Children are supervised during mealtimes and always remain within sight and hearing of staff.

**Snack times**

* A ‘snack’ is prepared mid-morning and mid-afternoon and can be organised according to the discretion of the setting manager e.g. picnic on a blanket.
* Children may also take turns to help set the table. Small plastic jugs are provided with choice of milk or water.
* Children wash their hands before snack-time.
* Children are offered semi-skimmed milk or water.
* Fruit or raw vegetables, such as carrot or tomato, are offered in batons, which children should be encouraged to help in preparing. Bananas and other foods are not cut as rounds, but are sliced into quarters to minimise a choking hazard.
* Portion sizes are gauged as appropriate to the age of the child.
* Biscuits are occasionally offered but bread/toast, crackers or breadsticks are used as good alternatives.
* Children arrive as they want refreshment and leave when they have had enough. Children are not made to leave their play if they do not want to have a snack.
* Staff join in conversation and encourage children’s independence by allowing them to pour drinks, butter toast, cut fruit etc.
* After the children have finished their snack they are encouraged to place their plates and cups into a bowl for washing.

**Mealtimes**

* Tables are never overcrowded during mealtimes (four children at a time at the snack table). Some social distancing is encouraged even though it is acknowledged that children will play in close proximity for the rest of the session.
* Children help staff set tables.
* Children wash their hands before sitting down for snack or packed lunch.
* Children are encouraged to choose what they want and to take their own helpings.
* Children are given time to eat at their own pace and are not hurried to fit in with adults’ tasks and breaks. They are not made to eat what they do not like and are only encouraged to try new foods slowly.
* In order to protect children with food allergies or specific dietary requirements, children are discouraged from sharing and swopping their food with one another.
* If children do not eat their main course, they are not denied pudding. Food is not used as a reward or punishment.
* Mealtimes are relaxed opportunities for social interaction between children and the adults who care for them.
* A specific table is used for snack. At lunchtime the children can choose which table they wish to sit at.
* Our weekly snack menu is shared in our half termly newsletter for inform parents of the foods the children will be offered and parents are given the opportunity of making healthy food suggestions that may be incorporated into our menu.
* Information for parents is displayed on the parent’s notice board, including:
* Ten Steps for Healthy Toddlers <https://infantandtoddlerforum.org/media/upload/pdf-downloads/HR_toddler_booklet_green.pdf>

This policy was adopted at a meeting of **SOUTH WOODHAM PRESCHOOL**

Held on: .....................................................................................

Date to be reviewed: ......................................................................................

Signed on behalf of the provider: ...........................................................................

Name of Signatory: ..........**MRS GILLIAN BOWYER**.............................

Role of Signatory: **CHAIR OF COMMITTEE**