levels.

Breakfast 8-9am – cereal, egg, cheese, toast with selection of spreads

Snack 10am – fresh fruit

Lunch 11.45am - cooked from menu

Snack 2pm – fresh fruit

Tea 4pm – cooked from menu

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

At the Arc, we have our own in-house chef and all meals are prepared on site in our own kitchen, which has an open hatch to the Rainbow Room. Children are able to see the chef prepare the meals and occasionally help by cutting up fruits and peeling potatoes.

We will ensure that:

- Children receive a balanced and healthy breakfast, midday meal, tea and two daily snacks. We avoid using large quantities of fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives are never added to meals.
- Menus are planned in advance, rotated regularly and reflect a nutritious balance and variation.
- Menus include at least 5 servings of fresh fruit and vegetables per day
- The menu has been researched using the Caroline Walker trust and Nutrition matters for the early year's guidance.
- Children are also involved in menu planning by asking the children what they like and dislike, using photos of food. Their feedback is taken into account when planning the menu.
- Staff support young children with feeding while older children are encouraged to be independent by serving themselves at the tables and tidying up after themselves.
- Fresh drinking water is always available and accessible. The Rainbow Room has a water dispenser for children to help themselves while the babies have cups on a low shelves which is easy accessible for them. Young babies are frequently offered drink; 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 any special dietary requirements, regarding food allergies, cultural requirement.
- We give careful consideration to seating to avoid cross contamination of food from child to child. An adult will always be seated 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
- 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 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 under 3 years.
- No child is ever left alone when eating/drinking to minimise the risk of choking.
- We celebrate special occasions such as birthdays and parents are allowed to bring cakes on special occasions but these must be shop brought with the ingredients listed. These will be given at mealtimes to prevent tooth decay and not spoil the child's appetite.
- All staff who prepare and handle food are competent to do so and receive training in food hygiene.
- In the very unlikely event of any food poisoning affecting two or more children on the premises, 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.

Guidance:

Nutrition matters for the early years HPA

Caroline Walker Trust publications –Eat Well for Under-5's in Child Care

Food Standards Agency publications

Reviewed June 2015