



## FOOD AND DRINK POLICY

### STATEMENT OF AIMS

We believe that all children should enjoy a sufficient, well-balanced and healthy diet appropriate to their individual health, taking into account cultural and philosophical dietary requirements.

The Nursery takes positive action to encourage healthy eating. Children learn to enjoy foods, and understand the reason why some foods are healthy and others are not. This is done by providing healthy snacks and meals, by encouraging children to become involved in helping to prepare food and through everyday activities that encourage children to make healthy food choices.

Our lunches are delivered by Zebedees who specialise in providing lunches for Schools/Nurseries. They say

**“We recognise that a nutritious and balanced diet also helps set the foundations for lifelong food preferences - making it vital that children eat well during this period.”**

Children are taught about food-related hygiene, for example, washing their hands before eating. They are also encouraged to share food times together, such as meal and snack times, to promote social skills and good hygiene practices which can play an important part in the social life of children in the Nursery and beyond.

### **Implementation of the policy**

The Nursery Manager must ensure that:

New members of staff, including students and volunteers, must read and adhere to the Food and Drink Policy.

All staff, students and volunteers are made fully aware of individual children's dietary needs and requirements.

The Food and Drink Policy is made available to parent and carers.

Records are kept of dietary and medical requirements and are updated annually or when there are any changes.

### **Allergies and Intolerances to food products and substances**

We ask parents to advise us of any allergies, intolerances or cultural preferences ensure when a child begins at Nursery. Prior to joining, parents must complete the school's medical forms and updated annually or sooner if there are any changes. This information is included on the food/medical emergencies list which includes photos of the children, which is displayed in the Foundation Stage kitchen, hall kitchen and in the main staff room. This must be brought to the attention of all staff working with the children including students and volunteers. The Nursery Manager and all staff members must keep up-to-date with any changes or variances to this information.

Orders placed with Zebedees are tailored to cater for any allergies and intolerance or cultural preferences.

During meal, cooking or snack times children are not allowed to exchange food in order to avoid accidental exposures to allergens.



### **Further procedures to safeguard children:**

At lunch times: The Foundation Stage practitioners for food must verbally confirm with the dinner ladies whether any children have alternative food products due to allergies, intolerances or parent/carer preferences requirements. When preparing snacks and meals, all staff must check allergies, intolerances or parent/carer preferences alerts before providing children with food or drink.

### **Cooking Activities**

We incorporate cooking into our curriculum planning and may share food from different cultures through topics, events or celebrations.

Children take part in regular cookery activities during our Nursery sessions  
Children will not be withheld from taking part in cooking activities unless staff deem it to be an immediate health risk to the child. If this is the case staff will ensure that an alternative activity is made available which safeguards the child from any exposure to known medical risks.

### **Further procedures to safeguard children:**

At cooking times, the nursery practitioner responsible must ensure that a pre-planned cooking objective sheet is in place and a further risk assessment check list has been completed before children can be allowed to participate. No changes to the cooking activity can be made once the risk assessment checklist is complete (without a new risk assessment being carried out).

### **Celebrations and Snacks from Home**

As we are a small setting those parents/carers, who particularly wish their child to celebrate a birthday or other special occasion with food, may bring in a cake or their own choice of celebratory food if they wish. Whilst our numbers remain small our healthy eating is not compromised by allowing this. Please remember we are a nut free setting and all foods brought in are ingredient checked before being offered to children with known allergies.

### **Hot Lunches**

Hot lunches are freshly prepared daily by Zebedees and delivered to school. All the parents/carers choose the child's choice of meal from the menu. The menu is on a 3 week rotation, changed twice yearly. Temperature controls are monitored from delivery through to serving. Zebedees offers a varied menu and also organises special themed days e.g for bonfire night.

Further Information:

Lunch is served at approximately 12.30 – 1.00 pm

### **Tea**

Most children go home at 3.30pm at the end of the school day. Those children who do stay for our Busy Bees Club (after school club) are given a snack tea at 5pm.

