



**Little Learners**  
NURSERY GROUP

## **Nutrition and Meal Times**

**Reviewed: July 2024**

**To be reviewed: July 2025**

At Little Learner's Nursery Group, we believe that mealtimes should be a happy, social occasion for children and staff alike. Positive interactions should be shared at these times and enjoyed. The Nursery is committed to offering children healthy, nutritious and balanced meals and snacks which meet individual needs and requirements.

We will ensure that:

- A balanced and healthy breakfast, midday meal, tea and snacks are provided for children attending a full day at the nursery.
- Meals will be prepared on site with fresh ingredients. *NB on occasions hot food may be shipped in from the other nursery site or in exceptional circumstances an external company.*
- Menus are planned in advance, rotated regularly and reflect cultural diversity and variation.
- Menus are displayed for children and parents to view.
- We provide nutritious food at all snack and meal times, avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- Menus include at least 3 servings of fresh fruit and vegetables per day.
- Fresh drinking water and cow's milk are constantly available and accessible. It is frequently offered to children and babies and intake is monitored.
- Individual dietary requirements are respected. We gather information from parents regarding their children's dietary needs including any special dietary requirements, preferences and food allergies that a child has and any special health requirements before a child is admitted to the nursery. Where appropriate we will carry out a risk assessment in the case of allergies and work alongside parents to put into place an individual dietary plan for their child.

- Staff show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. They do not use a child's diet or allergy as a label for the child, or make a child feel singled out because of her/his diet or allergy.
- Parents have the option of providing milk and/or home cooked meals for the under 3's which can be reheated in the nursery kitchen by staff who have Food and Hygiene training.
- Staff set a good example and are invited to eat with the children during snack times and show good table manners. Meal and snack times are organised so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate in small groups. During meals and snack times children are encouraged to use their manners and say 'please' and 'thank you' and conversation is encouraged.
- Staff use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink, and feeding themselves.
- Staff support children to make healthy choices and understand the need for healthy eating.
- Staff will promote self care skills and encourage children to wash their hands before and after the meal or snack.
- We provide foods from the diet of each of the children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones. Cultural differences in eating habits are respected.
- Children will be given a choice of foods (this can be discussed with parents for younger children) and there will always be vegetarian options.
- Any child who shows signs of distress at being faced with a meal he/she does not like will have his/her food removed without any fuss and an alternative meal offered. If a child does not finish his/her first course, he/she will still be given a small helping of dessert. Children not on special diets are encouraged to eat a small piece of everything.
- If a child regularly refuses food or dislikes the choices on offer a meeting

will be held with parents/carers to discuss alternative options and/or support.

- Children who refuse to eat at the mealtime are offered food later in the day (a parent may be asked to provide healthy snacks that they know a child enjoys).
- Children are given time to eat at their own pace and not rushed.
- Quantities offered take account of the ages of the children.
- We promote positive attitudes to healthy eating through play opportunities and discussions.
- The Nursery will provide parents with menus and upon request daily written records of feeding routines for children under 3.
- While children are eating, children must be within sight and hearing of an adult.
- All staff that prepare and handle food are competent to do so and receive training in food hygiene.
- Babies and Toddlers will eat in their nursery room, supported by nursery staff and midday assistants.
- Preschool children will eat in the main school hall or in their room. They will be supported by nursery staff and MDAs.
- Parents can request to have meals with their children during the transition periods.