

SECTION 2: HEALTH & SAFETY

Food and drink

Policy statement

Stanmore Montessori regards snack and meal times as an important part of the setting's day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating. We promote healthy eating encouraging children to bring fruit or a vegetable to share at snack time. This nutritious food meets the children's individual dietary needs. The children have the opportunity to prepare and cook a range of foods and we explain the value of healthy eating through a range of activities.

Procedures

We follow these procedures to promote healthy eating at Stanmore Montessori.

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we find out from parents their children's dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies. (see the Managing Children with Allergies policy.)
- We record information about each child's dietary needs in his/her registration record and parents sign the record 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 parent's wishes.
- Through discussion with parents and research reading by staff, we obtain information about the dietary rules of the religious groups to which children and their parents belong, and of vegetarians and vegans, and about food allergies. We take account of this information in the provision of food and drink.
- We organise meal and snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate.
- We use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and feeding themselves.
- We have fresh drinking water constantly available for the children. We inform the children about how to obtain the water and that they can ask for water at any time during the day.
- We provide milk and water so that the children can choose and pour their own drink at snack and lunch time.
- We inform parents who provide food for their children about correct storage and suitable containers for the food.
- In order to protect children with food allergies, we do not allow children to share and swap their food with one another.

Packed lunches

- 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 and allergies.
- Encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit and milk based deserts such as yoghurt. We discourage sweet drinks and can provide children with water or milk.
- We 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 with plates, cups and cutlery if required.
- We ensure staff sitting with the children to eat their lunch at the same time ensuring that this is always a social occasion.

Legal framework

The Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013