



Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Policy

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Revision Record

Revision No.	Date issued	Prepared By	Approved By	Comments
1	01.09.25	EM, EP		New policy put in place

Introduction

At Haylands Preschool and in Reception at Haylands Primary School, we believe that mealtimes should be happy, social occasions for children and staff alike. We promote shared, enjoyable positive interactions at these times.

We are committed to offering and supporting children to have a healthy, nutritious and balanced meal and snacks, which meet individual needs and requirements to ensure they get the right amount of nutrients and energy, develop positive eating habits early on to prevent children from becoming overweight.

'The early years are a crucial time to reduce health inequalities and set the foundations for a lifetime of good health' [Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition guidance}.

We ensure that:

- A balanced and healthy morning (approx 09:30 - 10:30) and afternoon (approx 13:00 - 14:00) snack is provided for children attending our provision.
- We encourage children to eat a balanced diet containing a wide variety of foods.
- Snack menus are planned in advance for the term ahead and in line with guidance produced by the Department for Education. These are rotated regularly, reflect cultural diversity will be adapted to meet religious and dietary needs.
- Snack menus include a variety of different foods, tastes, textures and colours.
- We provide nutritious food at snack, avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar, salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- Snack menus include at least one serving of fresh fruit and vegetables per day
- Children are involved in menu planning; we will review their likes, dislikes and preferences on a regular basis.
- We share the menu with parents/carers including the appropriate food allergen information.
- Only whole and semi-skimmed milk and water are provided as drinks to promote oral health. Fresh drinking water is always available and accessible. It is frequently offered to children and intake is monitored. In hot weather staff will encourage children to drink more water to keep them hydrated.
- Individual dietary requirements are respected. We gather information from parents regarding their children's dietary needs, including any special dietary requirements, preferences and food allergies that a child has and any special health requirements, before a child joins the setting. Where appropriate, we will carry out a risk assessment in the case of allergies and work alongside parents to put into place an individual dietary plan for their child.
- We give careful consideration to seating to avoid cross contamination of food from child to child. Where appropriate, an adult will sit with children during meals to ensure safety and minimise risks. Where appropriate, discussions will also take place with children about allergies and potential risks to make them aware of the dangers of sharing certain foods.

- Staff show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. They do not use a child's diet or allergy as a label for the child, or make a child feel singled out because of their diet or allergy.
- Preschool staff set a good example and sit with the children to model good table manners at lunchtime.
- 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 and conversation is encouraged.
- Staff use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drinks and feeding themselves.
- Staff support children to make healthy choices and understand the need for healthy eating.
- All food served to children is prepared in a way to prevent choking.
- Where possible, we provide foods from each of the children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new flavours from around the world.
- Cultural differences in eating habits are respected.
- Children not on special diets are encouraged to try a small piece of everything.
- Children who refuse to eat at lunchtime are offered food later in the day.
- Children are given time to eat at their own pace and not rushed; we have a set time in the dinner hall however children are able to eat once they return to their classroom.
- Quantities offered take account of the ages of the children being catered for in line with recommended portion sizes for young children.
- We promote positive attitudes to healthy eating through play opportunities and discussions.
- No child is ever left alone when eating or drinking to minimise the risk of choking.
- We will sometimes celebrate special occasions such as birthdays with the occasional treat of foods such as cake, sweets or biscuits. These will be given out to the children at home time, so parents are able to make the decision on when and if their child consumes these.
- We **do** allow parents to bring in treats on special occasions, these treats will need to be shop brought and sealed in the original packaging. We ensure that all food brought in from parents meets the above and health and safety requirements and ingredients that are listed within the Food Information for Consumers (FIR) 2014 and detailed in the allergens policy and procedure
- All staff who prepare and handle food are competent to do so and receive training in food hygiene which is updated every three years.
- In the very unlikely event of any food poisoning affecting two or more children on the premises, whether or not this may arise from food offered at our setting, we will inform Ofsted as soon as reasonably practical and in all cases within 14 days. We will also inform the relevant health agencies and follow any advice given.
- We are compliant with the School Food Standards, this is mandatory for maintained schools, and preschool units within primary schools.

School Meals

All children are able to order lunchtime meals through our main school system (free to all in Reception). These are provided by our school catering service: Chartwells. Chartwells offer a range of healthy options each day including variations based on dietary needs. Their menu is published twice yearly and sent to parents via our school newsletter (and on paper where requested). See their website for more information and their policies: <https://www.chartwells.co.uk/primaries/>

Packed lunches

We do allow children to bring packed lunches into the setting. We provide parents with guidelines for nutritious content and signpost to the NHS packed lunch guidance (<https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes/>).

We request parents use ice packs in the lunchboxes, we do not provide a refrigerator for packed lunches of the children. Likewise, we are not required and will not reheat food brought in by children.

We ask parents/carers to ensure they clearly label their child's name on the lunchbox and the contents.

We ask parents/carers to be allergy aware and to not put products containing nuts in packed lunches, if we have specific allergies, we will contact parents/carers to update them of this allergy.

Children's lunch boxes are checked prior to giving the contents to the children to ensure any risks from potential allergens or choking hazards are managed.

We ask all parents/carers ensure they cut all food up, young children can choke on small, sticky or slippery foods. Cut foods like tomatoes, grapes, blackberries and other small fruits into quarters. Cook carrots and make sure sausages are cut into very small pieces.

https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/Early%20Years%20Choking%20Hazards%20Poster_English.pdf

[Early years choking hazards food safety advice](#)

Choking can happen with any foods, but 'firm foods', bones and small round foods that can easily get stuck in the throat present a higher risk. Therefore, care givers should follow these five essential steps:
www.food.gov.uk

Planning food activities

Cooking is a great experience for young children and helps to create a positive relationship with food. Children attending the preschool will be provided with weekly opportunities to cook and learn about foods. We will regularly suggest cooking activities for parents/carers to do with their children at home. In Reception year children will continue to have frequent opportunities to help prepare and cook food.