**PACKED LUNCH POLICY**

Meal times are an important time of the day. We will aim to help children learn about healthy eating and enjoying the social aspect of eating together (& in which a member staff participates).

**Methods**

* All our staff hold up-to-date food safety certificates
* Before a child starts at Martlesham Preschool we collect information regarding allergies and dietary requirements on our registration form
* We regularly consult with parents to ensure our records are kept up-to-date regarding allergies and dietary requirements
* Our staff and volunteers are aware of where we display children’s current allergies and dietary needs
* We will provide a safe, calm, healthy and social eating environment
* We will use meal times to help children develop independence regarding choices, feeding themselves
* We will ensure children wash their hands before their meal
* We will encourage to eat, or try to eat, the food provided in their lunch box
* We will pack all leftovers back in lunch boxes so that parents can see what their child has eaten
* Meal times will be appropriately supervised and children do not walk around with food and drink
* We will make sure children have enough time to eat lunch, but realise they also would like time to play
* Drinking water is available at all times
* Children are not allowed to swap or share their food with anyone else

These details are also found in our “Food & Drink” Policy in our policies folder.

**Packed Lunches**

* Please provide your child with a named lunch box, named drinks container (if necessary), named utensils (if required)
* We will store lunch boxes in our kitchen, please provide a small, named ice-pack if food is likely to spoil
* Martlesham preschool request that parents **DO NOT** include the following:
  + Sweets/chocolatey items
  + Food containing nuts (some children at preschool have an allergic reaction to any contact with nuts)
  + Fizzy/sugary drinks
* We would like parents to provide a healthy balanced meal. There are no government regulations regarding the content of a child’s packed lunch. However, the British Nutrition Foundation has produced a set of guidelines. The recommended contents of a healthy lunch box are:
  + A portion of starchy food, i.e. Wholegrain roll or sandwich, pitta, plain crackers, pasta or rice salad
  + Plenty of fruit and vegetables
  + A portion of milk or dairy food, i.e. Cheese portion, yogurt
  + A small portion of lean meat, or fish, ham, quorn, cheese, egg or hummus
  + A small carton of fruit juice, or fruit squash (no added sugar). Water is provided
  + A small packet of crisps, or fruit scone, malt loaf, small cake or biscuit

**Booking**

* Children staying all day (i.e. 2 sessions per day) will automatically stay for lunch

*This policy is reviewed annually by Martlesham Preschool Committee*

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| This policy was adopted at the meeting of: | Martlesham Preschool |
| Held On: | December 2023 |
| Signed by Chairperson: |  |
| Signed by Preschool Manager: |  |
| Review Date: | December 2024 |