



Healthy Eating and Oral Health Policy

This policy has been written to encourage children, families and staff to develop positive attitudes towards food, follow a healthy and nutritious diet and make more environmentally friendly and sustainable food choices. Out There Kindergarten adopts a whole setting approach to healthy eating which involves children, their families and staff.

Introduction

This Policy recognises that families who attend Out There follow a variety of different diets for a variety of reasons. Special dietary considerations such as cultural or religious preferences, vegetarianism and veganism will always be taken into account when planning for snack and cooking activities at the

Kindergarten and when talking with children about healthy food choices.

We acknowledge that health, food insecurity and food choices are influenced by social inequality and that low income families can be adversely affected by food insecurity and food inequality.

We want to honor and respect people's food choices in a non judgemental way whilst also offering and supporting healthy food choices.

Children under the age of 5 years have different nutritional needs from those of older children and adults. They have a high energy and nutrient requirement in relation to their size and need food/fuel at various times throughout the day.

Early Years is also an important time to shape food preferences and habits and it is important to allow children to make their own selections through guided choice: this can have a positive impact on health in later life. Staff and families should involve children as much as possible in making healthy food choices at the kindergarten and at home by having regular conversations around healthy eating.

This policy covers general nutritional guidance to help families make healthy choices when providing packed lunches.

If parents/carers have any concerns about their child's diet they should discuss these with their Health Visitor, GP or Dietician.

General

- Those responsible for food preparation and handling of food must be competent to do so, and anyone who handles food will have the appropriate food hygiene/safety qualifications.
- Information must be made available to parents/carers regarding food and drinks provided to the children via the parent handbook and website.
- Staff will be good role models for healthy eating and drinking.
- We have a No nuts policy in place which must be observed by families and staff.
- The Kindergarten will obtain and record necessary information from parents/carers regarding any special dietary requirements, preferences or food allergies during the induction process.

Nutrition

- Out There Kindergarten will provide healthy, balanced and nutritious snacks.
- We will observe the nutritional value of different food groups and incorporate them into our food planning.
- (When preparing snacks or doing a cooking activity) No salt will be added to foods and foods high in salt will be used as little as possible. If these products are used (e.g. gravy granules, stock cubes, etc) they will be the lowest salt variety available.
- Foods containing added sugar will be limited to special occasions to reduce the risk of obesity and dental decay.
- We will request from parents that packed lunches are healthy and balanced and follow the nutritional advice below :

Providing a healthy and nutritious packed lunch

- We will provide healthy and nutritious suggestions for packed lunches via our parent handbook and family.
- We will provide the following information to help parents with their packed lunch planning.

<https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes>

<https://foundationyears.org.uk/eat-better-start-better/>

Covering Different Food groups

Packed lunches and snacks should cover the different food groups but also limit portions. Please see the table below for guidance.

Starchy Carbohydrates include: breads, pasta, rice, and potatoes- these provide a good source of energy.

Fruit and vegetables include: Fresh, frozen, tinned (fruit in juice, vegetables in water with no added salt or sugar) dried and juiced fruit and vegetables (dried and juiced fruit will only be consumed as part of a meal) these provide a good source of vitamins and minerals.

Dairy foods include: Milk, cheese and yogurts- these provide a good source of calcium for healthy teeth and bones.

Foods containing **protein** include: meats, fish, eggs and pulses- these are required for growth and repair.

Dairy alternatives for calcium: Good sources of calcium for vegans are:

- fortified unsweetened soya, rice and oat milk
- leafy green vegetables (but not spinach)
- almonds
- sesame seeds and tahini
- dried fruit
- pulses
- brown (wholemeal) and white bread

