

## **FOOD, MILK AND WEANING POLICY**

### **Link to legislation:**

- Weaning: NHS Guidelines: available at: <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/pages/solid-foods-weaning.aspx>
- School Food Trust –Eat Better Start Better Programme available at :<http://www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk/childrens-food-trust/early-years/ey-resources/>

### **Link to policy**

- Policy on use of Dummies, Teethers and Baby Bottles
- Birthday Celebrations and Cultural Diversity Celebration Policy
- Infection Control Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Special educational needs and disability Policy
- Equality and Inclusion Policy

### **What this policy contains**

1. Food routines and formula milk provision
2. Weaning
3. Nutrition and Meal Times
4. Food Handling Procedures:
  - Food and snacks supplied by parents
  - Cooking activities with children
  - Handwashing
  - Personal Cleanliness
  - Personal Protective Equipment
  - Food Preparation
  - Cooked/ Heated Foods
  - Storing Food
  - Temperature Control
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  - Reporting Illness/ exclusion
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  - Cloths
  - Equipment failure
  - Children with Medical/ Special Dietary Needs
  - First Aid
  - Signage
  - Budget
  - Training and Supervision

### **1. Food Routines**

Parents should aim to bring their children to nursery on time if they need to be provided with a nursery breakfast or meal. If parents are late they should contact the nursery in advance if they need their child's meal offered due to an appointment or their child will not be offered such a meal.

## **Outline of Meal Routines**

1. 8:00-9:00 am: Breakfast (all classrooms)  
10:30 -11:00 am: Group milk/water feeding time for babies.
2. 12:00-12:30 Lunch (all classrooms)
3. 3:00-3:30 pm Tea time Snack (all classrooms)
4. 4:30 pm-5:00 pm: Baby room evening snack including group milk/ water time.

Milk and water feeds for babies are based on a baby's individual needs, so babies have access to milk and water as required throughout the day.

## **Formula milk provision**

For children under one year old the nursery will provide the formula milk without charging the parents/carers. If the child becomes one year old and if the parents/carers wish for the continuation of formula milk after this date or they use another kind of fresh milk different from cow milk, they will be required to purchase and bring in this milk for their child.

## **2. Weaning**

The Nursery understands and respects that all babies and children develop differently and at different paces and it can be a worrying and confusing time for parents/carers during this time.

We aim to make this transition as smooth as possible by ensuring our key persons work closely with you to discuss any dietary requirements your child may have and make appropriate provisions to accommodate any additional needs parents may have.

The introduction of new foods is a gradual process. For babies weaning from breast milk or formula our nursery will steam, grill and puree fruit, meats such as chicken and fish, and vegetables at a consistency that is suitable for the baby's feeding needs. We will help babies become familiar with a great range of tastes and textures through to the beginning of self feeding. Key persons will aim to help babies and toddlers progress toward solid food and encourage all children to experience a variety of different foods by creating opportunities for them to taste and feel different textures of food e.g. via food tasting activities.

The initial process of weaning babies can start around 6 months and can take several months. We have used guidelines from the NHS which contains valuable information on weaning children and would recommend that all parents to visit the link above, and to discuss it with their health visitor. The nature of many food intolerances often remains unclear nevertheless we don't see fit that we delay the introduction of new foods most commonly associated with atopic reactions. The usually accepted list of allergic foods are: gluten containing cereals (wheat, barley, rye, and oats), cow's milk, eggs, fish, cheese. The nursery does not serve meals containing nuts or pork.

We will use information from a child's parents/ carers, and daily planning and observation to ensure that staff is aware of the pace and textures of food a child is accustomed to, and careful one to one supervision will ensure that children are gradually taught how to chew and begin to eat independently at a calm, steady pace with a supportive person there to help them.

When parents join us they are required to complete a Profile Form, before their child begins nursery stating what stage of weaning their child is at and what foods they are already having so that we can continue this. Parents must also record any (known) food intolerances, food preferences or allergies their children may have so we can alert all practitioners involved in cooking and serving meals. Management will carry out a risk assessment in the case of allergies and work alongside parents to put in place an individual Dietary plan for their child.

