



# Allsorts Childcare Milk and Feeding Policy

## Purpose

This policy outlines the way in which Allsorts ensures all children's dietary requirements are catered for and how meals and snacks are served in the settings.

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## Principles

Allsorts understands that starting nursery or preschool can be a worrying time for parents/carers. We aim to make this transition as smooth as possible by ensuring our key persons work closely with you to discuss any dietary requirements your child may have and make appropriate provisions to accommodate any additional needs parents may have.

Key persons will aim to help babies and toddlers progress toward solid food and encourage all children to experience a variety of different foods by creating opportunities for them to taste and feel different textures of food.

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## Babies and Weaning

The initial process of weaning babies can start around 6 months and can take several months. We have used guidelines from the NHS which contains valuable information on weaning children, and would recommend that all parents visit the links below, and to discuss with their health visitor.

Weaning: NHS Guidelines: available at: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/solid-foods-weaning/>

What to feed you toddler ; <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/understanding-food-groups/>

Baby and toddler meal ideas ; <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/childrens-meal-ideas/>

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## New Starters

When parents join us they are required to complete a New Starter Form, before their child begins nursery stating what stage of weaning their child is at and what foods they are already having so that we can continue this.

Parents must also record any (known) food intolerances, food preferences or allergies their children may have so we can alert all practitioners involved with meals and snacks. Management will carry out a risk assessment in the case of allergies and work alongside parents to put in place an individual dietary plan for their child.

## Procedures

Whilst children are eating there will always be a member of staff in the room with a valid paediatric first aid certificate.

Before a child is admitted to the setting Allsorts will obtain information about any special dietary requirements, preferences, food allergies and intolerances that the child has, and any special health requirements. This information is shared with all staff involved in the preparing and handling of food. At each mealtime and snack time a nominated member of staff is responsible for checking that the food being provided meets all the requirements for each child.

Allsorts has ongoing discussions with parents and/or carers about the stage their child is at in regard to introducing solid foods, including to understand the textures the child is familiar with. Assumptions must not be made based on age. Allsorts will prepare food in a suitable way for each child's individual developmental needs, working with parents and/or carers to help children move on to the next stage at a pace right for the child.

Allsorts prepares food in a way to prevent choking.

Children must always be within sight and hearing of a member of staff whilst eating. Choking can be completely silent therefore it is important for staff to be alert to when a child may be starting to choke. Where possible, staff should sit facing children whilst they eat so they can make sure children are eating in a way to prevent choking and so they can prevent food sharing and be aware of any unexpected allergic reactions.

When a child experiences a choking incident that requires intervention, Allsorts will record details of where and how the child choked and parents and/or carers made aware. The records will be reviewed periodically to identify if there are trends or common features of incidents that could be addressed to reduce the risk of choking. Appropriate action will be taken to address any identified concerns.

Babies and young children are seated safely in a highchair or appropriately sized low chair while eating. There is a designated eating space where distractions are minimised.

All of the Allsorts settings are nut free. We do not allow any foods containing nuts such as cereal bars, peanut butter or hazelnut chocolate spread.

We will visibly display Dietary Needs Lists throughout the setting, and continue to regularly communicate with parents regarding their child's progress.

We will also use daily planning and observation to ensure that staff are aware of the pace and textures of food a child is accustomed to, and careful one to one supervision will ensure that children are gradually taught how to chew and begin to eat independently at a calm, steady pace with a supportive person there to help them.

Mealtimes should be a happy, social occasion for children and staff alike. Positive interactions should be shared at these times and enjoyed.

We will ensure that:

- Allsorts offer age-appropriate and healthy snack (baby room only), breakfast (if attending breakfast club) and tea/afternoon snack (if attending afterschool club) with a parent's/carer's consent. Snacks include rice cakes/crackers, toast/crumpets/sandwiches, and fruit and vegetables.
- Drinks other than breast milk, formula, milk or water are not permitted, except for lunchtimes when a small carton of juice/squash is acceptable.
- Fresh drinking water is constantly available and accessible. It is frequently offered to children and babies.
- Individual dietary requirements are respected and visibly displayed on Dietary Lists in the kitchen and in the classrooms.
- In case of an accident involving a child with allergies, the parent will be immediately informed and if authorised, PIRITON / an Epi Pen will be administered to the child as per the doctor's and parent's instructions, and the record of its administration will be entered in the medicine consent form for parents to sign. In emergency cases, an ambulance will be called if necessary.
- Meals and snack times are organised so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate in small groups. During meal and snack times children are encouraged to use their manners to say 'please' and 'thank you' and conversation is encouraged.
- Staff use meal and snack times to help children develop independence through making healthy choices, serving food and drink, feeding themselves and helping to set up or tidy up their lunchboxes. These practices help children to develop healthy eating habits and social skills.
- Chairs will be placed so babies can face each other, practitioners will encourage and support baby's self-feeding skills.
- Children are given time to eat at their own pace and not rushed.
- Cultural differences in eating habits are respected.
- Babies can have breast milk or formula milk that must be supplied by the parent/carer. We advise parents to bring breast milk to nursery in a sealed and labelled container, with the date it was expressed, which will be placed in the fridge. The change from breast milk/formula to cow's milk is encouraged from after 1 year of age.
- We will provide parents with daily records of feeding routines for all children under 2 via Family.
- We promote healthy positive attitudes to healthy eating through play opportunities and discussions. Children will be encouraged to look at books illustrating different foods and use pictures to communicate preferences.

## **Food Supplied by Parents**

All children must bring a packed lunch, including babies in the baby room. The packed lunch should contain a balanced meal.

Please see the link below for some ideas:

<https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes/>

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## **Food Hygiene**

Before adults prepare or handle food they must wash their hands thoroughly and protective clothing must be worn i.e. apron and gloves (if wearing nail varnish).

They must ensure they use appropriate chopping boards when handling meat, fish, fruit and vegetables. All food should be kept covered and refrigerated where appropriate. All waste food should be disposed of in the appropriate bins and hands washed after use.

Dishcloths and tea towels should be washed daily. Practitioners involved in food preparation will regularly undertake Food Hygiene Training.