The size of the meal portions is designed to be sufficient and adequate to the child's appetite.

### **Refreshments**

Fresh drinking water is freely available to children and staff at all times. Suitable cups or water bottles are readily available and children are encouraged to help themselves. Each child has their own personalised water bottle in school. Staff ensure that all children have



appropriate amounts to drink, especially in hot weather and supply refills as needed when needed.

We are a juice free setting offering water/milk at snack time to encourage good oral/dental health.

We support the children in recognising that they need to drink water before they are thirsty, when they are hot or tired, or feeling unwell.

### **Snack Time**

We plan snack-time as a regular, pleasant and sociable event, which promotes healthy food choices for children aged 2-5 years.

We encourage the children to take turns, to share and be polite.

We encourage common courtesies such as saying 'please' and 'thank you'.

We make every effort to involve staff, parents/carers and children in planning, preparing and serving snacks.

Staff sit with children and encourage them to talk and listen to each other, learning to respect each other's views and opinions, likes and dislikes, etc.

Then menu for snack time rotates over a 3 week cycle.

### **Storage of food**

Food is stored in hygienic and clean airtight containers.

Food that needs to be kept chilled is placed on the appropriate shelf within a fridge.

Food is always eaten by its sell-by date

### **Food and Hygiene**

Staff undertake food hygiene training and follow the recommended procedures. When preparing and serving food staff wear aprons; they tie their hair back; cuts and sores are covered with a waterproof (highly visible) dressing and jewellery is kept to a minimum. If gloves are worn handwashing should take place before putting them on and gloves should be changed when handling different foods. Plates, mugs, utensils, etc. are thoroughly washed in the dishwasher and then left to air dry or dried with a clean cloth before storing in suitable cupboards. The designated food preparation areas are kept hygienically clean and the tables are cleaned before and after every use with antibacterial wipes. No raw meat is handled or prepared in school.

### **The Practice of Good Manners**

Adults are expected to model good manners towards children and vice versa, using "please" and "thank you" appropriately, to reflect a respectful and caring attitude to others. This is particularly emphasised and encouraged at social occasions such as eating together and group activities.

### **Breastfeeding**

We are a breastfeeding friendly setting providing information/leaflets to parents and offer a place for nursing mothers if they need to feed their child.

Monitoring The Policy will be reviewed annually by Head of Foundation Stage.

April 2018



## **HEALTHY EATING TIPS FROM ZEBEDEES**

### **DEALING WITH FUSSY EATERS**

#### **– HOW TO BE A POSITIVE FOOD ROLE MODEL**



**Fussy eating is a developmental stage many children go through as they strive to become more independent, affecting 10-20% of all children under five. This poses a huge challenge for nursery workers, who are under pressure to ensure that every child in their care receives a balanced diet.**

A nutritious diet can stabilise energy, sharpen the mind and improve mood - allowing children to maximise their potential both at home and at nursery. So how can you help encourage children within your setting to eat well and develop a positive relationship with food?

#### **Lead by example**

Children learn by example and love to copy, making nursery workers important influencers when it comes to children's eating habits. To deliver an effective healthy eating policy in a nursery, it is important that all staff send out positive messages about food.

#### **Top tips:**

- Nursery workers should try eating lunch and snacks at the same time as children. Research suggests that group mealtimes have a big impact on children's food choices later in life, and help encourage consumption of fruit, vegetables and dairy products
- When eating around children, nursery workers should make an effort to eat across all food groups – including a good mix of fruit, vegetables, whole grains, dairy products, lean meats, fish, beans and pulses. If you make poor choices, the children in your care will be encouraged to do the same.
- It is crucial to pay close attention to the way all employees talk about food to avoid communicating negativity. Focus should be placed upon encouraging and supporting the children to eat well and not passing on individual habits and choices.
- Investing in an effective food management policy and continuous professional development for staff can help support nursery workers in practising what they preach, and secure emotional buy-in from every individual in the setting.