We will visibly display Menu's and Dietary Needs Lists throughout the nursery on a daily basis, and continue to regularly communicate with parents regarding their child's progress. Menus and further information on food management are displayed on our nursery's website available at [www.elephantandcastledaynursery.co.uk](http://www.elephantandcastledaynursery.co.uk).

We offer babies healthy and balanced home cooked meals including desserts. We aim to provide children with three vegetarian dishes, one meat and one fish every week. We will sometimes offer children comfort

foods such as fish fingers or chicken nuggets, these foods will be blended for babies; the foods will be served with a side of fresh vegetables or salad. Legumes and vegetables high in iron are carefully selected to ensure vegans, and vegetarians are supported nutritionally with every meal e.g. spinach, broccoli, chick peas etc.

The nursery regularly bakes cakes that are free from additives, and low in sugar compared to supermarket alternatives, only small cube portions are served. Cakes are healthy sources of essential nutrients and protein, and so are suitable for all age groups within a healthy balanced diet. Cakes are served on their own or with dairy free custard.

The nursery regularly serves fruit in a raw or cooked form, fruit are available for babies daily either pureed or mashed, on their own or they can be combined with natural yogurt or porridge. Semolina and fromage fraise are also offered to babies and young children, carefully selected to ensure they are low in sugar. We also offer dry fruit to accompany desserts or snacks such as raisins.

For this reason the nursery will not be able to provide tinned, packaged or jarred baby foods with the exception of some baby cereals and baby rice, as labels show that these foods are high in fat, additives such as sugar or salt and are less healthy than home cooked meals.

We would like parents and carers to support us to ensure that children are encouraged to try a variety of common foods. We know that at this age young children may not be keen on trying new foods, or food they are not used to. To help children become independent learners and ensure they make good food choices, we ask parents to cooperate with us. Below are some strategies to support a partnership approach regarding eating:

1. The nursery will as much as possible cook foods that meet the dietary requirements and preferences for all children.
2. At the same time the nursery has a duty to encourage children to get in the habit of trying a variety of common foods that may promote a healthier lifestyle, and that they will likely encounter at primary school e.g.; mash potato, fish pies, carrots, peas and cous cous.
3. Whilst it may be difficult to see a child refuse food we recommend that it is important for parents and practitioners to persevere and encourage a child to try new tastes and textures, offering an immediate alternative will only teach them that adults will give in to any demands. We expect parents to support us with this at home.
4. It is good practice for parents and carers to cook some of the meals we provide to children at home. This will increase the chances of a child getting used to foods, evidence suggests children may need to try a new food at least seven times before they will like it, so it is necessary to persevere at home and at nursery. Please take or download a copy of the menu.
5. The nursery will not be able to offer alternative menus, but minor substitutions may be considered in some exceptional cases e.g. where a child has sensory needs.
6. If Parents or carers have any further concerns about their child's meals, please ask for a sample to be left for you at home time. This will give you an idea of the portion sizes we offer and ingredients, and textures of foods served.
7. If a child has significant developmental needs, we ask parents to take a copy of the menu and highlight or make written suggestions. Once returned to the office, we will arrange a formal meeting to discuss any suggestions or changes.
8. Parents and Carers are required alert the nursery if a child has any changes regarding their health or dietary needs, to do this Parents or Carers need to make an appointment with the nursery manager so that the child's Profile form can be updated.

### **3. Nutrition and Mealtimes**

Mealtimes should be a happy, social occasion for children and staff alike. Positive interactions should be shared at these times and enjoyed. We are committed to offering healthy, nutritious and balanced meals which meet individual needs and requirements. Our Eat Better Start Better programme was commissioned by the Department for Education. Joining the programme is a great way to show how we meet the welfare and nutrition requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

We will ensure that:

