



Policy statement

Mealtimes should be a happy, social occasion for all beneficiaries and staff alike. Positive interactions should be shared at these times and enjoyed. At Rainbow Hub, snack and mealtimes are an important part of the day. Eating times are important to teach the beneficiaries how to cook for and feed themselves' appropriately, use manners, good hygiene practices and represent a social time for them.

In order to meet the 'Healthy Eating and Nutrition Policy' the particular arrangements which we will make are set out within this document and sufficient resources will be made available to honour our commitment to the policy.

The policy will be kept up-to-date, particularly as the setting changes in nature and size and will be revised annually, or as and when required. We therefore welcome any useful comments from members of staff, parents, carers, beneficiaries, volunteers, students and visitors regarding this policy.

For the purposes of this policy 'beneficiary' shall include any child or adult accessing services at Rainbow Hub, including nursery, school or therapy services.

Procedure

- We promote healthy eating during all snack and mealtimes and strongly encourage parents/carers to provide healthy foods and discourage foods that are high in saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- At snack and mealtimes, we aim to provide (where applicable) nutritious food, which meets the beneficiary's individual dietary needs.
- Many of the individuals at Rainbow Hub may have specific dietary requirements/feeding issues.
- Individual dietary requirements will be respected. We will gather information from parents/carers regarding the beneficiary's dietary needs including any special dietary requirements, preferences and food allergies and any special health requirements before a beneficiary is admitted to the setting.
- Where appropriate we will carry out a risk assessment in the case of allergies and work alongside parents/carers to put into place an individual dietary plan for the beneficiary.
- Details of individual allergies are kept in each beneficiary file. A list of allergies is kept in the Hub Office, the Nursery Office and headteacher's office respectively, at Rainbow Hub and on the database. In the Nursery this is also kept on the children's one page profile in the base room and the child's all about me record kept in their individual file.
- Individuals with specific feeding issues may also have these detailed in an individual risk assessment and/or care plan which is kept in the risk assessment and/or personal file (see Health and Safety Policy).
- We will ensure that fresh drinking water will be constantly available and accessible and is frequently offered to the beneficiaries.

- If an individual is fed using a direct Gastrostomy or nasal Gastrostomy feeding tube and will require feeding through this tube whilst in the setting then training will be sought from external agencies (in line with our 'Administration of Medication and Gastrostomy Feeds Policy'). In line with OFSTED guidelines, individualised training will be sought for children below statutory school age. Generalised training will be sought for those above statutory school age. Information on this procedure and trained persons will be detailed in an individual care plan which is kept in the beneficiary's file. Rainbow Hub's Administration of Medication and Gastrostomy Feeds Policy will be followed when using this feeding method.
- Before meal or snack times children (with the help and support of staff) will wash/wipe their hands thoroughly
- During meals and snack times beneficiaries will be encouraged to use their manners and say/communicate 'please' and 'thank you' and conversation/communication will be encouraged and good role modelling of this will be shown by all staff members.
- Staff will use meal and snack times to help beneficiaries to develop independence through making choices, preparing/serving food and drink, and feeding themselves. Staff will support beneficiaries to make healthy choices and understand the need for healthy eating.
- Any beneficiaries who show signs of distress at being faced with food he/she does not like will have his/her food removed without any fuss. Beneficiaries who refuse to eat at the mealtime will be offered food later in the session if time allows.
- Beneficiaries will be given time to eat at their own pace and not rushed.
- Quantities offered will take account of the ages/abilities/diets of the beneficiaries being catered for.
- We will promote positive attitudes to healthy eating through food exploration, play opportunities and discussions.
- No beneficiary is ever left alone when eating/drinking to minimise the risk of choking.
- Staff should be aware of any possible choking hazards. These include the removable caps of water bottles and fruit juice e.g. fruit shoots, which should be removed before placing the bottles in lunch boxes. All hard vegetables such as carrots should be cut into very small pieces.
- All staff that prepare and handle food are competent to do so and receive training in food hygiene. They will be provided with the appropriate resources with which to prepare and handle food. There is a separate Food Safety Policy which must be adhered to.
- We provide beneficiaries with utensils that are appropriate for their ages and stages of development and that take account of the eating practices in their cultures.
- Children must not go into the kitchen with staff members unless the children are having a demonstration or are participating in a cooking or baking task, in which case the kitchen will be cleared of any visible hazards and the appropriate checklists completed.

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Date Reviewed	13/10/23
Reviewed by	Alison Holdsworth
Changes Made	-Location of allergy details for Nursery added (04/07/22) -Deletion of Food Hygiene practices -Reference to Food Safety Policy -Children only allowed in the kitchen for

	<p>specified reasons and checklists to be completed (17/11/22)</p> <p>-Children to wash hands before snack or mealtimes. (28/11/22)</p> <p>-Staff to be aware of choking hazards, cut certain food into small pieces (28/11/22)</p> <p>Addition of school (13/10/23)</p> <p>Location of allergy file in headteacher's office (13/10/23)</p>
Next Review Date	13/10/ 2024