



Food and Nutrition Procedures

We follow these procedures to promote healthy eating in our setting.

- Our food and Hygiene Officer (**Nicola Sackley**) is the person in charge and the person responsible for ensuring food preparation is up to the highest standard by all staff; understands the principles of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) as it applies to our business. This is set out in Safer Food, Better Business (Food standard Agency 2011). The basis for this is risk assessment of the purchase, storage, preparation and serving of food to prevent growth of bacteria and food contamination.
- All staff follow the guidelines of Safer Food, Better Business.
- All staff involved in the preparation and handling of food have received training in food hygiene.
- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we ask their parents about their dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies. (See the Managing Children who are Sick, Infectious or with Allergies Policy.)
- We record information about each child's dietary needs in her/his registration form and parents sign the form to signify that it is correct.
- We regularly consult with parents to ensure that our records of their children's dietary needs - including any allergies - are up-to-date. Parents sign the up-dated record to signify that it is correct.
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed about them.
- We implement systems to ensure that children receive only food and drink, that is consistent with their dietary needs and preferences as well as their parents' wishes.
- The ingredients used in snacks can be provided if required.
- We provide nutritious food at all snack times, avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- We include foods from the diet of each of the children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones.
- 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.
- Through discussion with parents and research reading, we obtain information about the dietary rules of the religious groups, to which children and their parents belong, and of vegetarians and vegans, as well as about food allergies. We take account of this information in the provision of food and drinks.
- We show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. We 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.
- We organise lunch time and snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate.
- We use lunch and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and feeding themselves.
- We provide children with utensils which are appropriate for their ages and stages of development and take account of the eating practices in their cultures.
- We have fresh drinking water constantly available for the children. Children bring in their own water bottles which also helps with their independence.

Initial Steps Ltd

16 Martins Lane, Brants Bridge, Bracknell, Berkshire, RG12 9EN
Company No. 08892649

- We inform parents who provide food for their children about the storage facilities available in our setting.
- We give parents who provide food for their children information about suitable containers for food.
- In order to protect children with food allergies, we discourage children from sharing and swapping their food with one another.
- For young children who drink milk, we provide pasteurised milk. Although we slowly introduce semi-skimmed milk from the age of two years.
- Food is stored at correct temperature (37 degrees) and is checked daily to ensure it is in date and not subject to contamination by pests, rodents or mould.
- Packed lunches are stored in a cool place; un-refrigerated food is served to children within 4 hours of preparation at home.
- Food preparation areas are cleaned before use and well as after use.
- There are separate facilities for hand-washing and for washing up.
- All surfaces are clean and non-porous.
- All utensils, crockery etc are clean and stored appropriately.
- Waste food is disposed of daily.
- Cleaning materials and other dangerous materials are stored out of children's reach.
- Children do not have unsupervised access to the kitchen.
- Staff's own food or drink should be kept in separate designated area of the fridge; where possible.

Fussy/Faddy Eating

- Children who are showing signs of 'fussy or faddy eating' are not forced to eat anything they do not want to.
- Staff recognise the signs that a child has had enough and remove uneaten food without comment.
- Children are not made to stay at the table after others have left if they refuse to eat certain items of food.
- Staff work in partnership with parents to support them with children who are showing signs of 'faddy or fussy eating' and sign post them to further advice, for example, How to Manage Simple Faddy Eating in Toddlers (Infant & Toddler Forum) <https://infantandtoddlerforum.org/health-and-childcare-professionals/factsheets>

Packed Lunches

Children are required to bring packed lunches in our setting and we:

- Ensure perishable contents of packed lunches are refrigerated or contain an ice pack to keep food cool;
- Inform parents of our policy on healthy eating;
- Encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit, and milk based deserts such as yoghurt or crème fraiche where we can only provide cold food from home. We discourage sweet drinks and can provide children with water or milk;
- Discourage packed lunch contents that consist largely of crisps, processed foods, sweet drinks and sweet products such as cakes or biscuits. We reserve the right to return this food to the parent as a last resort;
- We provide children bringing packed lunches with plates and cups.
- We ensure staff sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.

Initial Steps Ltd

16 Martins Lane, Brants Bridge, Bracknell, Berkshire, RG12 9EN
Company No. 08892649

Birthdays

- Children may share a special snack i.e. cakes or chocolate on his/her birthday. (We do not allow sweets). If a parent is not happy for their child to accept a gift/snack then we ask them to let us know. Party invitations may be distributed at school, but we ask that it is done discreetly as some children can get upset if they have not been invited.

Food for play and cooking activities

Some parents and staff may have strong views about food being used for play. It is important to be sensitive to these issues. For example, children who are Muslim, Jewish, Rastafarian, or who are vegetarian, should not be given any food to play with that contains animal products (Gelatine). Parents' views should be sought on this. In some cases, it is not appropriate to use food for play at all, particularly in times of austerity.

- Food for play may include dough, corn flour, pasta, rice, food colourings/flavourings.
- Jelly (including jelly cubes) is not used for play.
- Food for play is risk assessed against the 14 allergens referred and is included in the written risk assessment undertaken for children with specific allergies.
- Staff are constantly alert to the potential hazards of food play, in particular choking hazards and signs of previously undetected allergies.
- Pulses are not recommended as they can be poisonous when raw or may choke.
- Dried food that is used for play should be kept away from food used for cooking.
- Foods that are cooked and used for play, such as dough, have a limited shelf life.
- Cornflour is always mixed with water before given for play.
- Cornflower and cooked pasta are discarded after an activity; high risk of bacteria forming.
- Utensils used for play food are washed thoroughly after use.

Children's cooking activities

- Before undertaking any cooking activity with children, members of staff should check for allergies and intolerances by checking children's records.
- Children are taught basic hygiene skills such as the need to wash hands thoroughly before handling food, and again after going to the toilet, blowing their nose or coughing.
- The area to be used for cooking is cleaned; a plastic tablecloth is advised.
- Children are encouraged to wear aprons for cooking.
- Utensils provided are for children to use only when cooking, including chopping/rolling boards, bowls, wooden spoons, jugs, and are stored in the kitchen.
- Members of staff encourage children to handle food in a hygienic manner.
- Food ready for cooking or cooling is not left uncovered.
- Cooked food to go home is put in a paper food bag and refrigerated until home time.
- Food play activities are suspended during outbreaks of illness.

Initial Steps Ltd

16 Martins Lane, Brants Bridge, Bracknell, Berkshire, RG12 9EN
Company No. 08892649

Legal Framework

Regulations (EC) 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Hygiene of foodstuffs

Further Guidance

Safer Food, Better Business (Food Standards Agency 2011)

Initial Steps Ltd

16 Martins Lane, Brants Bridge, Bracknell, Berkshire, RG12 9EN
Company No. 08892649