



Healthy Eating And Nutrition (HEYA) Policy

This policy was produced on 20/12/2024.

Where children are provided with meals, snacks and drinks, they must be healthy, balanced and nutritious.

The named persons for ensuring this policy is implemented, monitored and evaluated along with the Committee are: Claire Jones - Manager and Nicky Green - Healthy Eating and Nutrition Lead.

This policy links to the Personal, Social and Emotional area of learning development in the EYFS.

This policy forms part of the 'Healthy Early Years Award' (HEYA) in Southampton and has been developed through consultation with parents, staff and committee members. This has been shared through an Email giving information about the award and our ethos. We welcomed all contributions towards the award and this policy.

Rationale and Aims

This policy is to help establish good eating habits from a young age. To encourage a positive attitude towards diet and healthy foods. To help reduce nutritional deficiencies and to help reduce the chance of becoming overweight or obese, and contributing towards gaining the 'Healthy Early Years Award'.

We aim to ensure all food and drink within our setting promotes health and well-being to staff, children and visitors. This award and policy will help improve the nutrition of children aged 2-School age and ensure we are meeting the statutory requirements of the EYFS.

The Policy applies to the following people:

- Staff- When eating/drinking with children and checking their lunchboxes.
- Parents/Carers- When they are providing water bottles and packed lunches for their children.
- Healthy Eating Lead/Manager- When creating/checking weekly snack menu's.

Objectives

As a setting we aim to:

- Deliver a consistent approach to nutrition.
- Meet the recommended food based standards.
- Ensure that our food provision reflects the ethical, cultural and medical requirements of the children.

We want our staff to be good role models to all children and families in regard to nutrition and healthy eating. All staff will further their knowledge with relevant training.

We will work with parents/carers to ensure packed lunch boxes provided have a variety of foods from the different food groups to ensure the best possible nutrients and portion sizes. We have made factsheets and links available on our Website to help parents make good choices. As a setting, we reserve the right to send home certain food items (nuts/nut products, sweets, chocolate/chocolate flavoured items, cakes, biscuits or fizzy drinks) with suggestions for alternatives.

Our setting's Roles and Responsibilities around Nutrition and Healthy Eating are:

- The food and drink we provide for our morning snack meet the HEYA checklist by ensuring we have a starchy option once a day and a portion of fruit/vegetable once a day. Starchy options will be low in salt and wholegrain options will be included and listed along with nutritional and allergen details. This is available on our Website.
- Sometimes we will provide dairy products as part of our morning snack. All spreads will be rich in mono-unsaturated and poly-unsaturated fats. Low fat or light brands will be avoided.
- yogurt products will be low in sugar.
- We will not provide raw nuts or dried fruit. All tinned fruit will be in natural juices.

- We provide fresh drinking water in children's own water bottles and in a jug with cups. Children have free access to water at all times. Water is regularly topped up and changed to ensure freshness. Adults promote drinking water throughout the day.
- We provide milk along with water at our morning snack time and lunch times where the parents provide a healthy lunchbox..

At Happy Bunnies Pre-School, our snack menu will be available to parents/children on arrival. Children will be shown their options when the snack table is open so they can make their own choices.

If a child is a 'fussy' eater, we will try and encourage them to come to snack and try a small amount. We will feedback to parents. Parents are asked to keep their child's keyperson informed if they struggle with food and/or need any additional support. Children are not forced to eat anything they do not want to.

During some of our weekly activities, we plan food themed events to encourage children to explore new foods either through taste, smell or texture.

In order to protect children with food allergies, intolerances and cultural beliefs, we have a separate table for them to sit (with other children) so that we can monitor them closely. We discourage children from sharing or swapping their food.

All practitioners promote positive social and hygiene skills at eating times. We support children to wash their hands and explain the reasons for this. We ensure our tables are set up with no more than 8 children and one adult to ensure meaningful conversation. We use this opportunity to talk about the food choices they have made, to encourage sitting on their chair, waiting their turn, ensuring they have a drink and supporting with opening packets, pouring drinks and using cutlery. We recognise that this time provides many positive learning opportunities. We encourage children to develop independence in opening their lunch packets and feeding themselves.

Commitment we require from parents and families:

- We ask parents/carers to inform the setting of any cultural, religious and medical dietary needs for their child. This information is gathered before starting at Pre-School and we ask that it is regularly updated to ensure that we are meeting your child's individual needs. Care is taken to ensure that children with allergies do not come into contact with food products that they are allergic to.
- We would like parents to be aware that we are a Healthy Eating Setting and to follow the guidance we provide in regard to providing packed lunches. If parents require any advice or support to help their child eat healthier food, we are happy to help. This can be through the child's key person or the settings Healthy Eating and Nutrition Lead Practitioner.

Lunches

Lunchboxes are provided by parents/carers on our afternoon session. During lunch times we aim to provide a high quality standard of care with a sociable atmosphere during which children can eat and socialise.

Healthy Packed Lunch

- We regard lunch time as an important part of the Pre-School session as it represents a social time for the children and adults and helps children learn about healthy eating.
- We actively promote healthy eating and ask that lunches provided for children reflect this. We ask that lunchboxes Do NOT include any nuts/nut products, sweets, chocolate/chocolate flavoured items, cakes, biscuits or fizzy drinks .
- We provide milk and water at lunch times which children can pour from a jug into a cup promoting independence.
- To ensure safety and prevent the possibility of choking, we request foods that may present a choking risk for example grapes, tomatoes or sausages are cut into smaller pieces and lengthways.
- We reserve the right to send home any unwanted (unhealthy) foods with an explanation of why.

Celebrations such as Birthdays and Cultural events are great opportunities to share learning with the children. Our aim is to do this in a healthy way. For this reason we do not encourage birthday cakes or sweets to be brought into the setting to hand out to other children. This approach also protects children that may have allergies. We celebrate Birthdays by singing 'Happy Birthday' and giving cards and special stickers. If parents wish to bring in a small gift instead of sweets or cake, we encourage a bottle of blowing bubbles or similar.

Oral Health

The setting promotes oral health and hygiene, encouraging healthy eating, healthy snacks and tooth brushing by:

- Providing fresh drinking water which is available at all times and easily accessible.
- Not serving sugary drinks.
- Only serving water and milk at snack time.
- Offering children healthy nutritious snacks with low/no added sugar.
- Discouraging parents from sending in confectionary as a treat.
- Teaching children about toothbrushing by listening to stories, looking at pictures, talking about their own hygiene routines and singing songs.
- Advising parents to stop using dummies once their child is 12 months old.

Evaluation And Review

Our policies are reviewed annually by manager, staff, parents and committee. Our Food Hygiene Certificates have a validation date and are updated accordingly.

Review date:20/12/25

Signed-

Nicola Green Healthy Eating And Nutrition Lead

Claire Jones-Manager.....