

## **The Ark**

### **Nutrition Policy**

We aim to promote healthy eating within the Nursery through projects we do with the children, through communication with the children's parents/carers and the structure of the day at the Childcare Centre.

We are committed to equality of opportunity (please see our Equal Opportunities policy), and plan our programme to extend the children's experience and knowledge of other cultures, celebrations and festivals, to include the different foods eaten.

We try to make the children aware of the different food groups and the need for a balanced diet through play and discussion.

Our registration form, which is completed by parents in respect of every child, asks the parents to record if the child suffers from any allergies (including food intolerance) and whether the child has any special dietary requirements (e.g. vegetarian, religious, cultural, medical).

We provide healthy snacks and milk for the children at snack time and water is available for whenever the children are thirsty (the children are made fully aware of this when they join us.) On special occasions such as birthdays, cake may be made available.

All meals are home cooked using fresh ingredients where possible. No artificial colours, flavours or preservatives are used in foods. No salt is added during cooking.

We request that parents support us in our healthy eating aims when providing packed lunches for their children in the following ways:

- Lunch boxes must be clean and clearly named, inside and out.
- Any items requiring refrigeration should be labelled with child's name and placed in the fridge by staff.
- Pack drink in a non-breakable container with your child's name on it
- Avoid any foods such as crisps, chocolate, sweets or fizzy drinks or any other foods with high levels of additives/colourings (some children are highly sensitive to these ingredients which can severely affect their behaviour and/or make them sick)
- Avoid any foods with a nut content as children with a severe allergy to nuts can suffer extreme reactions even via indirect contact.
- Fruit or vegetable and dairy snacks are encouraged

We are of course conscious of parental choice and where possible will comply with parent's wishes regarding the above.

We aim to promote hygiene by getting the children to wash their hands before snacks or meals (for further information please see our Health and Safety policy). We try to make snacks and meals sociable occasions with the children sitting down together in small groups. We also ask our staff when eating with the children to adhere to this policy. We endeavour to inform parents how well children having hot meals provided by The Ark have eaten.

For those having packed lunch, any uneaten food will be left in the children's lunch boxes in order that parents can then see what the child has or has not eaten.