- A balanced and healthy midday meal, tea and daily fruit and milk snacks are provided for children attending a full day at the nursery.
- Our Nursery may offer baby healthy snacks, with a parents/carers' consent, in the form of rice cakes, toast, bread sticks, fruit (fresh and dried) and baby biscuits such as Heinz Biscotti biscuits.
- Drinks other than breast milk, formula or water are discouraged.
- Menus are planned in advance, rotated regularly and reflect cultural diversity, different seasons and variation. These are visibly displayed for parents to view/ can be downloaded.
- We provide nutritious food at all snack times and meal times avoiding nuts, large quantities of fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives or colourings. Nut products would not be included in the diet by the nursery but food containing nut traces cannot be ruled out UNLESS a child is at risk of anaphylaxis.
- Parents and children are involved in the menu planning as much as possible.
- Fresh drinking water is constantly available and accessible. It is frequently offered to children and babies.
- Individual dietary requirements are respected and visibly displayed on Dietary Lists in the kitchen and in the classrooms.
- In case of an accident to a child with allergies, the parent will be immediately informed and if authorised, PIRITON / an Epi Pen will be administered to the child as per the doctor's and parents instructions, and the record of its administration will be entered in the medicine consent form for parents to sign. In emergency cases, the ambulance will be called if necessary. –See *Illness and Medication Policy*
- Meals and snack times are organised so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate in small groups. During meal and snack times children are encouraged to use their manners to say 'please' and 'thank you' and conversation is encouraged.
- Staff use meal and snack times to help children develop independence through making healthy choices, serving food and drink, feeding themselves and helping to set up or tidy up their plates. These practices help children to develop healthy eating habits and social skills. High chairs will be placed so babies' can face each other, practitioners will provide babies with age suitable bowls and cutlery to encourage and support baby's self feeding skills. Pieces of food will be cut into small pieces (or rolled into crumbs so it is not sticky) to encourage babies to grasp food.
- Children are given time to eat at their own pace and not rushed.
- Quantities offered take account of the ages of the children being catered for.
- We provide foods from the diet of each child's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones. Cultural differences in eating habits are respected.
- We ensure that packet baby cereals or normal cereals are made with boiled water, formula milk, cow's milk for breakfast. We will ensure that babies aged 6months – 24 months have milk readily available: we provide a range of milk formulas including big brands such as Aptamil and Cow and Gate, and will substitute milk to meet a child's dietary needs.
- Babies can have breast milk. We advise parents to bring breast milk to nursery in a sealed and labelled container, with the date it was expressed, which will be place this in the fridge. The change from breast milk/ formula to cow's milk is encouraged from after 1 year of age.
- The nursery will provide parents with daily records of feeding routines for all children under 2; please note parents must ask if they wish a record to be kept for children aged 12 months and over.
- We promote healthy positive attitudes to healthy eating through play opportunities and discussions. Children will be encouraged to look at books illustrating different foods and use pictures to communicate preferences, they will engage in daily exercise to support a healthy lifestyle.
- We will substitute meat and dairy with alternative products such as quorn, soya, rice or almond milk, to ensure that the menu is accessible for children that cannot eat certain foods, where necessary.

#### **4. Food Handling Procedures**

##### **Food and snacks supplied by parents or carers**

For health and safety reasons, parents and carers are not encouraged to supply food or snacks for their own children or any other children on the premises, except for in exceptional circumstances where a child's health requires it, and this has been approved by the nursery Manager. In such cases food brought to the

nursery by a parent to meet a child's specific dietary requirements must be stored suitably, a list of ingredients and the date the meal was cooked must be suitably displayed.

If parents wish to offer children a snack before or after a nursery session, the snack should be given to the child before they enter, or once they leave the nursery premises. All snacks, (including fruit), and especially those snacks containing nuts should be avoided and not be consumed on the nursery premises at any time.

Parents should avoid storing snacks in their child's pram/buggy, as part of safety checks prams may be moved around or folded by practitioners, increasing the risk of snacks falling out that can affect the safety of children and visitors.

### **Cooking activities with children**

- Children must wash hands before and after cooking activities.
- Children must be supervised at all times.
- Children must wear suitable protective clothing, see PPE
- Children who are unwell should not participate in food activities.
- Staff need to give due notice to the general manager of recipe needs.
- Do not allow children to taste raw eggs either as it is or in mixtures.
- Children should not handle hot foods or products containing chocolate or nuts. Ingredients for cooking activities should be checked carefully.
- Ideally child safe plastic ware and utensils should be used.
- Children should not handle knives or sharp equipment, or any other equipment that could cause serious harm. All activities will be carefully planned and risk assessed in advance.
- Children are not permitted to enter any kitchen preparation areas.
- High risk foods such as eggs, dairy, chocolate should be discussed with the manager if they are planned to be used in cooking.

