

NORTH STAR NURSERY AND HOLIDAY CLUB FOOD POLICY

In formulating our food policy we have attempted to meet the recommendations of modern nutritionists as well as the wishes of parents and children. We believe that food is a very important part of a child's day, and that there are three aspects of feeding, which need to be addressed in our policy:

- 1) Nutritional 2) Cultural 3) Emotional

1. Nutritional

Children need a balance of the different food groups to grow and remain healthy, and our strategy for ensuring this is as below:

The menus we use provide a reasonable amount of proteins, are high in carbohydrates and use the minimum of seasonings, with no salt added to any food products during the preparation and or cooking process.

Meals are cooked from fresh/frozen ingredients daily on the premises wherever possible, although we do utilise some pre-prepared foods such as fish fingers and sausage. Parents may request an alternative if they so wish.

Every meal contains a protein food, either meat, cheese, fish, egg or pulses.

All children are offered each day:

- semi skimmed milk and whole milk for under 1 year olds
- fresh drinking water throughout the day
- fresh fruit (uncooked), fresh/frozen vegetables
- carbohydrates (wholemeal/white bread, rice, pasta or potato)

We do not serve fried food, but offer grilled or baked alternatives.

All pies, cakes etc. are cooked from basic ingredients with minimal sugar by our cook and served within 24 hours of baking or from frozen. All the cooked and then frozen products are dated for later use.

Babies are offered the same diet as the other children wherever possible, pureed or mashed in an appropriate way, although parents may provide baby food if they prefer. Whole milk is provided when parents feel it appropriate. Where babies are on formula milk parents are asked to supply it.

We have a 4-week basic summer and winter menu, which gives a variety of meals. Items such as fruit and vegetables vary according to availability. The menu is flexible to account for use by dates, special diets and seasonal foods and festivals.

2. Cultural

New parents on enrolling their children are asked to give us information on any special dietary needs. We feel very strongly that we have a responsibility to honour parents' and carers' wishes and cultural requirements such as special diets on religious or other grounds. We also feel it is vital that no child should be made to feel self conscious about special dietary requirements, so we try to offer foods

which meet all needs wherever possible. This means, for example, that all children will eat vegetarian meals on occasions. Staff are very aware of the importance of respecting individual requirements without making children feel awkward or embarrassed; where children have to be given something different it is done without fuss, but our preference is for all children to eat the same food as far as possible.

The social aspects of eating and drinking are something we take seriously. We encourage the children from as early as possible to be independent and use their knives, forks and spoons. We offer them as much control over the process as we can, so that the older children will have their hot meals served at the table, giving them a chance to exercise preferences and portion size. By praising good habits and offering encouragement and assistance we can make the meals an enjoyable learning process.

3. Emotional

The links between feeding and emotional security are well documented. Equally, the potential for stress in the area of feeding is also well known. As child carers we are in a slightly easier position than parents are, since children will often eat things at Nursery which would be refused at home. They are usually hungry at Nursery because they are busy and active here, and the fact that other children are eating with them helps to encourage good eating habits. We try to make mealtimes calm and pleasant; the staff sits with the children and encourages them to manage unaided if they can, but are always available for help. We allow lots of time and never mind the fact that learning to use spoons and knives and forks is a messy business. Children are taught the individual needs of others positively where menus and portions differ from the majority. We find children then take on the role of reminding staff when alternatives are required.

Sometimes we have a problem with a child who refuses food. When this happens we try to encourage him or her to try just a little, but there is no point in forcing the issue. If it happens frequently we will approach parents to see if there is any reason, and if the behaviour is the same at home. We can then adopt a common procedure in dealing with it and usually we find the problem disappears with time. It is obviously very important we consult with parents, and we always try to act according to their wishes, but remember the care of the child is our priority and so we will be "child led".

Our main aim is that mealtimes should be without anxiety, a pleasurable and rewarding experience.

4. Food Policy Principles

The basic rules for a healthy diet are now widely recognised. The main food groups are:

4.1 Protein Foods

Needed in reasonable quantities by everyone, but very important in children because protein is used to build and repair cells it is the growth food. Foods containing protein are:

Meat	Fish	Milk	Pulses	Cheese	Grains
Eggs	Nuts - we do not include in nursery foods				

4.2 Fats

Needed in small quantities but more useful to children than adults as they provide necessary fat-soluble vitamins but tend to be stored as body fat if eaten and not used. Food containing fat is:

Mild Cheese	Oil	Butter/Margarine	Nuts - not used in nursery
Oily Fish	Fatty meat		

4.3 Carbohydrates

Research has shown that carbohydrates are stored as glycogen, readily accessible as an energy source, before being turned into fats. The exception to this is sugar, which is not natural food and reacts differently, being stored as fat without having any vitamins or fibre to offer compensation. Other carbohydrates provide energy and also most of the fibre we eat. Fibre is not only important in keeping the digestive system functioning; it also facilitates the absorption of nutrients and protects against cancer of the bowel in adults. Food containing carbohydrates are:

Cereals	Fruits	Bread (wholemeal far more fibre)	Vegetables
Potatoes	Rice		

4.4 Vitamins, Minerals and Trace Elements

Most doctors now agree that the best way to avoid vitamin or mineral deficiency is to offer a wide range of foods. A diet, which contains variety and is rich in fresh foods, is very unlikely to be deficient in anything.

