Runnymede pre-school September 2025

Pack lunch and snack policy

Following the Department for Education updated Early Years and Foundation Stage nutrition guidance we have introduced this snack and packed lunch policy.

Diet and nutrition are extremely important in the health, growth and development of your child and we encourage healthy eating habits.

Poor nutrition and poor eating habits can have an adverse effect on children’s behaviour and physical ability, it also encourages bad oral hygiene and dental decay. We are aware of the rise in childhood obesity and poor oral health and the concerns about the effect of processed food on children. We aim to improve the nutritional quality of the pack lunches eaten at Runnymede Preschool and encourage healthy eating habits that will help influence health and well being later in life.

We also work towards climate change and sustainability; we aim to reduce plastic waste and also food waste to help to protect our planet.

Any food allergies and specific dietary or cultural requirements must be notified in advance.

This policy must be read alongside our food and nutrition policy.

**SNACK**

A healthy snack is provided in the morning. Our snack menu includes items that comply with healthy eating guidelines, for example: Wraps – pitta bread – cream cracker- breadsticks- toast- seasonal fruits- ( apple, satsumas, pears) Cheese- hummus- cucumber- carrots.

The cost for snack is 50 pence, you can opt out of the snack arrangement and provide your own snack from our list of suitable items. If you wish to opt out you must let us know, if you do not let us know you will receive an invoice for snack via Tapestry for the half term.

Cow’s Milk is supplied free of charge (if you require a different type of milk you must supply this) Water is readily available at all times.

**Breakfast**

Only low sugar cereals, toast with butter or fruit will be offered alongside milk and water to drink.

**PACK LUNCH**

* We aim to be a nut free nursery. Please do not include items such as peanut butter, pesto, Nutella or other nut-based foods. If you would like more information on this please do not hesitate to ask so we can provide more guidance.
* Children can be overwhelmed by too much food in their lunchbox. We encourage your child to eat as much as they would like and uneaten food will be put back inside their lunchbox. This can help you estimate how much to pack for your child’s next session. Keep to suitable portion sizes.
* Keep packaging to a minimum to help reduce landfill, reduce plastic packaging wherever possible eg food pouches.
* Use a plastic, fabric or metal lunch box that is wipeable and ensure it is kept clean, mark clearly with your child’s name.
* An ice pack Must be included as we do not have the facilities to refrigerate the lunch boxes. We also are not able to reheat any food. Parents are responsible for the health and safety of the food they supply.
* Please do not pack chocolate bars, sweets or fizzy drinks, as this does not align with our approach to healthy eating.
* Avoid processed foods and food with high levels of artificial colourings and sweeteners, such additives can severely affect behaviour and development.
* Crisps are high in fat and salt so we encourage you to not include them in packed lunches. However, if you do wish to do so, please place a small amount into a pot.
* The nursery will provide water and milk at lunchtime you do not need to provide a drink. Please do not provide juice and smoothies.
* Please help us by preparing your child's food ready for them to eat. For example, please cut sandwiches into small pieces and ensure they do not contain more than two slices of bread. Please prepare fruit by slicing apples and choking hazard foods like grapes and cherry tomatoes into quarters. Items such as cheese or cocktail sausages should be cut into slender baton sizes.
* Cutting out foods that are high in salt and sugar helps create a healthy lunch for your child. Simply swapping crisps, sweet biscuits and chocolate bars for foods like fruit, chunks of cheese or a low sugar yoghurt can make a big difference to your child's diet.

Here are some tasty, healthy pack lunch ideas:

Dips with wholemeal pitta bread, Carrot and Cucumber Sticks or Breadsticks Cold Pasta with Tuna or Cheese & Mini Tomatoes (quartered) Wraps - Tuna, Chicken, Pitta bread with Cheese (Grated or in Slices) Wholemeal Bread Sandwiches with chicken, ham or cheese Low-Sugar Yoghurt with Satsumas or Bananas Fruit - Whole or Cut Up (grapes should always be quartered) Crackers and cream cheese

**CELEBRATIONS**

If your child would like to share a celebration with their peers at preschool, we request that a suitable alternative to sweets and cakes is supplied, for example stickers or bubbles.

Further information about healthy eating and links to useful websites can be found on our food and nutrition policy.

Policies can be found on our website and also on your tapestry account under documents.