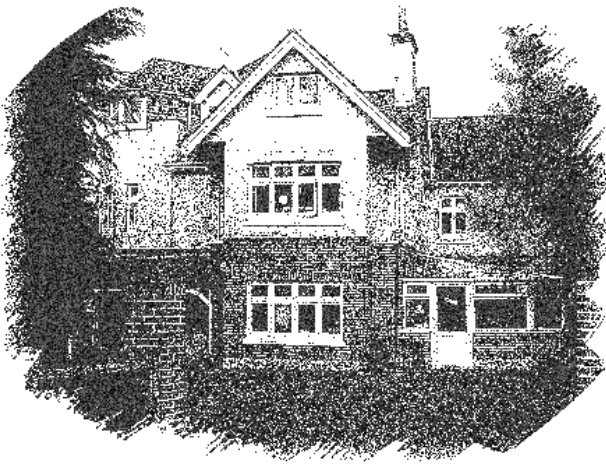




QUEENS PARK MONTESSORI DAY NURSERY

**155 Richmond Park Road
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Dorset
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Telephone: (01202) 523293

Proprietor: Mrs Alison Toms

Ofsted Reg: EY242933

NUTRITION AND MEALTIMES POLICY

At Queens Park Montessori Day Nursery we believe that mealtimes should be happy, social occasions for children and staff alike. We promote shared, enjoyable positive interactions at these times.

We are committed to offering children healthy, nutritious and balanced meals and snacks, which meet individual needs and requirements, following the Department for Education nutrition guidance:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6839b752210698b3364e86fc/Early_years_foundation_stage_nutrition_guidance.pdf

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Allergies and allergic reactions policy.

Our approach to food and healthy eating

- A balanced and healthy midday meal, tea and two daily snacks are provided for children attending a full day at the nursery
- We do not provide breakfast, but children are allowed to bring in cereal or alternative healthy options from home.
- Menus are planned in advance and in line with example menu and guidance produced by the Department for Education. These are rotated regularly, reflect cultural diversity and variation and are available to view on our website.
- Menus include at least 5 servings of fresh fruit and vegetables per day
- We provide nutritious food at all snack and mealtimes, avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar, salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings
- Quantities offered take account of the ages of the children being catered for, in line with recommended portion sizes for babies and young children.

Sustainability

- Alex's Good Foods are our meal supplier. They buy local fresh, seasonal produce which is used in our hot foods at lunchtime.

Mealtime environment

- No child is ever left alone when eating or drinking to minimise the risk of choking, and a qualified paediatric first aider is always present during meal and snack times

- Mealtimes are organised so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate. During meals and snack times children are encouraged to use their manners and say 'please' and 'thank you' and conversation is encouraged, whilst at the same time being aware of the risks of choking
- Staff use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices and feeding themselves
- Any child who has been encouraged to eat their meal, but shows real signs of distress at being faced with a meal they do not like, will have their food removed without any fuss.
- Children not on special diets are encouraged to eat a small piece of everything
- Children are given time to eat at their own pace and are not rushed.

Drinks

- Only milk and water are provided as drinks to promote oral health
- Fresh drinking water is always available and accessible. It is frequently offered to children and babies, and intake is monitored
- In hot weather staff will encourage children to drink more water to keep them hydrated.

Baby feeding and weaning

- We follow babies' individual feeding patterns following conversations with parents. We regularly review these to ensure they continue to meet the baby's needs
- We feed babies responsively according to their needs and support mothers with breastfeeding, through providing suitable places to breastfeed in the setting and making provision for expressed breastmilk
- We prepare infant formula milk if required, following NHS guidelines
- Weaning is introduced in collaboration with parents, including discussions about the stage their baby is at, the types of foods and textures their baby is eating at home and how these are presented to the baby; no assumptions are made based on the age of the baby
- The nursery provides parents with daily written records of feeding routines for children under the age of 2.

Commercial baby food and drink

- We provide fresh food for babies. However, we have pre-made commercial food as a standby if needed.
- We do permit parents to provide commercial baby food or drinks.

Management of food allergies and dietary needs

- All allergens are displayed alongside the menus to show the ingredients of each meal
- Individual dietary requirements are respected. Before a child joins the nursery, we gather information from parents regarding their children's dietary needs, including any special dietary requirements, preferences and food allergies that a child has, and any special health requirements. All information is shared with staff involved in preparing and handling food
- Where appropriate, we will carry out a risk assessment in the case of allergies and work alongside parents to put into place an individual dietary/allergy plan for their child. This will be regularly reviewed and any changes shared with all staff
- We give careful consideration to seating to avoid cross contamination of food from child to child. Where appropriate, an adult will sit with children during meals to ensure safety and minimise risks

- At each meal and snack time, we ensure the practitioner who is directly placing the meals on the table, is responsible for checking that the food being provided meets all the requirements for each child
- Where appropriate, discussions will also take place with children about allergies and potential risks to make them aware of the dangers of sharing certain foods
- Staff show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. They do not use a child's diet or allergy as a label for the child, or make a child feel singled out because of their diet or allergy.

Provision for cultural and dietary preferences

- Where possible, we provide foods from the diet of each of the children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones
- Cultural differences in eating habits are respected.

Learning about food and cooking with children

- Staff support children to make healthy choices and understand the need for healthy eating
- We promote positive attitudes to healthy eating through play, growing, cooking opportunities and discussions.

Celebrations and special occasions

- We will sometimes celebrate special occasions with treats such as cake, sweets or biscuits. These will be given at snack/mealtimes to help prevent tooth decay and not spoil the child's appetite
- We allow parents to bring in cakes on special occasions but they must be shop bought and not home-made
- We ensure that all food brought in from parents meet health and safety requirements and that ingredients are listed, following the Food Information for Consumers (FIR) 2014.

Food safety and hygiene

- All staff who prepare and handle food are competent to do so and receive training in food hygiene. The nursery manager updates their training every three years, and makes staff aware of any changes to food safety and hygiene advice.
- All staff are trained in preparing foods safely to avoid the risk of choking, following the Foods Standards Agency guidelines
- All staff are aware of the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis
- All staff are aware of the differences between allergies and intolerances, including that they need to maintain vigilance as children can develop allergies at any time
- In the very unlikely event of any food poisoning affecting two or more children on the premises, whether or not this may arise from food offered at the nursery, we will inform Ofsted as soon as reasonably practical and in all cases within 14 days. We will also inform the relevant health agencies and follow any advice given.

Food brought from home

- In line with the governments insistence that food charges must not be mandatory to access Early Education funding, we now have to allow children to bring packed lunches into the setting if parents request. We provide parents with guidelines for nutritious content and signpost to the NHS packed lunch guidance: <https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes/>
- We share the Food Standards Agency choking hazards guidance to support parents to prepare foods to reduce choking hazards

- We request parents use ice packs as we do not have sufficient space to store in a refrigerator
- We provide reheating services for children's packed lunches
- Children's lunch boxes are checked prior to giving the contents to the children to ensure any risks from potential allergens or choking hazards are managed.
- This is managed on a case-by-case basis as the request to opt out of nursery food arises.

This policy was adopted on:

Signed on behalf of the nursery:

Date for review: