**Food and Drink**

Top Place Preschool regards snack and meal times as an important part of the preschool day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating. At snack and meal times, we aim to provide healthy snacks, which meets the children's individual dietary needs.

**Procedures**

Before a child starts to attend the preschool, we ask their parents about their dietary needs and preferences, including any allergies.

We record information about each child's dietary needs in the child’s file and on a list in the room. The information is also stored on our preschool database.

Each child will be given a customised table mat displaying their allergies/dietary requirement at snack time.

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

We display current information about each individual child’s dietary needs so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed about them.

We implement systems to ensure that children receive only fruits, vegetables, dairy etc that is consistent with their dietary needs and preferences as well as their parents' wishes.

We provide nutritious food for all snacks, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.

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 his/her diet or allergy.

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

We use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, drinking and feeding themselves.

* **Packed lunches**

We cannot provide cooked meals and children are required to bring **NUT FREE** packed lunches, however we:

Ensure perishable contents of packed lunches are refrigerated

Inform parents of our policy on healthy eating;

Encourage parents to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit etc. We discourage chocolates and sweet drinks, only water is allowed.

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;

* Provide children, bringing packed lunches, with plates, cups and cutlery; and

Ensure staff sit with children to eat their lunch so that the mealtime is a social occasion.