

# Abacus Nursery - Nutrition and Mealtimes

EYFS: 3.47 - 3.49

At Abacus Nursery we believe that mealtimes should be happy, social occasions for children and staff alike. We promote shared, enjoyable positive interactions at these times.

We are committed to offering children healthy, nutritious and balanced meals which meet individual needs and requirements.

Breakfast is served from 8.15 - 9.0.clock ('café style' downstairs)

Lunch 11.45-12.30 and tea 3.30-4.15pm

We will ensure that:

- A balanced and healthy breakfast, lunch and tea are provided for children attending a full day at the nursery. Breakfast and lunch are provided for children who attend a morning and for children who attend an afternoon we serve tea only.
- Two menus are in place Summer (April - September) and Winter (October - March) to ensure the meals being served are in line with the seasons. Each menu also reflects cultural diversity and variation and is planned in advance, on a two week rota. This provides many opportunities to try each meal, along with being nutritional and healthy we also ensure our menu includes a range of textures and flavours to educate the pallet. The weekly menu is on display for children and parents to view
- Allergen information can be found in the kitchen alongside the menus to show the ingredients used (and the allergen) within our menu. A list is also in the porch.
- We provide nutritious food at all meal times, avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar, salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- There is a big focus on serving fresh fruit and vegetables every day
- Parents, staff and children are involved in menu planning
- Every child once they have signed to say they have tried the 14 allergens and had no ill effect (required in writing) can be served nursery food; blended etc to meet their individual need.
- Fresh drinking water is always available and accessible. Served through jugs of water at the table and then with named water bottles throughout the rest of the day. Downstairs the water bottles are at child height for self-use (independence), upstairs the bottles are out of reach (for hygiene reasons ) but frequently offered. In warmer weather when the importance to stay hydrated is greater the bottle moves outside with the child.
- Staff set a good example by eating with the children and modelling/encouraging good table manners i.e. how to hold cutlery, serve themselves, say please and thank you. Meal times are organised so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate in small groups. There are always at least 2 staff members on each floor with the children at mealtimes.
- In readiness for meal times at School our older children in twos/threes sit on their own table and manage their own water etc.

- Staff use mealtimes to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink, and feeding themselves
- Staff help children to understand the need and benefits of having a healthy diet
- Cultural differences in eating habits are respected
- Staff serve each child their first course (whilst serving dishes are very hot). Where they do not like something a very small portion is served (one pea) and they are encouraged to taste a small piece of everything on their plate.
- Quantities offered take account of the ages of the children being catered for in line with recommended portion sizes for babies and young children
- We promote positive attitudes to healthy eating through play opportunities and discussions
- No child is ever left alone when eating/drinking to minimise the risk of choking. A member of staff who is 1st aid trained is always in situ on each floor during mealtimes.
- We do allow parents to bring in cakes on special occasions. We ask that shop bought cakes come in their original packaging. Cakes must be nut free and no chocolate cake for our babies/toddlers.
- To celebrate special occasions party food at tea time, biscuits, crisps etc are occasionally served.
- Children in the baby room are either in a highchair or a bucket chair up to the table, depending on their individual needs, all other children in the pre-school room are on a small plastic chair up to the table.

All staff who prepare and handle food are competent to do so and complete a kitchen induction from a member of the management team who all hold a food hygiene certificate which is updated every three years.

In the very unlikely event of any food poisoning affecting two or more children on the premises, whether or not this may arise from food offered at the nursery, we will inform Ofsted as soon as reasonably practical and in all cases within 14 days. We will also inform the relevant health agencies and follow any advice given