### **Hand washing and Hand washing Facilities**

Hand washing is vital and should be carried out thoroughly to prevent spread of contamination. An Effective Hand Washing Technique must be used.

- Hand washing facilities are always available for children and staff and include hot (not exceeding 43 degrees) and cold water, liquid soap and paper hand towels/or air dryers.
- Hand washing facilities are available in all kitchen preparation areas, toilets, nappy changing areas, kitchens, baby, toddler and pre-school areas.
- Kitchen and dining areas have a separate sink for washing food and dishes.
- Children are encouraged and reminded to wash their hands after using the toilet, before eating and after playing outside.

Staff must wash their hands:

- before preparing or serving food, and before feeding children
- before eating or drinking
- after going to the toilet
- after assisting children at the toilet
- after nappy changing
- after dealing with any body fluids
- after cleaning procedures
- after caring for sick children
- after handling soiled clothing or items or after dealing with waste
- after removing disposable gloves and/or aprons
- after blowing their nose

## **Hand washing technique:**

- Wet hands under hot water (not exceeding 43 oC for children to prevent scalding), apply liquid soap, rub vigorously paying particular attention to palms, backs, wrists, fingernails and fingers and rubbing between each finger and around the thumbs, rinse, dry thoroughly using disposable paper towels and turn off taps using the paper towel. An aid dryer can also be used to dry hands.
- Staff should cover all cuts and abrasions with waterproof dressings.
- As long as hands are washed correctly, there is no need to use an antibacterial soap, an ordinary soap with moisturizers will adequately clean and kill germs.
- If a Liquid hand wash is used, it must meet the BS EN 1499 Standard (with disinfectant properties) is recommended for extra protection against cross contamination. Information on this label is found on the product label or by contacting the manufacturer or supplier.
- Hygienic Hand Rubs meeting the BS EN 1500 standard can provide an additional level of protection against cross contamination and are recommended after hand washing where there is an increased risk of cross contamination, e.g. when raw foods have been handled prior to hand washing. It should be noted that hygienic hand rubs should never be used as a replacement for hand washing. Hand rubs are available in all kitchen areas, bathrooms, classrooms and hallways.

## **Personal Cleanliness**

Every person working in the food- handling area must maintain a high level of personal cleanliness. They must wear suitable, clean clothing and where necessary protective clothing.

- Staff will not engage in any aspects of minding children while preparing food.
- Hair should be tied back and preferably covered. The minimum expectation is that hair will be tied back irrespective of gender and no grips or clips should be worn.
- Correct protective equipment will be worn. When serving food all staff are required to wear disposable plastic aprons and to wear suitable head covering e.g. hat or a hair net.
- Sensible footwear should be worn, not open sandals. Shoes should have suitable grip to prevent slipping.
- Food handlers should not sneeze or cough over food
- Cuts and sores should be covered with a waterproof (preferably highly visible) dressing
- Jewellery should be kept to a minimum when preparing and handling food. Staff should not wear watches or jewellery when preparing food (except a plain wedding band). Any other items of jewellery that cannot be removed must be covered with a blue plaster.
- Staff should try to minimize direct contact with raw food by the use of tongs, utensils and the safe use of disposable gloves.
- Fingernails should be kept short and clean, food handlers should not wear nail varnish, false nails or nail extensions.
- Staff should not smoke, drink, eat or chew gum while handling food. Staff should also avoid touching their face or nose, or coughing and sneezing over or near food, and wash hands if they do.

## **Personal Protective Clothing (PPE)**

- All staff working in the food preparation area should wear suitable, clean protective clothing. Ideally, they should be light - coloured with no external pockets, which should be changed and laundered regularly at a suitably high temperature, in order to protect the food you are preparing.
- If protective clothing becomes contaminated from handling raw food it must be changed before handling ready-to-eat food.
- It is also a good idea to wear a clean apron or disposable apron over work clothes.
- The use of disposable plastic aprons is recommended when carrying out any activities where raw foods are being handled and where there is a high risk of protective clothing being contaminated by raw foods.
- Hand washing should take place after removing contaminated clothing and before putting on clean protective clothing.

