

## Meals from Home Policy

Whilst we recommend Zebedees meals to our families we understand that this is now an optional choice and some children may bring meals from home. We still need to work in accordance with our statutory framework guidance on food safety, the FSA safer food better business and in accordance with Environmental Health. Therefore, we need to be very strict on ensuring that food from home complies with food safety for ALL of our children as we manage allergies, intolerances and preferences. Therefore, this policy must be adhered to at all times.

Should you wish to supply all your child's meals then as a nursery we have to have responsibility of ensuring that all foods coming into the setting comply with the settings food and drink policy.

To maintain healthy development and growth children need to eat a nutritionally well-balanced diet. As an Early Years setting, we are in a strong position to influence and can contribute significantly to improving the health and well-being of your children. Good nutrition in early childhood can help to prevent a variety of health problems, both in the short term and later in life.

Children require a balanced diet that includes daily intake of food groups. Carbohydrates, fruit and vegetables, protein, dairy, good fats that are low in sugar, salt and excess fat. Guidelines recommend it is important not to fill up on too many foods that are high in fat and / or sugar at the expense of other more nutritious foods.

Our meals from home policy is in place to ensure all children are being offered healthy and nutritious food, to reduce choking risks, and to help prevent allergic reactions for children who may have airborne allergies.

### **zebedees** deliciously nutritious nursery meals

As a setting, we choose Zebedees to provide our children with nutritious meals. Zebedees pride themselves on their menus, which go above and beyond current government guidance for Early Years Settings in the UK. You can rest assured that children in our nursery will receive nutritionally balanced meals prepared to the highest food safety standards.

We work closely with Zebedees to ensure all of our children with dietary requirements, including allergies, intolerances and preferences are catered for. We can provide our families with Zebedees menus, including menus specific to dietary requirements. These can also be found on the Zebedees website.

Nursery age is a key time when children establish their food preferences and eating habits, so it's really important nurseries provide children with a good range of nutritional options.

Babies and weaning stages are very important to us and to Zebedees. We are able to tailor your child's meal to the appropriate weaning stage. This allows your baby to have the same meal as the rest of the nursery whilst learning how to explore the different stages of weaning.

With this in place parents/carers are responsible for providing appropriately packed meals for their children to have throughout the day. Parents/carers will need to provide breakfast, a morning and afternoon snack, lunch and tea. Meals need to be stored securely, and children need to have enough food to see them through the day. As fridge space is not available, parents are advised to bring meals in insulated bags with freezer blocks where possible.

To ensure other children are not exposed to potential life-threatening allergens and does not pose any choking hazards to your child or any other child, meals must **NOT** contain the following –

- **Nuts**
- Any items that **may contain nuts (this is vital, any items that are bought into nursery that contain or may contain nuts will be disposed of immediately)**
- Whole uncut round foods; grapes, cherries, blueberries, cherry tomatoes, raisins etc

Children who provide their own meals will be seated in a safe, suitable room separate to the children having Zebedees Meals. This is to ensure children all have the opportunity to eat the food that is in front of them without feeling that they are missing out on foods that other children have.

We endeavour to make sure children have a healthy nutritious meal when meals are being provided from home. Therefore, the following items must **NOT** be packed to bring into the setting –

- Any product containing chocolate (this includes chocolate coated items)
- Sweets or confectionary items
- Sugary drinks (only water may be provided in a water bottle, no squash)
- Popcorn
- Prepacked food such as Dairylea dunkers, Lunchables etc
- Sugary spreads in sandwiches etc jam or honey
- Crisps



As per our policy all lunch boxes will be checked to make sure all foods packed are appropriate and safe to serve. Therefore, if we find any of these items or similar in your child's meals we will not serve these and will send them back home again. As parents you will be contacted and asked to bring in a suitable alternative.

Parents/carers are responsible for making sure food is cut into appropriate shapes and sizes for their child. (sausages, bananas, strawberries etc)

We will not be able to heat up any foods that are bought in from home, therefore only food that can be eaten cold will be accepted.

All foods and lunch boxes must be clearly labelled with the child's name, and homemade foods will need to have ingredients listed.

Parents/carers must only provide food that suits the child's allergies. We must follow our written allergy advice from parents/carers. If you wish to change your child's dietary requirement, please put this in writing to [info@bunnyrunchildcare.co.uk](mailto:info@bunnyrunchildcare.co.uk). This includes children who are being introduced to the milk ladder etc.

When choosing to provide Zebedees meals or meals from home this will be booked for the entire term. This cannot be changed each day/week/month.

There is no option to swap during the course of the day, if you provide your own meals you need to provide all 5 meals, likewise if you choose Zebedees and Bunny Run meals, we will provide all 5 meals.

It is not optional to not bring in meals. If you do not wish to opt in for Bunny Run and Zebedees meals, then a meal from home must be provided for your child's session.

## Breakfast-

**Bunny Run provide** - a choice of 3 cereals, rice crispies, cornflakes, Weetabix, full fat milk, oat milk, a choice of fresh fruit, watermelon, honeydew melon, strawberries, banana etc.

Parents/carers will need to provide (if your child is arriving at nursery before 8.30am) - a suitable, low sugar, individually packed cereal and pre-cut fresh fruit from the list below –

*We will provide your child with full fat cow's milk and oat milk for those with dairy and soya allergies and preferences.*

- Rice crispies
- Cornflakes
- Weetabix
- Melon
- Strawberries
- Banana

**Snacks** – snacks are provided between 9.30-10am and 2.00-3.00pm

**Bunny Run provide** - a delicious snack from our snack menu including –

- Carbohydrates - wholemeal bread, pitta, plain scones, breadsticks, rice cakes, crispbread, crackers
- Fresh vegetables - carrots, cucumber, tomatoes, peppers
- Fresh fruit – apples, pears, bananas, satsumas, pineapple, melon, strawberries
- Dips and spreads – hummus, cream cheese, butter

If your child is here for morning and afternoon snack parents/carers will need to provide suitable snacks from the list above.

*We will provide your child with full fat cow's milk and oat milk for those with dairy and soya allergies and preferences.*