Foods to provide	Quantity in Packed Lunch	Examples of foods that could be provided
Starchy food (provide a variety of different starchy foods each week, including a wholegrain variety for lunch and tea once a week)	1 x Portion	White or wholegrain bread, rolls, pitta bread or wraps. Chapattis. Plain naan bread. Bagels. Cooked pasta, rice, noodles, couscous or potato.
Fruit and/or vegetables (provide a variety of different fruit and vegetables each week)	At least 1 x Portion	Carrot, cucumber, pepper or celery sticks. Lentils included in daal. Grated carrot in sandwiches or wraps. Fresh fruit such as sliced apple, banana, grapes, mixed chopped fruit or strawberries. Dried fruit such as raisins or apricots.
Meat, fish, eggs, beans or other non-dairy sources of protein (provide a variety of different foods each week)	1 x Portion	Sliced meat, poultry or fish in sandwiches, rolls or wraps, or by itself. Sliced egg in sandwiches, rolls or wraps. Meat alternatives such as tofu in salads. Pulses such as kidney beans, chickpeas, lentils, as part of bean salads.
Dairy food	1 x Portion	A pot of yoghurt or fromage frais. Cheese in sandwiches or wraps.
Drink	1 x Drink	Children can bring a small drink of juice or milk in their packed lunch. Please note there should be water only in children's water bottles for use during the day.
Desserts, cakes, biscuits or crisps	1 x Portion only	Desserts, cakes and biscuits made with cereals, milk or fruit. Avoid salty snacks such as crisps. No sweets or confectionery ie chocolate eggs, chocolate chips or hundreds and thousands, and use only as part of cakes or desserts.

Lunch Times

- Children will be supervised at all times whilst having lunch and staff are aware of choking hazards.

https://foundationyears.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Early-Years-Choking-Hazards-Poster_FINAL-21-Sept-2021.pdf

- Kindergarten staff will pro-actively involve children at lunch time to create a social occasion which provides opportunities to promote children's social and emotional development as well as encourage good eating habits and food manners.

- Children who struggle to eat certain foods will be encouraged (but not forced) to eat.
- Children will be given as much time as they need to finish their meals.
- Any food that the children do not eat will be sent home in your child's lunch box
- Packed lunches should come in reusable plastic containers – no glass containers should be sent in
- Due to our consideration for the environment we actively encourage consideration of waste and wherever possible request that reusable containers and wrappers are used ; any waste will be sent home in your child's lunch box.

Snacks

Snacks are offered between meals where required to ensure children receive appropriate levels of energy and nutrition, for example at mid-morning and mid-afternoon. They may also be offered to individuals and groups of children where there is a need.

We provide an organic, healthy mid morning snack of the following; organic rice cakes, organic fruit spread and vegetable/fruit.

We provide an organic, healthy afternoon tea of the following;

Drinks

- Children will have access to drinking water at all times throughout the sessions.
- Children will be offered water during snack time.
- On occasion, home made juice will be served

Celebrations Days

- We will encourage staff to innovate in the way birthdays and other celebrations are celebrated, e.g. without the use of foods high in sugar and salt.
- If Parents want to bring in a cake/food items we will ensure that it meets the dietary requirements of all the children.
- Parents/carers will be consulted over appropriate ways to celebrate ethnic/cultural and religious occasions.

Curriculum and Learning and Development

We will include healthy eating and oral health in our curriculum and ensure that children have opportunities to learn about healthy eating and oral health through fun, practical and engaging activities.

Healthy Eating

- We will talk about and demonstrate the importance of healthy food choices so children know and understand what constitutes a healthy diet.
- Food exploration and cooking is a part of our curriculum and we will do this in a way that promotes healthy eating.

Oral Health

'The provider must promote the good health, including the oral health, of children attending the setting.'

- We will promote oral health by regularly talking about and modeling good oral hygiene with the children.
- We will share oral health resources with families and encourage

Addressing Food Inequality

- We will share any relevant information with parents in regards to food clubs and food vouchers as instructed to by the local children's centres and Bristol City Council.
- Children in receipt of Early Years Pupil Premium will not be charged for snacks and parents are able to bring in their own snack should they request to do so.
- If a parent or child requests it on arrival, we will provide a breakfast option to ensure that no child starts the day hungry

This policy was adopted by: Out There Forest School and Kindergarten	Date: January 2022
Reviewed: Nov 2023 To be reviewed: July 202	Signed: Ella Ives Jenny Brough