

Knutsford Community Preschool

09.8 Prime times – Snack times and mealtimes

Children are supervised during mealtimes and always remain within sight and hearing of staff.

Snack times

- We operate a running 'Cafe' during the morning and afternoon sessions and children are free to choose when they would like their snack up to a certain time or may be organised differently according to the discretion of the Preschool manager e.g. picnic on a blanket.
- Children are encouraged to choose their own plate and cup and small plastic jugs are provided with choice of milk or water.
- Children wash their hands before and after snack-time.
- Children are offered semi-skimmed milk unless they have allergies or other dietary requirements.
- Fruit or raw vegetables, such as carrot or cucumber, are offered in batons. Bananas and other foods are not cut as rounds but are sliced lengthways to minimise a choking hazard.
- Portion sizes are gauged as appropriate to the age of the child.
- Children are offered toast and crackers along with fruit and raw vegetables.
- Children arrive as they want refreshment and leave when they have had enough. Children are not made to leave their play if they do not want to have a snack.
- Staff join in conversation and encourage children's independence by allowing them to pour drinks, butter toast.

Mealtimes

- Children are always within sight and hearing of staff at mealtimes.
- There is a Paediatric First Aider present at children's meal and snack times.
- Children bring their own packed lunch to Preschool with guidance from <https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes/>
- Please see guidance for portion sizes <https://healthforunder5s.co.uk/sections/toddler/whats-a-healthy-portion-for-your-little-one/>
- Packed lunch **must not contain** any form of nuts.
- We do not have the facilities to reheat left over meals from home. All packed lunch food must be ready to eat without the need for heating.

- Any drinks provided in lunch boxes should only include either plain water, milk (semi-skimmed), diluted fresh fruit juice, fruit or dairy based smoothies.
- Packed lunch **should not include** confectionery such as chocolate bars and sweets.
- As fridge space is very limited, children are advised to bring packed lunches in **insulated bags with freezer blocks** where possible to stop the food going off.
- Please ensure any foods that are chopped e.g. fruit, vegetables, cheese, meat, tofu etc are **chopped into long batons rather than rounds**. Please see handout attached 'Making food safe for babies and children' for guidance.
- Children wash their hands and sit down as food is ready to be served.
- Staff have their lunch with children and role-model healthy eating and best practice at all times, for example not drinking cans of fizzy drinks in front of the children.
- Children are given time to eat at their own pace and are not hurried to fit in with adults' tasks and breaks. They are not made to eat what they do not like and are only encouraged to try new foods slowly.
- In order to protect children with food allergies or specific dietary requirements, children are discouraged from sharing and swapping their food with one another.
- Children are encouraged to eat their savoury food before eating a sweet food item. Food is not used as a reward and withdrawal of food is never used as a punishment.
- Mealtimes are relaxed opportunities for social interaction between children and the adults who care for them.

Reviewed annually in November by Staff and Committee