

At **Coalway Early Years** we believe that snack times and lunch times 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 and nutritious snacks which meet individual needs and requirements.

We will ensure that:

* A snack is provided during the morning session. Children who stay for lunch are provided with a packed lunch by parents/carers
* Snack menus are displayed on the notice board for parents to view
* We provide nutritious food at all snack times, this consists of a choice of milk or water to drink, at least two types of fruit or vegetables and a savoury snack such as a breadstick, cracker, wrap. Occasionally we provide sweet biscuits as an option, toast/crumpets/muffins, or food baked by the children. On rare occasions we may also provide a simple hot snack such as baked beans or porridge
* We provide advice and guidance for parents on the contents of a healthy lunchbox. We clearly state that fizzy, sugary drinks, sweets and chocolate are not allowed, or any products containing **nuts**. We carefully monitor the contents of lunchboxes and will speak to parents in instances where the contents are inappropriate, too much or too little or lunchboxes/drink bottles are not being cleaned adequately
* Fresh drinking water is always available and accessible. It is frequently offered to children and intake is monitored. In hot weather staff will encourage children to drink more water to keep them hydrated
* 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 starts or joins 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
* We give careful consideration to seating to avoid cross contamination of food from child to child. Where appropriate an adult will sit with children during meals to ensure safety and minimise risks. Where appropriate, age/stage discussions will also take place with all children about allergies and potential risks to make them aware of the dangers of sharing certain foods
* 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.
* To ensure that any allergies are known by all staff and adhered to the children each have their own placemat which displays if they have an allergy or not. If there is an allergy present this placemat will be in red for visual awareness also.
* Staff set a good example, eat with the children and show good table manners. Lunch and snack times are organised so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate in small groups. During lunch and snack times children are encouraged to use their manners and say 'please' and 'thank you' and conversation is encouraged
* Staff use lunch 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
* We promote cooking and baking with the children and the opportunity to try new foods, sometimes linked to cultural festivals
* Cultural differences in eating habits are respected
* Any child who shows signs of distress at being faced with a food he/she does not like will have his/her food removed without any fuss
* Children not on special diets are encouraged to eat a small piece of everything
* Children who refuse to eat at snack or lunch times are offered food later in the day
* Children are given time to eat at their own pace and not rushed
* 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
* We do allow parents to bring in cakes on special occasions. We ensure that all food brought in from parents meets the above and health and safety requirements and ingredients that are listed within the Food Information for Consumers (FIR) 2014 and detailed in the allergens policy and procedure
* All staff who prepare and handle food are competent to do so and receive training in food hygiene 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.

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| **This policy was adopted on** | **Signed (nursery manager)** |  |
|  | **Signed (Chair or Committee)** |  |
| **Date for review** |  | **Date for review** |  |
| **Date for review** |  | **Date for review** |  |