

# Alonim Kindergarten Food Policy



## Approach

Alonim works hard to create a supportive environment that enables children to grow, develop and thrive. Healthy eating is essential for proper growth and progress of young children and so it is our priority children are provided with meals, snacks and drinks that are healthy, balanced, and nutritious.

We will strive to promote positive attitudes and enjoyment of healthy food. Our approach is for parents and staff to follow, from packed lunches prepared for children at home, through to celebrations, birthdays and during any learning opportunity that uses food.

## Development and implementation of the food policy

During our regular parent/carer coffee mornings we will discuss with parent/carers our Policy on Food/drink. Equally, each family will be given a copy of this policy. Staff will be informed during our staff meetings. These measures will ensure all involved will follow the same strategy.

## Food and drink provision

Following the Eat Better, Start Better Voluntary Food and Drink Guidelines for Early Years Settings in England ensures settings achieve the same high standard for meals, snacks and drinks provided. To this end we provide Parents with the information below and ask that any snacks and lunches they provide follow the guidelines given.

Pupils are taught how to use the water cooler so that they can independently fill their water bottles. The children know where their bottles are kept and that they can access these at any time they wish. Milk is also offered at breakfast, snack, and lunch time. All snacks provided by Parents/Carers will meet our suggested healthy eating options. From time to time we will also provide healthy snacks for pupils to eat.

Children have regular snacks/meals throughout the day i.e., Breakfast for children, who access this is between 8-9.15 am. snack time mid-morning and lunch at 12.45 p.m.

### **Packed Lunches and Snack**

Food brought into the setting from home should only be vegetarian and contain NO NUTS. From time to time we have children with specific allergies e.g., Sesame, Kiwi, and when these pupils are amongst us Parents/Carers will be advised not to include these foods in their child's snacks or packed lunch.

Children should be encouraged to eat a varied diet. Children from one to four years need a diet made up of foods from the four main food groups, in the right balance and in portion sizes right for them. We recommend the packed lunches sent with children into our Setting contain:

- Starchy foods - One portion of starchy foods with every lunch. We encourage a variety across the week (e.g., bread, rice, pasta) and a mixture of wholegrain and white starchy foods.
- Fruit and vegetables – At least one portion of fruit or vegetables with every lunch. A portion for a child should fit in one hand.
- Meat, fish, and plant proteins - One portion with every lunch. We encourage children to have at least one plant protein such as beans, lentils, pulses, tofu every week, and a portion of oily fish every three weeks. NO SHELLFISH ALLOWED.

We discourage sweet drinks and will provide children with milk or water.

We will provide children with the appropriate utensils for their age/stage and cultural practices.

All staff understand the importance of portion sizes for children and will encourage good eating practice such as to stop eating when they are full. If a Child's lunch regularly contains portions that are too large Parents/Carers, will be notified again of appropriate portion sizes.

## **Providing food for all**

At Alonim we will ensure that all food which is provided for Shabbat or festivals/celebrations will be acceptable to all children, including those with food allergies, cultural and religious diets.

## **Food safety and hygiene**

In early years settings, it is important that food is stored, prepared, and presented in a safe and hygienic environment and children are taught basic hygiene. At Alonim the Lunch Club staff will have completed a Food Hygiene course. To keep food cool and fresh we ask Parents to include an ice pack in their child's lunch box.

## **The eating environment and social aspects of mealtimes**

Children, who attend lunch club will sit together with their peers and a staff member at the table, where they will be encouraged to try the foods, they have been provided with and interact socially with their peers.

## **Celebrations and special occasions**

Food and drink often play a significant role at special occasions and events. These occasions are also useful to provide opportunities for children to learn about food and drink from different religions and cultures. At Alonim, during these, we will offer food, (vegetarian in line with our policy), which is both nutritious and reflects other cultures. We will encourage children to try these foods through discussion and role modelling, not by force.

## **Oral Health**

Children's health and wellbeing is of the utmost importance. Oral health is a key part of children's development and future health and wellbeing. Alonim is committed to promoting oral health in the setting and will do this by increasing children's knowledge through discussion around tooth friendly food and drink and regular toothbrushing routines at home. To reinforce this learning, we will invite a Dentist into the setting to speak to the children about how they can care for their teeth. Furthermore, we will engage Parents in this by sending a tooth sticker chart home for children to use.

## Breast Feeding

All mothers, who attend the setting are welcome to use a secluded area within the nursery for breastfeeding. Milk can be stored in fridge if this is needed.

## Evaluation and review of the setting's approach to food and drink provision

Evaluation and reflection are an important part of good practice within every setting, and this includes food and drink provision. We will:

- Obtain feedback from parents, carers, and children
- Looking other settings and their approach to food and drink provision in our area
- Keep up to date with current good practice on meeting the welfare requirements for food and drink by visiting the Children's Food Trust website: [www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk](http://www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk)
- Regularly review staff training and development plans for food safety, hygiene, and nutrition.
- Review the food policy at least once a year

This policy was adopted by Patsy Maltz

For Alonim Kindergarten

In consultation with Healthy Early Years Partnership LBB:

Name: PATSY MALTZ

Position: HEAD TEACHER

Signature: P Maltz

Date: 1 August 2021

Review date: 1 August 2022

## References

Action for Children (2017) Eat Better, start better. A practical guide. Voluntary food and drink guidelines for Early Years settings in England.

Crawley, H. (2006) Eating well for under-fives in childcare: Practical and nutritional guidelines 2nd Edition The Caroline Walker Trust

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