



Packed Lunch Policy

Introduction

To grow and stay healthy children need to eat a nutritionally well-balanced diet. Nursery Schools are an influential setting and can contribute significantly to improving the health and wellbeing of children.

Good nutrition in childhood can help to prevent a variety of health problems, both in the short term and later in life. There is increasing concern that many children are consuming too much fat, sugar and salt and too little fibre, fruit and vegetables.

Aim

To ensure that children who bring a lunch from home to eat at Little Steps Day Care have food which is just as healthy and nutritious as the lunches we provide. New research shows that healthy eating in the early years can influence growth and academic achievement in later life.

Objectives

- To ensure that we give consistent messages about food and health
- To give our children and parents the information they need to make healthy choices
- To encourage healthy eating habits in childhood that can influence health and wellbeing in later life
- To promote health awareness
- To ensure that children get the right amount of energy (calories) and nutrients as children grow rapidly during this time of their life
- To ensure children do not consume too much energy (calories) which may lead to obesity or a child becoming overweight
- To contribute to the healthy physical development of all members of our nursery community
- To promote consistency between packed lunches and food provided by nursery's this should adhere to national standards set by the government.

Implementation

This packed lunch policy fits within a wider context of promoting a whole nursery approach to food and healthy eating.

- Children's packed lunches should be based on the 'Eatwell Guide' model which shows items from the 5 main food groups; (Food Standards Agency)



Little Steps Day Care will work with parents and carers to advise that packed lunches follow the list below:

Contents of packed lunch:

- Fruit and vegetables; at least one portion of fruit, vegetables or salad a day. Ensure grapes and berries are cut in half (long ways).
- Carbohydrates; starchy food such as bread, pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes (not fried)
- Sandwich fillings to be savoury only - no jam, honey or chocolate spread
- Dairy; food such as cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais, or soya product
- Our alternative suggestions to snacks such as crisps include; savoury crackers, breadsticks or savoury popcorn
- All packed lunches should be age appropriate, so that the child can eat independently and should not need preparing by the teacher

The following should not be included in packed lunches:

- Fried food or food high in saturated fat
- Chocolate, including chocolate spread and chocolate chip
- Fizzy/sugary drinks in cartons, bottles or cans (including diet drinks which contain high levels of caffeine and other additives which are not suitable for children)
- Confectionary such as chocolate bars, chocolate covered biscuits and sweets, cereal bars, fruit bars, sugared sweet/toffee popcorn
- Cooked food, such as pasta, rice, meat etc, we are unable to heat/ re-heat food at nursery for food hygiene purposes please ensure your child's lunch can be consumed either at room temperature or from the fridge.

PLEASE BE AWARE THAT WE ARE A NUT FREE BUILDING, THEREFORE ANY PRODUCT CONTAINING NUTS IS NOT PERMITTED, IE; PEANUT BUTTER.

At no time will a child be made to feel ashamed or uncomfortable about the contents of their lunch box.

Working with parents and carers

We hope that all parents and carers will support this packed lunch policy. If you have any further questions or require some advice, please do not hesitate to speak to a member of management.