## Dietary requirements

Individual dietary requirements are respected and alternatives dishes may need to be served (details of these dishes are recorded daily on a blue sheet for each meal time for quick referral). Information from parents regarding their children's dietary needs is collected on their application for care before they join us and we ask that it be updated throughout their time with us as necessary. This includes any special dietary requirements, preferences (i.e. vegetarian) and food allergies that a child has. Parents are then asked to complete the dietary requirements paperwork to gather all the facts to share with staff to ensure there are no misunderstandings/discrepancies. For confirmation of a medical dietary requirement, we will put a Medical care plan in place detailing the dietary requirement which must be signed by a member of the medical professional and returned to us within 28 days. All paperwork for individual childrens dietary needs can be found in the kitchen. A tick sheet is in place detailing the steps that need to be completed to ensure we meet the child's dietary needs at nursery e.g. all staff

informed, allergy mat in place etc. We will do our best to remove allergens but cannot guarantee that all traces will be removed. Where the allergy is life threatening we will carry out a risk assessment and work with parents to try and accommodate their child's dietary needs. This could mean where necessary serving an alternative dish or removing the allergen completely from our menu eg nuts. In the rare situation that we will struggle to meet a child's dietary needs a meeting with parents will be held to formulate a plan of action to support the child's needs.

An adult on each table joins the children to not only serve the meal, but to ensure safety and to encourage positive social interaction. Downstairs every child with a food allergy is placed on the 'top' table with a qualified member of staff in charge. An allergy form is completed. Upstairs where a child sits is dependent on their age and stage of development but always in a place where they can be closely supported. Staff show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies.

If a mistake with an allergen takes place we would inform the parent immediately, review our procedure and record this in our wellbeing folder. We ask our parents to understand that our kitchen is small so we cannot guarantee that cross contamination will not happen, although we will do all we can to prevent this.

### Guidance for the use of breast milk and powdered infant formula (Making up bottles)

The NHS and the Centre for disease control and prevention provides the following guidance for the use of breast milk in Nursery. If frozen (we recommend) we ask that it is clearly named and includes date expressed and placed in freezer. We will not accept 'undated' milk. Frozen milk will be stored for up to six months and when required defrosted slowly in the fridge or reheated in a jug of warm water if needed quickly. Freshly expressed breast milk must also be dated. Once reheated any unused breast milk will be disposed of after one hour (mouth infections can be caused if used after this time and the vitamin C content reduces). Fresh breast milk will be stored in the fridge and where unused disposed of after four days.

The Department of Health has issued guidance relating to the use of powdered formula feeds. Concerns have been raised due to the length of time the reconstituted milk is stored, which increases the risk of bacterial growth.

The Guidelines on tins of formula recommend bottles of milk are made, using freshly boiled water (not repeatedly boiled or cold boiled water reheated) as they are needed.

Without electricity in our milk kitchen (where feeds are prepared) and the time element/staff absentee when going downstairs to the kitchen each time a bottle needs making up, boiled water is stored in a flask (purchased for this purpose only) as recommended by the same guidance. To ensure we make up bottles correctly (ratio of powder to water) we ask that the amount of milk powder required for each feed arrives measured out and stored in a suitable container (available from Mothercare/Boots, etc). Each bottle needs to arrive filled with the correct amount of boiled water (to maintain

sterilisation) in line with the measured powder. When the feed is required we will replace your water with boiled water (above 70°C) and add the powder to make up the feed, then cool to meet your child's personal preference. All Bottles and the powder containers must be labelled with your child's full name.

After each feed the quantity consumed is recorded. At the end of the day this information will be fed back to you. Any milk not drunk within one hour of a feed being offered will be disposed of, the bottle rinsed and the empty bottle replaced in your child's Nursery bag. Due to the number of bottles we are dealing with and the risk of a mix up! we do not thoroughly wash/sterilize children's personal bottles.

If this arrangement is not to your liking we ask that you supply the 'ready prepared' cartons of milk for under two's. Please remember not all milk is suitable for babies under one this includes:- Goats, sheep, soya (unless GP or Health visitor advises), rice, oat, almond, dried, evaporated or condensed milk. Whilst cow's milk is ok in small amounts for children over six months in foods it is not suitable as a main drink until over one year. We provide oat milk as an alternative to cows milk at nursery.

### Sterilising

We sterilise feeder cups, dummies, spoons/bowls etc for every child under one year or until they start Nursery food.

### Boiled water

Boiled water is served to every child under one year or until they start Nursery food (the government guideline is boiled water to be used up to the age of 6 months).

Please discuss with a member of staff where your personal preferences differ from our practice.