Food and Drink Policy

Children are provided with regular drinks and snacks where appropriate. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.

**Provision of snacks**

Epsom Sure Start Children’s Centre provides snacks of fruit, vegetables, breadsticks or rice cakes for the children attending our Stay and Play sessions or attending one of our crèches. These sessions are planned to encourage children to sit together and share a social event, therefore it is important that parents/carers encourage their child to sit and join in. Children are discouraged from walking around with food.

**Allergies**

The Centre staff make every effort to ensure that none of the food provided during the sessions contains nuts. However, parents/carers are expected to ensure that their child does not come into contact with any food item to which they have a known allergy and would clearly not be suitable for them.

**Healthy eating**

We encourage parents/carers to provide meals for their children that are nutritionally balanced. We do not provide sweet biscuits or sweet treats as a snack. The Centre is committed to running healthy eating activities for parents/carers to learn about providing healthy meals for their children.

**Drinks**

Water is available to children at all times throughout the session using water bottles, cups, beakers or feeder cups. Parents and carers are permitted to make a hot drink using the safety cups provided.
**Hot Drinks Policy**

We take great care to ensure that children are safe whilst attending sessions both at the Children’s Centre and off site. Hot drinks may be offered but only in a safety cup with a lid to prevent accidental spills.

**Breastfeeding**

The Children’s Centre promotes breastfeeding and provides a comfortable, welcoming atmosphere to feed. A private area will be made available for any mother wishing to breastfeed her baby should this be requested. Any mother struggling with breastfeeding will be supported by Centre staff who have attended UNICEF training or signposted onto a Health professional who can further help them.

The Centre operates a Breast Pump Hire Scheme which is advertised in our promotional materials and on posters in the Centre.