

Mana Childcare Early Years

Healthy Eating and Nutrition Policy

Policy Statement

At Mana Childcare Early Years, we believe that healthy eating is essential for children's growth, development and wellbeing. We are committed to encouraging healthy eating habits by providing nutritious snacks and promoting balanced packed lunches brought from home.

We work in partnership with parents and carers to ensure children receive a varied and healthy diet throughout the day, supporting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

Our Aims

We aim to:

- **Promote healthy eating habits from an early age.**
 - **Encourage children to enjoy a variety of nutritious foods.**
 - **Provide healthy snacks and drinking water throughout the day.**
 - **Work in partnership with families to encourage balanced packed lunches.**
 - **Meet children's individual dietary, cultural, religious and medical needs.**
 - **Safeguard children with food allergies and intolerances.**
 - **Create positive, relaxed mealtime experiences.**
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Snacks Provided by Mana Childcare Early Years

We provide healthy snacks each day, which may include:

- **Fresh fruit**
- **Vegetable sticks**
- **Wholemeal crackers**
- **Breadsticks**
- **Rice cakes**
- **Cheese**
- **Natural yoghurt (where appropriate)**
- **Toast**

- **Healthy cereals**
- **Milk and fresh drinking water**

Snacks will be varied and age-appropriate while meeting food hygiene and allergy requirements.

Fresh drinking water is available to children throughout the day.

Packed Lunch Guidance for Parents

Parents and carers are responsible for providing their child's packed lunch.

To support healthy eating, we ask that packed lunches include a balance of nutritious foods such as:

We encourage:

- **Sandwiches, wraps, pittas or pasta made with wholemeal bread or wholegrain options where possible**
- **Lean meats, tuna, eggs or cheese**
- **Hummus or other healthy fillings**
- **Fresh fruit**
- **Salad or vegetable sticks**
- **Yoghurt**
- **Cheese**
- **Plain crackers**
- **Rice cakes**
- **Homemade healthy pasta or rice dishes**
- **Water as the preferred drink**

Please avoid including:

- **Chocolate bars**
- **Sweets**
- **Fizzy drinks**
- **Energy drinks**
- **Large quantities of crisps**
- **Sugary desserts**
- **Chewing gum**
- **Foods high in sugar, salt or saturated fat**

We understand that packed lunches will vary and staff will always approach conversations with families respectfully and supportively.

Nut-Free Setting

Mana Childcare Early Years is a Nut-Free Setting.

To protect children with severe allergies:

- **No nuts or products containing nuts must be brought into the setting.**
- **This includes peanuts, tree nuts and foods that clearly contain nuts.**
- **Parents are asked to carefully check food labels before packing lunches.**
- **If a lunch contains a nut product, it will not be served and parents may be contacted to provide an alternative where necessary.**

While every reasonable precaution is taken, we cannot guarantee the environment is completely free from traces of nuts due to food manufacturing processes.

Food Allergies

Parents must inform Mana Childcare Early Years of any:

- **Food allergies**
- **Food intolerances**
- **Medical dietary requirements**
- **Religious or cultural dietary requirements**

Staff will:

- **Follow individual allergy care plans.**
 - **Prevent cross-contamination where possible.**
 - **Check ingredient labels for snacks provided.**
 - **Ensure all staff are aware of children's allergies.**
 - **Know how to respond in the event of an allergic reaction.**
 - **Keep emergency medication readily available where prescribed.**
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The 14 Recognised Food Allergens

The following allergens are recognised under UK food legislation:

- Celery
- Cereals containing gluten
- Crustaceans
- Eggs
- Fish
- Lupin
- Milk
- Molluscs
- Mustard
- Peanuts
- Sesame
- Soya
- Sulphur dioxide/sulphites
- Tree nuts

All snacks provided by Mana Childcare Early Years will have allergen information available.