## **Food Preparation**

- Food should be prepared in a suitable environment.
- Food handlers must use the correct colour coded chopping boards (e.g. red for raw met etc.)
- Raw and cooked foods should be in separate areas.

- Perishable food must be stored at the correct temperature below 5 oC in a refrigerator when not being used.
- Food should be kept covered at all times.
- Waste should be disposed of properly and out of the reach of children, particularly young children.
- Keep a lid on dust bins and wash hands after using it.
- All fresh fruit and vegetables should be washed thoroughly before use.
- The water supply used for washing up should be 60 oC.
- Tea towels will be kept clean and stored in a dust – free place. Clean dish cloths and tea towels must be used for each food session.
- All aprons will be wiped down with an anti-bacterial product or washed after use.

### **Cooked/Heated Foods**

- All cooked foods must reach minimum core tem of 75°C. Foods must be checked using a temperature probe.
- When foods are reheated, a minimum core temperature of 82°C must be reached. The temperature of a selection of foods must be checked and recorded daily using the temperature probe to ensure that it is consistently achieved.
- Foods must be cooled quickly, ideally within 90 minutes and place in the fridge for safe storage. All food should be kept covered and refrigerated where appropriate.
- All waste food should be disposed of in the appropriate bins and hands washed after use.

### **Storing Food**

- Use by dates must be checked daily and foods used or thrown out before their dates expire.
- Opened food should be stored according to their packet instructions and in accordance with their sell by or use by dates.
- Raw and cooked meat should be stored separately within the fridge.
- Dried foods should be stored in airtight containers, clearly labelled and the use by date present.
- Food and drink stock should be rotated and checked regularly.

### **Temperature control**

It is the policy of Elephant and Castle Day nursery to ensure that any and all foods are stored according to safe food handling practises and at the correct temperature in order to prevent the growth and multiplication of food poisoning organisms, to reduce the rate of food spoilage and to ensure that food quality is maintained.

Control measures:

- Fridge and freezer temperatures are checked and recorded on a daily basis to ensure the correct temperature is being upheld.
- All food should be piping hot and above 63 degrees or above.
- Cold food must be kept at 8 oC or below.
- The fridge temperature should ideally be under 5°C.
- This should be checked daily and recorded. If the temperature is higher, close the door and recheck. If necessary adjust fridge setting. If the fridge temperature is above 8°C, report to management immediately
- .The freezer temperature should ideally be between -18°C to -22°C. This should be checked daily and recorded.
- If the temperature is higher, recheck and adjust if necessary. If the temperature is above - 13°C, report to management immediately.
- Chilled foods should only be kept at room temperature during use and returned to the fridge straight away. If chilled foods are left out of the fridge for a period of more than 20 minutes, they should be discarded.
- When food is reheated, it must be steaming hot all the way through; a temperature probe should be used to ensure food is at the required temperature.
- Fridge and freezers should be regularly cleaned and defrosted as per the cleaning schedule.

## **Defrosting**

- If you defrost food you must do this in a way that minimises the risk of harmful bacteria growing, or toxins forming in the food.
- Following defrosting, food must be handled in a way that minimises the risk of harmful bacteria growing or toxins forming e.g. keeping food in the fridge.

## **Reporting Illness/Exclusion**

No one is allowed to handle food or enter a food area if they:

- are suffering from, or carrying, a disease likely to be transmitted through food
- have infected wounds, skin infections, sores
- have diarrhoea or vomiting
- There is a requirement to report illness that may present a hazard to food safety and to exclude people from food handling duties where there is any likelihood of causing contamination of food.
- Food handlers suffering from any of the complaints listed on the 'Return to Work Questionnaire' must be excluded from food handling until they have fully recovered.
- It is good practice to encourage staff to also report if anyone in their household is suffering from diarrhoea, stomach upset or vomiting.
- The law puts the responsibility on employers to satisfy themselves that no food handler poses a risk to food safety.
- Staff should tell their manager if they have any cuts or sores and these should be completely covered with a brightly coloured waterproof dressing.
- If staff are not 'fit for work', move them out of food handling areas or send them home. Throw away any unwrapped foods they have handled.

