

## **Rocks Lane Montessori Healthy Eating and Food Safety Policy**

Rocks Lane Montessori regards snack and meal times as an important part of our day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults, and helps children to learn about healthy eating. Whether we provide food, or ask for packed lunches, we will always promote healthy eating, which meets the children's individual dietary needs.

### **Procedures**

We follow these procedures to promote healthy eating in our setting.

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we ask their parents about their dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies. (See our Allergy Policy.)
- We take guidance from the food standard agency with regard to our responsibilities around allergens.
- We record information about each child's dietary needs in the Registration Form and parents sign the form to signify that it is correct.
- We regularly consult with parents to ensure that our records of their children's dietary needs – including any allergies - are up-to-date. Parents sign the updated record to signify that it is correct.
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all our staff and volunteers are fully informed about them.
- We implement systems to ensure that children receive only food and drink that is consistent with their dietary needs and preferences, as well as their parents' wishes.
- We provide nutritious food for all meals and snacks, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- When we provide meals, we include a variety of foods from the four main food groups:
  - Meat, fish and protein alternatives;
  - Dairy foods;
  - Grains, cereals and starch vegetables; and
  - Fruit and vegetables.
- 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.
- We are a nut free setting, and take care not to provide food containing nuts or nut products and we are especially vigilant where we have a child who has a known allergy to nuts.
- Through discussion with parents and research reading, we obtain information about the dietary rules of the religious groups to which children and their parents belong, and of vegetarians and vegans, as well as about food allergies. We take account of this information in the provision of food and drinks.
- We show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. We 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.
- We organise meal and snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and adults participate.
- We use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink, feeding themselves, and clearing up after.

- We provide children with utensils that are appropriate for their ages and stages of development and that take account of the eating practices in their cultures.
- We have fresh filtered drinking water 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 day.
- In accordance with parents' wishes, we offer children arriving early in the morning, and/or staying late, an appropriate meal or snack.
- We inform parents who provide food for their children about the storage facilities available in our setting.
- We give parents who provide food for their children information about suitable containers for food.
- In order to protect children with food allergies, we discourage children from sharing and swapping their food with one another.

#### *Packed lunches*

Where we cannot provide cooked meals and children are required to bring packed lunches, we:

- Ensure perishable contents of packed lunches are refrigerated or contain an ice pack to keep food cool.
- Inform parents of our policy on healthy eating.
- Inform parents of whether we have facilities to microwave cooked food brought from home.
- Encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit, and milk-based deserts, such as yoghurt or crème fraîche, where we can only provide cold food from home. We discourage sweet drinks and can provide children with water or diluted fresh fruit juice.
- 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 as a last resort.
- Provide children bringing packed lunches with plates, cups and cutlery; and
- Ensure that adults sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.

#### **Food hygiene**

We maintain the highest possible food hygiene standards with regard to the purchase, storage, preparation and serving of food.

#### **Procedures**

- Our staff with responsibility for food preparation understand the principles of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) as it applies to our setting. This is set out in Safer Food, Better Business. The basis for this is risk assessment of the purchase, storage, preparation and serving of food to prevent growth of bacteria and food contamination.
  - All our staff follow the guidelines of Safer Food, Better Business.
  - All our staff who are involved in the preparation and handling of food have received training in food hygiene.

- The person responsible for food preparation and serving carries out daily opening and closing checks on the kitchen to ensure standards are met consistently. (See Safer Food, Better Business)
- We use reliable suppliers for the food we purchase.
- Food is stored at correct temperatures and is checked to ensure it is in-date and not subject to contamination by pests, rodents or mould.
- Packed lunches are stored in a cool place; un-refrigerated food is served to children within 4 hours of preparation at home.
- Food preparation areas are cleaned before and after use.
- There are separate facilities for hand-washing and for washing-up.
- All surfaces are clean and non-porous.
- All utensils, crockery etc. are clean and stored appropriately.
- Waste food is disposed of daily.
- Cleaning materials and other dangerous materials are stored out of children's reach.
- Children do not have unsupervised access to the kitchen.
- When children take part in cooking activities, they:
  - Are supervised at all times.
  - Understand the importance of hand-washing and simple hygiene rules.
  - Are kept away from hot surfaces and hot water; and
  - Do not have unsupervised access to electrical equipment, such as blenders etc.

#### *Reporting of food poisoning*

Food poisoning can occur for a number of reasons; not all cases of sickness or diarrhoea are as a result of food poisoning and not all cases of sickness or diarrhoea are reportable.

- Where children and/or adults have been diagnosed by a GP or hospital doctor to be suffering from food poisoning and where it seems possible that the source of the outbreak is within our setting, [the manager/I] will contact the Environmental Health Department to report the outbreak and will comply with any investigation.
- We notify OFSTED as soon as reasonably practicable of any confirmed cases of food poisoning affecting two or more children looked after on the premises, and always within 14 days of the incident.

**The Designated Person is: Miss Rajka Krivokapic. In her absence, her Designated Deputy is available for staff to discuss their concerns.**

**Date: October 2018**

**Our Healthy Eating and Food Safety Policy will be reviewed annually.**