**Food and drink policy**

This setting regards snack and meal times as an important part of the setting's session/day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating.

Bar Hill Pre-school promotes healthy eating.

**Aim**

At snack and meal times, we aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs. Children attending lunch club provide their own packed lunch and we will advise parents/carers of healthy or alternative ideas where appropriate.

We aim to meet the full requirements of The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage regarding Food and Drink.

**Methods**

1. Before a child starts to attend the preschool, we find out from parents their children's dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies.
2. We record information about each child's dietary needs in her/his registration record and parents/carers sign the record to signify that it is correct.
3. We regularly consult with parents/carers to ensure that our records of their children's dietary needs - including any allergies - are up to date. Parents sign the up-dated record to signify that it is correct.
4. We display current information about individual children's dietary needs in photo form so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed about them.
5. We implement systems to ensure that children receive only food and drink that is consistent with their dietary/medical needs and preferences as well as their parents' wishes.
6. Parents also financially contribute or provide a piece of fruit on the sessions their child attends.

7 We display the menus of snacks on the parent information board with information regarding the 14 main allergens..

1. We provide nutritious food at all snack times, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings. Parents may donate a parental snack choice these items must not contain artificial colourings, preservatives, flavourings, gelatine or high sugar and fat content.
2. We include a variety of foods from the four main food groups:

* Protein alternatives;
* Dairy foods;
* Grains, cereals and starch vegetables; and
* Fruit and vegetables.

1. We include foods from the diet of each of the children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones.
2. We have an no nuts policy and take care not to provide food containing nuts or nut products and need to be especially vigilant where we have a child who has a known allergy to nuts. Nuts/ nut products are not permitted in lunchboxes or birthday cakes.
3. Through discussion with parents/carers and research reading and training for staff, we obtain information about the dietary rules of the religious groups to which children and their parents belong, and of vegetarians and vegans, and about food allergies. We take account of this information in the provision of food and drinks.
4. We provide a vegetarian alternative on days when meat or fish are offered and make every effort to ensure Halal meat or kosher food is available for children who require it.
5. We require staff to show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. Staff 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.
6. We organise meal and snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate.
7. We use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and feeding themselves.
8. We provide children with utensils that are appropriate for their ages, individual needs, stages of development and take account of the eating practices in their cultures.
9. We have fresh drinking water inside and out constantly available for the children. We inform the children about how to obtain the water and that they can ask for water at any time during the session/day.
10. We inform parents who provide food for their children about the storage facilities available in the preschool.
11. We give parents who provide food for their children information about suitable containers for food.
12. In order to protect children with food allergies, we have rules about children sharing and swapping their food with one another.
13. For children who drink milk, we provide semi pasteurised milk.
14. For each child under three, we provide parents with daily written information about feeding routines, intake and preferences.

*Packed lunches*

Our setting cannot provide cooked meals and children are required to bring packed lunches,

We:

* ensure perishable contents of packed lunches are stored appropriately and we request parents use cold packs in lunchboxes
* inform parents/carers of our policy on healthy eating;
* Encourage parents/carers to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit, and milk based deserts such as yoghurt or crème fresh (petit filou) we can only provide food from home that does not require cooking.
* We discourage sweet drinks and can provide children with water.
* Discourage packed lunch contents that consist largely of crisps, processed foods, sweet drinks and sweet products such as cakes or biscuits.
* We reserve the right to return this food to the parent/carers as a last resort;
* Provide children bringing packed lunches with plates and cups and cutlery; and ensure staff sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.