## **Exclusion/return to work after illness**

- It is recommended that staff should not return to work until they have been free of gastrointestinal symptoms (vomiting/diarrhoea) for 48 hours.
- Staff who have been taking anti-diarrhoeal medication should not return to work until they have been symptom-free for at least 48 hours after stopping use of the medication.
- Certain infections including dysentery, E. coli O157, typhoid and paratyphoid require formal exclusion and then medical clearance before returning to food handling duties.
- A 'Return to Work Questionnaire' can be found in the office. Please note that some individuals may have medical conditions that cause changes to bowel habits which are not associated with a risk of infection. In such cases, only a change in bowel habit associated with a possible infection should be considered significant.

## **Cleaning food preparation areas:**

A Kitchen and Eating Area Cleaning Schedule, as well as a general Classroom Equipment Cleaning schedule are in place and displayed in every food preparation and play areas. Practitioners are required to be aware of the cleaning schedules and cleaning methods that need to be used.

- Every week the fridge is thoroughly cleaned and all items in the fridge are checked for freshness, and all food past their use by or best before date are correctly disposed of.
- Shelves and drawers are removed and cleaned with warm soapy water
- The inside walls are cleaned from top to bottom with anti-bacterial cleaner
- The deals around the fridge are cleaned to ensure no spillages or stains
- Freezers are defrosted (on non-frost-free) every 3 months or sooner as needed following the same procedure.
- All work surfaces should be washed down and then cleaned with anti-bacterial cleaner and disposable cloths.
- All chopping boards are cleaned after use with warm soapy water, anti-bacterial cleaner and then thoroughly rinsed.
- All spills should be wiped up immediately.

The manager will ensure that appropriate controls are in place to prevent cross contamination and that these controls are documented and reviewed accordingly.



## **Cloths**

- Cloths can be one of the top causes of cross-contamination in the kitchen. It is essential to use them safely to prevent bacteria and allergens from spreading.
- Use disposable cloths wherever possible, and throw them away after each task.
- Always use a new or freshly cleaned and disinfected cloth to wipe work surfaces, equipment or utensils that will be used with ready-to-eat food.
- Dirty cloths should be stored in a separate basket away from other dirty linens.
- Dishcloths and tea towels should be washed daily.
- If using re-usable cloths, make sure they are thoroughly washed, disinfected and dried properly between tasks (not just when they look dirty). Ideally, wash cloths in a washing machine on a very hot cycle. A suitably high temperature can be obtained using a hot cycle of 90°C.

## **Equipment Failure**

- Report all equipment failure to the general manager or management as soon as it is discovered.
- Any hazards should be reported to the manager using a risk assessment template, so that the hazard can be properly managed and reviewed.
- Equipment inventories must be kept of all equipment stored.

## **Children with Medical Conditions and Dietary Needs**

- Food handlers should consult the dietary needs list displayed in every food preparation area when they prepare or serve food.
- Food handlers should consult and liaise with the general management managing special requirements.
- Nuts or nut products, and pork products are prohibited from use in the nursery.

## **First Aid**

- A first aider should be consulted in the first instance. See appropriate lists in classrooms.
- Food handlers must have access to a kitchen first aid box; they must ensure this is kept fully stocked.
- Any problems should be reported to the general manager or management.

## **Signage**

Food handlers must ensure the appropriate First Aid, COSHH, CLEAPPS and Emergency notices are displayed.

## **Budget**

The Director will be responsible for making expenditure from the specialist budget.

Funding for food initiatives outside of the specialist food are will need to be sought from the Director.

## **Training and supervision**

At Elephant and Castle Day nursery we make sure that any staff who handle food are supervised and instructed and / or trained in food hygiene in a way that is appropriate for the work they do.

- Only staff that holds relevant Food Handling Certificates can prepare food.
- Food handlers are trained and verified as competent in an effective hand washing technique, by the means of continuous training and supervision.
- We make use of the "Safer Foods, Better Business" pack and guidance published by the Food Standards Agency (FSA). The pack enables managers to audit that correct procedures are being followed.
- We are also annually inspected by Environmental health, to ensure health and hygiene standards are being met.
- Food hygiene training will be monitored by the general manager.
- Regular management peer observations ensure that the food handlers, food records and safety signage in relation to safe food preparation are continuously supervised and monitored.
- New staff members who will be involved in food preparation should attend a food hygiene induction with the manager and a formal training day at the earliest opportunity.

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