We aim to provide four opportunities during a whole day to have fruit and or vegetable portions, supporting the “5 a day” strategy from the Department of Health.

5. Artificial Additives

We cannot claim that no food here is bought processed. We serve ice cream, fish finger etc. However, where food is not prepared on the premises from fresh ingredients we always buy brands that are low in artificial ingredients. We do use products that state on the label “MAY CONTAIN TRACES OF NUTS” but no products are used that actually contain nuts.

Menus are reviewed annually and parents are welcome to offer suggestions and outline current research to us for consideration.

6. Special Diets

Special dietary requirements are respected and catered for and more information is available in our Allergy Inclusion Policy.

Staff are very aware of the importance of respecting individual requirements without making children feel awkward or embarrassed. Where children have to be given something different, it is done without fuss, but our preference is for all children to eat the same type of food as far as possible.

Our nursery cook is available to discuss individual needs with parents to agree alternatives to our regular menus.

7. Allergens

ALL DISHES MAY CONTAIN ALLERGENS. North Star Nursery operates a Food Safety Management System and all our dishes are subject to a Risk Assessment whereby all ingredients are listed and any allergens identified. These are available to view in the children's room.

Our Nursery Cook is available to speak with parents and carers to discuss their child's individual needs.

Should parents or carers wish to bring in cakes or other treats to celebrate a child's birthday or other special occasion, we ask that any homemade birthday cakes, biscuits, etc. are brought into nursery in

a sealed container with a list of ingredients and the date they were made, and shop-bought cakes in their original unopened box. This follows advice from Environmental Health with regard to allergens.

North Star Nursery is striving to be a nut-free environment.

8. Food Safety

It is the Nursery Manager's responsibility to ensure:

- Staff have the required Food Hygiene Certificate
- Staff are in good health (see Staff Handbook)
- Staff understand all cleaning and hygiene schedules
- Spot check that the schedules are being carried out
- Senior staff know how to carry out RIDDOR procedure if necessary.

It is the responsibility of staff to ensure:

- Staff only cook if they have a Food Hygiene Certificate
- Staff are in good health (see Staff Handbook)
- Follow appropriate hygiene/clothing for cooking
 - e.g. 1) hair tied back
 - 2) correct clothing (specific apron) and clean on every day
- Wash hands every time they enter the kitchen and whenever necessary throughout the day.
- Follow all schedules outlined in the kitchen
 - e.g. cleaning, temperature charts, etc.
- Wipe down all surfaces at the end of the day and place all refuse in appropriate places
- If at any stage the food handler feels unwell, report to the nursery manager.

All staff must ensure they read and sign the Food Handlers Declaration at Appendix 1 upon induction.

Sample Menu

WEEK 1

MONDAY	GRILLED PORK SAUSAGES CREAMED POTATO PEAS, CARROTS, GRAVY YOUGHURT	MACARONI CHEESE FRUIT
TUESDAY	SOYA MINCE COTTAGE PIE MIXED VEGETABLES SPOTTED DICK & CUSTARD	LEEK AND POTATO SOUP SOFT BREAD ROLL FRUIT
WEDNESDAY	ROAST TURKEY /CHICKEN BOILED POTATOES GREEN BEANS &CAULIFLOWER FRESH FRUIT SALAD	SAVOURY FILLINGS SANDWICHES CHEESE SCONES FRUIT
THURSDAY	FISHERMANS PIE ON TAGLIETTELI WITH MIXED VEGETABLES	BAKED BEANS ON WHOLEMEAL TOAST
FRIDAY	SEASONAL FRUIT CRUMBLE & ICE CREAM VEGETABLE CURRY AND RICE WITH POPADUMS BANANA CUSTARD	FRUIT MIXED PORK & VEG SAUSAGE ROLLS CRUDITES CARROT CAKE FRUIT

Food Handlers' Declaration

- 1. I confirm that I have not had sickness (vomiting) or diarrhoea in the last 48 hours and am deemed fit to prepare, cook and serve food to the public.**

Signed.....print name.....

Date.....

2. I understand food hygiene, e.g. have acquired a food hygiene certificate.
3. I understand the kitchen guide and how to complete it.
4. I understand that handwashing is required to be done on entering the kitchen every time.
5. I know there is no smoking anywhere in the nursery grounds.
6. I understand that correct clothing is to be worn when cooking.
7. I understand that I must complete all procedures that need to be carried out in the kitchen (see kitchen guide)
8. I understand that all clothing and cloths are to be sent to the laundry by the end of the day (or when soiled, not left lying around as to cause contamination)
9. I understand waste is to be disposed of in the correct place (catering bin by UKRI).
10. I understand I must report and dispose of any broken/damaged equipment.

Signed.....print name.....

Date.....