Nursery workers have an important role to play in increasing a child's familiarity with fruits and vegetables - not only at mealtimes, but all day long. The aim is to make these a familiar part of everyday life and not just a dreaded moment at the lunch table.

#### **Top tips:**

- Point out and talk about healthy foods with the children as often as possible. Read books that contain bright images of fruits and vegetables, organise trips to local farmers markets and use real fruits and vegetables in games and activities. Allow children to help pick out foods, taste foods in different contexts and encourage physical contact with new foods.
- Peer pressure can be a positive influence on a fussy eater. Seeing other children getting stuck in and enjoying different foods can encourage fussy child to experiment, so sit picky eaters next to the more adventurous at meal times.
- Children love to eat foods they have grown themselves. You don't need an allotment or any expertise - many foods can be grown in a pot on a windowsill. A



freshly picked tomato just off the plant can be much more appealing than one chopped up on a plate!

### **Give responsibility**

Often children don't like different foods to touch each other on a plate, or for food they dislike to touch food they do like. A better solution to piling up plates of food and expecting them to eat everything is to allow children to serve themselves (providing help if necessary).

#### **Top tips:**

- Encourage fussy eaters to take small portions and go for seconds if they are still hungry. This will seem less overwhelming than large, adult-sized portions
- If a child is not keen on a particular food, let them have more of something else. We all have our favourite meals, as well as our pet hates, and so it's important to acknowledge personal tastes.

### **Make it fun**

Meal times are a social occasion and when treated as that the food becomes less of an issue. Fussy eaters will find themselves enjoying food much more if it's not associated with stress.

#### **Top tips:**

- Do not stand over children watching every last mouthful; instead encourage them to eat, chat quietly and have fun. Once food is no longer the only focus of the meal, picky eaters often forget about resisting food and start to enjoy it.
- Keep track of when and how a food is offered to children with stickers - you can offer a sticker for every new vegetable eaten or when children taste a food they have previously rejected.
- Don't give too much attention to food refusal - this can simply encourage it. Instead, focus positively on those who are eating well and discuss aspects of the meal that were particularly enjoyed. It may take time, but children will eventually realise that they will get more attention from eating well than they do from being fussy.

### **Keep at it**

Studies show that children are born with an innate fondness for sweet foods and less of a preference for bitter or sour foods, as a built in protection mechanism – so it's no surprise that they prefer Haribo to leafy greens.

#### **Top tips:**

- To help override this response, it's important to repeatedly expose children to flavours that they are naturally wary of, rather than simply feeding them the foods they like to eat. If a child rejects kale and broccoli and is never offered it again, they simply won't EVER learn to like it.
- It takes approximately 11 times for a child to try a new food. To make the process easier, try to offer the same food in different ways. For example, raw carrot as sticks (great for dipping) but also boiled, grated or in a smoothie.

### **Avoid making separate meals**

Offering up a selection of entirely alternative meals at meal times teaches children that they can control the food they eat, which they will soon learn to exploit.

**Top Tips:**

- Set out the mealtime rules at the beginning of every meal (i.e. what the meal is and how much of it needs to be eaten in order to be allowed pudding) and then stick to them
- If a meal is refused, it's best to clear it away after 20 minutes or so (or after the other children have finished) and put it in the fridge to try again later.
- Avoid forcing or coaxing a child into eating, as this can further establish a negative relationship with food. If a child doesn't eat, they will simply be hungrier for the next meal and more likely to eat it. Whatever you do, avoid allowing mealtimes to become a battle. If they're healthy and growing normally, they'll eat the amount of food they need over a day.
- Offer healthy snacks between meals so that children won't ever have to go too long without some fuel. However, avoid replacing meals or snacks with milk. If children are filling up on milk they are not going to be hungry for meals and solid foods, which should make up the majority of their calories by the age of one.