



Food and Drink Policy



Play, Learn and Grow Together

Statement of intent

Hart Memorial Nursery regard snack time and dinner time as an important part of the school day. It is the policy in the Hart Nursery Unit to provide our children with a daily meal cooked on site. This is a very important part of the day as it:

- Promotes nurturing, wellbeing and emotional health
- Develops children's social skills
- Develops independence and self-help skills
- Encourages children to try new foods
- Ensures the children are given a freshly cooked, nutritionally balanced meal
- Helps children to learn about healthy eating

Aim

We aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs. We aim to meet the full requirements of Healthy Eating Guidelines.

'Dietary needs' are defined as nutrients that are received through nutritious food for optimal function and growth. This takes into account the exclusion or inclusion of specific foods on written medical advice or for cultural reasons.

Methods

- When a child starts Nursery, parents provide information of their children's dietary needs, including any allergies
- Parents record information about each child's dietary needs in her/his Medical Booklet and parents sign the record to signify that it is correct. If necessary, parents will also completed the Special Diet application form and obtain written confirmation from a medical professional
- We display current information both in Nursery and in the school canteen about individual children's dietary needs so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed
- We implement systems to ensure that children receive only food and drink which is consistent with their dietary needs
- We provide nutritious food at all snack/ meal times, avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colour
- We prepare for snack / meal times so that they are social occasions in which children participate in small groups
- We use snack /meal times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink, and feeding themselves
- We provide children with utensils which are appropriate for their ages and stages of development

- We have rules to prevent children sharing and swapping their snack / meal with one another
- For children who drink milk, we provide semi-skimmed milk
- We encourage children to try new foods
- Positive reinforcement of good table manners, trying new foods etc occurs daily and reward systems are in place to support this
- Parents provide information on their child's eating habits and abilities at the start of the school year. They are required to give permission when children may need assistance with eating initially- See Appendix 1

Unless a family is entitled to receive free school meals, the Nursery must be paid in full for any meal consumed which is then paid to the Education Authority at the end of each calendar month.

Free school meals application forms are available on request from the school office. The teacher will speak to parents should non-payment issues arise. If they persist, a written request for money owed will be issued by the principal. If the non-payment of meals continues, the parent will be asked to collect the child at 12.00 noon or send a packed lunch. The child will only be able to consume meals again once all monies have been paid. Parents will be informed of this in writing.

Packed Lunches

Parents are encouraged to try their child with school dinners at the start of the year. Should parents choose the packed lunch option they must ensure that only healthy foods are included as part of the lunch (see Packed Lunch Recommendations- appendix 2).

If sending a packed lunch, it is expected that:

- 1) an ice pack is placed in the lunch bag to ensure the food is kept cold and as fresh as possible. If a child does not have an ice pack in their lunch bag, they will not be allowed to eat any of the milk / dairy / meat products
 - 2) any cutlery required is supplied by parents
 - 3) fruit must be chopped and in a sealed container ready to eat unless the child can manage a whole piece of fruit with the skin on
 - 4) only milk or water will be sent to drink
- Children will eat their packed lunch in the classroom along with those taking a school dinner.
 - Children will be encouraged to eat their lunch independently.
 - All lunch boxes will be monitored daily and reminders about unhealthy options sent home.
 - Any leftovers will be returned so parents can monitor their child's food intake.

Reviewed: November 2019



Meal time Information

Use the following codes 1-4 to answer the questions below

1 –Minimal

2-A little

3-A lot

4-Fully capable

Describe the level of improvement in your child's ability:

1. to use his/her fork to eat

1

2

3

4

2. to use his/ her knife appropriately

1

2

3

4

3. to cut up his/her food

1

2

3

4

4. to eat his/her meal within the same time frame as the rest of the family

1

2

3

4

5. to eat his/her meal independently

1

2

3

4

6. to remain seated at the table throughout the meal

1

2

3

4

7. to have good table manners (saying please, thank you and please may I leave the table) as appropriate

1

2

3

4

8. To try new foods

1

2

3

4

9. To eat a balanced diet containing a wider range of foods

1

2

3

4

10. If your child does not eat all of his/her meal independently, to what extent do you have to help feed him/her?

1

2

3

4

I give permission for Nursery staff to help, encourage or feed my child if required.

Signed: _____ (Parent/ Carer) Date: _____

Please feel free to make additional comments below.

Thank you for time and support!

from Nursery Staff

Packed Lunch Information

Healthy Lunch Box Suggestions

Sandwiches - Ham, Cheese, Salad, Tomato, Egg & Onion,
Chicken, Beef, Tuna

Scones

Pancakes

Bread Muffins

Yoghurt

Fruit (must be chopped if the child cannot manage whole)

Crackers

Vegetable sticks - carrots, celery

Plain Biscuit

Bread sticks

Cheese

Pasta

Wraps - tuna, salad etc

Sugar-free Jelly

Milk / Water

Foods that do not comply with our Food and Drink Policy

Sandwiches- jam / chocolate spread

Chocolate bars / biscuits

Cereal bars

Crisps / Corn snacks

Sweets

Doughnuts

Fizzy drinks / Fruit Shoots / diluting orange / milkshakes

Ice cream / ice pops (these cannot be kept frozen)

Nuts (due to nut allergies in the school)