

Staying for Lunch at The Lawns

We offer a lunch time session at The Lawns

Timings: From the end of the morning session at 11.45
To the beginning of the afternoon session at 12.30

Cost: £3.45 for Nursery children
£4.20 for Saplings children

Children bring a packed lunch and are supported by three members of staff throughout lunchtime. Please ask at Reception for booking forms.

Lunchtime Routine

- 11.30 Morning children staying for lunch play outside.
- 11.45 Afternoon children booked in for lunch arrive.
- 11.45 Children go to the bathroom to get ready for lunch.
- 12.00 Lunch is split into two groups. One group goes upstairs to Treetops and the other younger group stays in the Nurture Room and will eventually go upstairs as they mature. When the weather is appropriate we sometimes have lunch outdoors in the garden. As children finish their lunch they visit the bathroom to wash and use the toilet.
- 12.30 Children who have finished lunch join the afternoon session or go home. Any children still eating stay with a member of staff till they have finished.



Some useful things to know

- For the upstairs children, lunch boxes should be placed on the yellow lunch trolley which can usually be found to the right of the main front door. The children staying in the Nurture Room have a basket for their lunch boxes which can be found next to the yellow lunch trolley.
- After lunch the trolley and basket are put back outside ready for you to collect the lunch boxes.
- Please ensure lunch boxes/drinks are clearly labelled on the outside as many children have the same lunch boxes.
- Children sit in small social groups at a table.
- There are at least three members of staff with the children at all times.
- Staff support each group. Sitting with the children they model and encourage good social practices with children eg manners, sharing, quiet conversations.
- We are a healthy eating school and ask that you provide a healthy diet and take time to read the leaflet regarding healthy pack lunches.

- We offer milk or water to children who do not bring their own drinks.
- We leave what your child does not eat in their lunch box (we remove messy foods/drinks such as yogurt) so you can judge what your child is eating and readjust the contents.
- Staff will feed back any concerns eg when they haven't eaten much or they were struggling to eat the amount of food you are offering.



Allergies

Please make sure staff know if your child has an Allergy or dietary need and keep us informed of any changes. We have a list of children with allergies / health issues which are formatted from information gathered at home visits. We depend on parents and carers to keep us informed of changes.

We ask that you do not give your child any food that contains nuts eg peanut butter.

Children are discouraged from sharing their food.



Lunchtime as a learning opportunity

Above all we see lunch time as a pleasant relaxed time where children can come together and socialise while eating their lunch. But we also recognise there is an opportunity for children to further develop their learning in all areas of the Early Years Curriculum.

Personal, social and emotional development

Making relationships - The lunch time staff are all familiar to the children and because of the nature of lunchtime the children relate well to the adults helping them. The children also develop good relationships with their peers and will mix with other children that they may not have chosen to in the normal sessions eg older children, children from different key groups.

Self-confidence - For many children staying for lunch is a very big step and we recognise that children need sensitive support and gentle encouragement. We encourage children to become independent, manage their own needs, to ask for help when they need it and to cope with different routines. As children become more comfortable we encourage them to take on small tasks eg clearing tables, putting their lunch boxes back on the trolley.

Managing feelings and behaviour - Throughout the lunch period children have lots of opportunity to discuss their feelings, to be able to talk about their likes and dislikes etc. Lunch time is an ideal time to develop positive behaviour and though we have high expectations of all our children we recognise that such social skills take time to develop. The adults are constantly modelling positive responses, behaviour, manners and setting firm boundaries. The children gradually learn about the 'rules', behavioural expectations, the consequences of their behaviour and how to adjust their behaviour in different situations.

Communication and Language - During the lunch period there is a massive opportunity for children to develop their language and communication skills to express themselves effectively, extend their vocabulary and to develop conversation skills. The staff engage children in conversations about a wide range of subjects, extending, challenging and encouraging them to clarify their thinking.

In the calmness and peace of Treetops, lunchtime provides an ideal opportunity to develop children's listening skills, to pay attention and focus on the language that is going on around them.

Physical Development - All children, eventually, have to use the stairs to access 'Treetops' the room where they have lunch. We see this as a great opportunity to develop confidence and safely negotiate the stairs. We recognise new, inexperienced anxious children need extra support, so extra staff assist children with both going up and down the stairs.

As the children develop they are encouraged to be independent throughout their meal, to manage their own needs eg opening packets, putting in straws, so we suggest they 'have a go' or give verbal guidance "if you hold it like this..."

Throughout the meal staff emphasise the importance of healthy food and diet. They reinforce any discussions, activities relating to health needs that have taken part in class eg growing our own vegetables, caring for our teeth, and yoga and exercise sessions.

Staff support children with managing their basic personal hygiene eg using the toilet, washing hands, wiping their face with the aim to becoming completely independent. Once again we use this as an opportunity to discuss taking care of ourselves, why we wash our hands and health and safety.

Literacy - Children are encouraged to be aware of language in the environment and that all those funny marks actually have a meaning. A favourite activity is for the adults to read jokes often found on yogurts! For the more able children staff will encourage children to decode words on packets. Staff will take any opportunity to extend children's interest in the written word.

Mathematics - Children are encouraged to use number language, count and calculate throughout lunchtime. "How many chairs do we need now?" "You have lots of grapes." Staff will talk about size, shape and measure, "Look your sandwiches are a triangle shape. What shape have you got...?" "Wow that's a huge apple." "Your lunch box is very heavy, can you feel it?"

Understanding the World -The children have lots of opportunities to discuss their lives, experiences, events, family, their own culture. They start to learn that we all have similarities and differences eg likes and dislikes, different diets. Children are encouraged to talk about the origins of food and the processes food may have gone through.

Expressive arts and Design - We often have background music on while we eat from different genres. Children are encouraged to notice colour, shape and texture, to comment and discuss on what they see.

