1.19 Food and Drink (Safer Eating)

Policy statement

This setting regards snack and lunch times as an important part of the setting's day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating. At snack and lunch times, we would like parents/carers to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs.

1. **Procedures**

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

1.2 Before a child starts to attend the setting, we find out from parents their children's dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies. (See the Managing Children with Allergies policy.)

1.3 We regularly consult with parents to ensure that our records of their children's dietary needs - including any allergies - are up-to-date.

1.4 We display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed about them

1.5 The setting has staff members with up-to-date Food Hygiene Certificates

1.6 .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.

1.7 We have a “no nut” policy and take care not to provide food containing nuts or nut products and are especially vigilant where we have a child/adult who has a known allergy to nuts.

1.8 Parents are made aware of our “no nut” policy when they join and are reminded regularly via our termly newsletter and there is a sign on the table in the entrance.

1.9 We require staff to show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. Staff 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.

1.10 We organise snack and lunch times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate.

1.11 We use snack times to help children to develop independence through finding their own snack box, opening boxes, wrappers, containers, and pouring drinks for themselves.

1.12 We have fresh drinking water constantly available for the children. They can ask for water at any time during the session.

1.13 We provide semi-skimmed milk or water with snacks.

1.14 In order to protect children with food allergies, we discourage children from sharing and swapping their food with one another.

1.15 Snacks are provided by parents daily and we encourage them to provide nutritious food for snacks

1.16 Through discussion with parents and research reading by staff, we obtain information about the dietary rules of the religious groups to which children and their parents belong, and of vegetarians, vegans and other special diets, and about food allergies. We take account of this information in the provision of food and drinks

1.17 Children have opportunities to learn about growing food, food preparation, healthy eating, balanced diet, hygiene and oral health

2. ***Lunchboxes***

2.1 Packed lunches, provided by the parents should be clearly labelled with the child's name.

2.2 We inform parents about healthy eating practice

2.3 We encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit, and milk based desserts 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 milk;

2.4 We 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;

2.5 We provide children with plates, cups and cutlery if needed.

2.6 We ensure staff sit with children to eat their snack/lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion. We have one member of staff sat at the table with the children to ensure children's safety whilst eating.

2.7 Parents/carers will be advised if their child is not eating well.

2.8 Grapes should always be cut up to reduce the risk of choking. If parents provide whole grapes, staff will cut them up before the child eats them. We send regular reminders about this.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	St Christopher's Playgroup	name of setting
Held on	September 2026	(date)
Date to be reviewed	September 2027	(date)
Signed on behalf of the management committee	KJCookes	
Name of signatory	Karen Cookes	
Role of signatory (e.g. chair)	Manager	