

Whitelees Primary School & Nursery Class



Loving Lunch Policy

Parent/carer Guide

Each session, every child will be offered the opportunity to enjoy lunch in Nursery. North Lanarkshire Council provides a set, nutritious menu prepared by NLC Catering Services, and our nursery benefits from its own designated Catering Assistant. The menu operates on a three-week rotation and nursery staff will keep parents/carers informed of any changes or seasonal updates.

Nursery staff work together to create a warm, relaxed and welcoming lunch environment where children can enjoy an unhurried and sociable experience. Lunchtimes allow staff to talk with children, build relationships, support wellbeing and promote key independence and life skills in line with Realising the Ambition.

Promoting Independence and Children's Rights

Staff will always encourage children to take part in age appropriate roles, such as helping to serve food, while ensuring support is available when needed. Independence, choice and autonomy are encouraged at every stage.

Lunches operate in two sittings, giving children the opportunity to choose when they would like to eat, in line with the UNCRC Article 12 (voice of the child) and NLC's child-centred practice. Staff will ensure all children access the Loving Lunch experience in a way that suits their needs and stage of development.

Food Standards, Health and Safety

All meals follow national and local nutritional guidance, including Setting the Table and NLC Catering Standards. Meals are low in salt and sugar and include a variety of healthy fruits and vegetables. Children will always have access to water, with milk offered at snack. This supports Setting the table guidance which supports reducing children's milk intake as evidence suggest milk can reduce appetite when children are eating solid foods. Fresh drinking water is always available and accessible to children. We recognise as we support children through this change we will sensitively support children to drink water and milk can/will be provided if required. Staff will use professional judgement as we understand children have preferences aswell.

Children with allergies, intolerances or dietary requirements are clearly identified and supported. Procedures are firmly in place to ensure safety and consistency. Alternative meals or drinks are provided by Catering Services where required, and any dietary documentation must be signed by a relevant medical professional.

Parents/carers should keep the nursery informed of any new or changing dietary needs so that procedures can be updated promptly.

A Positive, Calm Mealtimes Experience

Staff will never force children to eat foods they do not want to eat, nor will children be expected to finish their plate. Staff offer sensitive encouragement and model positive language around food. Children eat at their own pace in an unhurried environment and are supported to explore new foods should they wish.

If a parent/carer has concerns about their child's eating habits, staff can liaise with the child's Health Visitor for guidance. Health Visitors may, where appropriate, refer children to additional services (e.g. Dietetics). The nursery will work closely with families to ensure children's needs are understood and supported.

Parents/carers may request a vegetarian option for their child. Staff will work with the Catering Manager to ensure an appropriate and nutritious alternative is available.

At times, menus may change for special celebrations (e.g. Christmas lunch, themed days). Children and parents/carers will be informed in advance of any changes.

The daily menu, including visual prompts, is displayed within the nursery for children and families. The most up-to-date NLC Nursery Lunch Menu can be accessed at any time via the North Lanarkshire Council website: [Nursery School Menu | North Lanarkshire Council](#)

NLC will notify the nursery of any seasonal or necessary amendments.

Loving Lunches is an integral part of your child's day at Nursery. This policy has been created in order to continue to provide the best possible lunch experience for your child, and to set clear expectations on how we can continue to work in partnership with parents/carers and additional services to ensure we are getting it right for all children during their lunch experience.

UNCRC Links: Article 24 (health and health services) Every child has the right to the best possible health. Governments must provide good quality health care, clean water, nutritious food, and a clean environment and education on health and well-being so that children can stay healthy. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.

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