Issue 1

Review Date: August 2014

Meal/snack time policy

Children’s health is an integral part of their emotional, mental, social, environmental and spiritual well being.

Kaleidoscope Nursery values the importance of providing children with healthy, balanced and nutritious meal and snack times.

We have been accredited for the CHEYSA (Coventry Healthy Early Years Setting Award) which is a quality tool and enables us to promote the health of the children and their families in Coventry. The scheme provides quality assurance to parents that we have met targets in 6 identified areas of health promotion:

Breastfeeding, Healthy Nutrition, Physical Activity, Oral Health, Immunisation and Stop smoking.

Staff have been trained in the above 6 areas, this includes visits from health care professionals to discuss menu planning, drinks, portion sizes, snacks, etc. It is of vital importance that we work in partnership with parents and carers to establish and maintain healthy eating patterns and attitudes.

Preparation and effective Hygiene Practice

Our Nursery cook is responsible for the preparation and cooking of food, and receives food hygiene training every 3 years. All other staff responsible for serving food also receive food hygiene training every 3 years. Any person without this training can help to prepare/serve food providing they are under direct supervision of a member of staff with the food hygiene certificate.

Our Nursery cook is also responsible for maintaining records such as ‘safer food better business’ which is recommended by Environmental Health. Environmental Health visit the setting every year, we currently have a 5 star rating which is displayed on our front door.

Before the preparation and serving of food staff must adhere to specific procedures to ensure children’s health and hygiene.

\* Staff and children wash their hands using warm water and soap, children are monitored to ensure that his is done properly. Children then sit at the table to wait for their meal/snack, the bathroom doors are then closed for the duration of the mealtime

\* Tables are sanitized before the children sit down and high chairs are sanitized immediately before and after use.

\* Food is adequately covered and stored appropriately, when being transported from the kitchen into the playroom to avoid any contamination

\* Any utensils/food which has been contaminated/ dropped on the floor are never re-used. There is a clean supply of utensils on hand if needed.

Menu planning/working in partnership with parents

Menus are displayed on the notice board in every room and are discussed with parents at induction. The menus are devised using guidelines such as Eating well for under 5’s. The menus are reviewed with a nutritionist every 6 months to ensure children are receiving a balanced diet. Alternative meals are provided for vegetarian/vegan and special diets are catered for these are available on a separate menu.

We are guided by Eating well for under 5’s to gage portion sizes, we have the correct size bowls on display for staff to provide the correct portion to each child.

Parents/carers have the opportunity to share and input ideas for menu planning on our annual questionnaire. Parents/carers are informed of their child’s daily eating by daily diaries where meals are discussed.

Water is available throughout the day in each room. The baby room use cups with lids for children under 12 months and cups without lids for 12 months+. Staff in the baby room encourage the children at regular intervals to drink water. In all other rooms children are able to access their own water throughout the day however in hot weather the children are reminded at frequent intervals to have a drink. Parents are not allowed to bring in drinks from home.

4-11 Klub bring in a packed lunch which is stored in the fridge in line with environmental health regulations, any leftover food is put back into the lunch box so parents are aware of how much the child has eaten. Information on healthy lunch boxes is available on display for parents.

Supervision and safety during mealtimes

Children are never left unsupervised when eating, younger babies are placed in a high chair and fed individually. Other children sit in small key groups and their key person sits at the table with them. Staff sit within arms length and facing the children so it is easy to spot a child who may be choking or having difficulty eating. Ratio is maintained at meal times.

Younger children requiring bottle feeding are held and supported by staff, whilst maintaining good interaction. Children are encouraged to sit at a table whilst drinking, they are prevented from walking around with cups.

Appropriate feeding utensils are provided for children according to their needs and stage of development, children are encouraged to be independent at meal times.

Meeting individual needs

Upon induction children’s individual dietary needs are discussed with the key person, this may be due to allergy, medical, cultural or religious belief. Any child with an allergy will need a health care plan which is reviewed every 3 months. All dietary needs are reviewed by the supervisor every month. Dietary requirements are on display in every room and also in the kitchen

If a child does not like a particular meal then they will be encouraged to try it, alternative ways of serving the food may be considered i.e not always mixing food types together i.e pasta and sauce served separately or no gravy given to a child etc.

Staff have accessed Eating well for under 5’s training and emotional eating, this information has been cascaded to all nursery staff.

We use an independent snack bar for all rooms, older children use their name cards as a way of self registration and younger children use the snack bar in their key groups this is to monitor which children have accessed the area.

Schedule/appropriate feeding times

Throughout the day the children are provided with breakfast, fruit time, lunch and pudding, fruit time and afternoon snack, the children have access to drinking water at all times. A drink of milk is provided at breakfast and afternoon snack.

Individual feeding patterns for very young babies are discussed with the parents and followed. If a child falls to sleep before or during their meal, the meal is saved and stored in a ‘hot oven’ to maintain the correct temperature for a maximum of 2 hrs. Children are given plenty of time to eat their meals at their own pace.

Learning and development opportunities

Meals and snack times are used to maximise children’s learning and development, practitioners who sit with the children use feeding times to encourage social interaction, language development and independence. Older children help to set the table, pour drinks and clear their own plates.

Meal times are a sociable and pleasant occasion where children are encouraged to take turns in conversation with practitioners and peers. Practitioners talk about concepts such as colours, numbers, quantity, science and healthy eating. However children are not forced into joining in conversation if they do not wish to do so.