

Peter Pan Playgroup

Healthy and Safer Eating Policy

Peter Pan Playgroup have regard to the EYFS Nutrition Guidance (April 2025) which requires settings to ensure children receive healthy, balanced and nutritious food:-

“Children who are provided with a healthy, balanced and nutritious diet ensures that they get the right amount of nutrients and energy they need while they are growing rapidly, develops positive eating habits early on, and can help prevent children from becoming overweight or obese. Children’s early experiences with food can shape future eating habits. This can impact children’s long-term health including maintaining a healthy weight, and good oral health.

A healthy, balanced diet is based on the 4 main food groups (fruit and vegetables; potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbohydrates; dairy or dairy alternatives; and beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins). These provide essential nutrients to help children grow and develop.

Some food labels use red, amber and green colour coding to tell you if a food has high, medium or low amounts of fat, saturated fat, sugars and salt:

- *red means high*
- *amber means medium*
- *green means low.*

In general, a food or drink that has mostly greens on the label is a healthier choice. Red means the product is high in fat, saturated fat, salt or sugars, and you should avoid giving these to children and try to choose products which are low or medium in saturated fat and sugars, and low in salt.”

At Peter Pan we offer children a snack in the morning and those who stay for lunch bring in a packed lunch from home. Before a child is admitted, we consult with parents on any special dietary requirements including cultural and religious beliefs, preferences, allergies, food intolerance, or any medical condition, and ensure all staff are made aware of these.

We ensure all parents are made aware of our Healthy and Safer Eating Policy.

As a learning opportunity we also plan various food and cooking activities with the children in a fun and engaging way to promote healthy eating, develop fine motor skills, and encourage sensory exploration whilst being aware of any allergies/medical conditions.

We also support food sustainability incorporating practices that promote healthy eating, reduce food waste, and foster an understanding of where food comes from, while also considering the environmental impact of food choices, through various activities such as growing beans, learning about healthy eating, and reducing waste.

Snack Time

- At Peter Pan we offer all our children a healthy, nutritious, well-balanced snack at our snack time that we hold between 10.00am and 11.00am each morning.
- We offer only fresh water and milk as refreshments, though milk is only offered during our snack time, fresh water is available throughout the morning which the child can access via their own drinking bottles.
- In instances where children have a special medical condition we do allow, if needed, soft drinks (diluted and not high in sugar) to be consumed during the course of their treatment. These drinks, if needed, will be supplied by the parent/carer, clearly labelled, and only made available to that said child.
- During our snack time we offer the children a choice of fresh and/or tinned fruit (only in juice) and vegetables which is prepared in a safe, hygienic way, with fruit and vegetables cut into small batons/slices (halved or quartered depending on size) to avoid becoming a choking hazard.
- We also offer breadsticks/crackers/fresh bread with accompaniments such as cheese, spreads or dips which we know children enjoy. (Donations from parents are gratefully received.)

- All our children and staff are encouraged to wash their hands before and after snack.
- Everyone is welcomed and encouraged to attend our snack with whatever dietary requirements they may have.
- If any medical conditions dictate that a child may need a different type of snack, then these will be provided by the parent/carer, clearly labelled, and only made available to that said child. In this instance, the said child would not be excluded from our snack, but encouraged to take part, and if any questions were raised why this child was eating something different, staff would explain in simple terms to the small group the child sitting with them at the time.
- Children will always be supervised during snack time by the staff member doing the snack. They will sit at the table so that they are aware of choking, etc.
- We see snack time as a learning opportunity so with this in mind, we teach and encourage our children about healthy eating but also provide children with a wide range of fruit and vegetables from around the world, which they can taste, touch and smell.
- Celebrations such as “Chinese New Year”, “Pancake Day”, are included within our rolling snack, so for example the children would have an opportunity to sample noodles for Chinese New Year or have a pancake for Pancake Day.
- Majority of our staff have or will be attending a Food Hygiene and Safety course, so are aware of the importance of having good hygiene standards when rolling snack is taking place, and the importance of storing/cleaning/recording our equipment and supplies in the correct and safest way – correct temperatures and sell by dates.

Lunch Time

- Children sit down to eat their packed lunch between 12.30pm-1.00pm and we encourage parents to provide a healthy, balanced, nutritious lunch in a named insulated lunch box with a cold ice pack to keep fresh/dairy food cool and to provide a named reusable drinking bottle of water.
- We encourage fruit or vegetables to be included and discourage sweets and chocolate in the lunch box.
- We ask that parents ensure food is cut into portions suitable for their child and that fruit and/or vegetables are cut appropriately into either batons or slices (halved or quartered depending on size). Grapes should be cut lengthways to avoid becoming a choking hazard.
- We ask that parents do NOT provide any nuts or nut related product in their child’s lunch due to the possibility of nut allergies in the setting.
- All our children and staff are encouraged to wash their hands before and after lunch.
- Children collect their own drink bottle of water from their basket and their own lunchbox from the lunch trolley. If children have forgotten their drinks bottle, water is readily available.
- During lunch, children sit at a table with up to five children per table, being supervised by one member of staff per table so that they are aware of choking, etc. Staff eat with the children and role-model healthy eating and best practise at all times.
- In order to protect children with food allergies or specific dietary requirements, children are discouraged from sharing and swapping their food with one another.
- Any child with special dietary needs or intolerances such as coeliac disease, we undertake a risk assessment to ensure that child is not exposed to cross-contamination whilst also ensuring they are not excluded from lunch with their peers.
- Children are given time to eat at their own pace and are not hurried nor are they not made to eat what they do not like but encouraged to try.
- All left over food and packaging will be placed inside your child’s lunchbox so you will be able to see what your child has eaten.
- Lunch time is a relaxed opportunity for social interaction between children and the adults.