



Policies

FOOD IN PLAY POLICY

Hatch Warren Under Fives and Kempshott Under Fives Preschool, will hereafter be referred to as the “Preschool”

The Preschool has adopted this policy to reflect our commitment to ensuring that all the children in our care have quality play opportunities, which are safe.

Our aim is to ensure that ‘food in play’ activities are age appropriate and are linked to the Early Years Foundation Stage which actively promotes children’s creative and sensory development. The tactile experiences gained during these activities help children experience a variety of textures.

Using ‘food in play’, children can learn to explore and experiment using all their senses. They can feel, smell, pour and mix to see what happens next, having fun while they learn whilst developing their gross and fine motor skills. We are also presented with an opportunity to promote healthy eating.

We always check for allergies and dietary requirements before engaging in the activities using food. All activities are within a supervised room to ensure the children’s health and welfare is our top priority. Utensils and other equipment used during these activities are regularly cleaned and the children are encouraged not to eat the ‘play’ food or put play equipment into their mouths, although sometimes this is unavoidable.

PROCEDURE

This procedure is for staff and covers ANY activity that children take part in which contains ANY food (includes home-made play dough).

- Only food supplied by the pre-school can be used for ‘messy food’ activities. This is because the ‘food’ supplied has been risk assessed and is age related. The food is stored in the kitchen or in our messy food air tight container only.
- Food used in play must be appropriate in size to prevent possible choking should it be placed into the mouths of children. As an example if grapes were used they should be sliced length ways as we do during snack and lunch times.
- Planning food activities take into account children with food allergies. The allergies board can be found in the kitchen and on our snack table.
- Check all ‘food for play’ prior to use to make sure it is not out of date.
- Staff will liaise with each other when carrying out weekly planning using ‘food play’ in order to share the activity where possible to cut down on food wastage.
- Keep the food with the activity area and monitor if it travels around the room, cleaning up any possible hazardous deposits and spills.
- Food used for messy play should be presented in ways that make the food appear differently to the way it would be presented for eating, e.g. in trays (small and large), with added food colouring, raw or dried when normally eaten cooked etc.

- Food should only be used in 'messy play' when something significant is planned for specific areas and to support children's learning and development
- Children should be discouraged from eating 'play food' along with putting any equipment used into their mouths.
- Play food must never be left overnight in the preschool.
- Wet food should be disposed of in the kitchen bin.
- Dried food should be inspected for possible reuse. Dried food that can be reused should be stored in a container labelled with the original expiry date on the packet, the date the food was stored and the contents. This should then be returned to the 'play food' cupboard for future use.

The following foods could be used for 'messy' play activities but are not limited to:

- Oats
- Rice Krispies, Cornflakes and Cheerio's
- Custard
- Dyed cooked pasta and rice
- Jelly (cooked)
- Canned peas
- Instant mashed potato
- Baked beans
- Play dough
- Flour
- Pulses
- Dried pasta and rice
- Ice - Care must be taken with the size so as not to be a choking hazard
- Raw root vegetables
- Cornflour

This policy was adopted at a meeting of the Preschool held on:

Signed on behalf of the Preschool _____