

Haven Nursery School and Children's Centre

Healthy Eating Policy

As a Nursery and Children's Centre we take a pro-active approach to the wellbeing of young children and their families. Our belief is that a balanced, healthy and nutritious diet is important for a child's physical growth as well as their general development, including the ability to learn new skills and improving future life chances.

We are committed to improving the health and wellbeing of local children and families and this policy aims to set out how we will promote healthy eating patterns and improve knowledge through our approach to:-

Food and drink provision throughout the Centre;
Nursery snacks;
Meal Provision;
Education;
Health & Safety;

Education

Through the EYFS curriculum and Family Learning Programme, the Children's Centre will provide learning opportunities for children and adults around healthy eating, including:

The importance of healthy eating both now and in the future;
The components of a healthy diet;
The design and preparation of healthy dishes;
Knowledge of food from other countries and cultures;

The Centre may also enlist the help of external agencies or professionals to help promote healthy eating habits and improve knowledge.

Children do not have unsupervised access to the kitchen.

When children take part in cooking activities, they:

- Are supervised at all times;
- Understand the importance of hand washing and simple hygiene rules
- Are kept away from hot surfaces and hot water, and
- Do not have unsupervised access to electrical equipment such as blenders, etc.

Health & Safety

The centre will provide a clean, sociable environment for children, families, visitors and staff.

We maintain the highest possible food hygiene standards with regard to the purchase, storage, preparation and serving of food.

We are registered as a food provider with the local authority Environmental Health Department.

We will use reliable suppliers for the food we purchase, with deliveries made on a weekly basis (as a minimum) to ensure the prompt consumption of perishables and the unnecessary accumulation of stock.

Food is stored at correct temperatures and is checked to ensure it is in-date and not subject to contamination by pests, rodents or mould.

Fridge and Freezer temperatures will be monitored and recorded on a daily basis.

Packed lunches are stored in a cool place. Parents are advised to include an ice-pack with their child's packed lunch and un-refrigerated food will be served to children within 4 hours of preparation at home.

The member of staff with overall responsibility for food preparation (Cook) will hold an in-date Food Hygiene Certificate, and carry out daily opening and closing checks on the kitchen to ensure standards are met consistently.

Waste food will be disposed of daily, composting where appropriate.

Cleaning materials and other dangerous materials will be stored out of children's reach.

All food handlers will follow good hygiene rules and practice, e.g. thorough hand washing, clean apron, hair tied back, etc.

Children will be supervised at all times whilst eating (during groups and drop-ins parents will be encouraged to sit with their children while they eat and provide a good role model for healthy eating).

Hot drinks will be served and consumed in areas away from children.

Packets of nuts will not be allowed in the Centre.

All children's allergies and food intolerances will be clearly displayed in food preparation and eating areas.

Meal Provision and Snacks

We believe that mealtimes should be social, enjoyable times which provide an opportunity for children to learn important social skills as well as try new foods, with caring adults as positive role models.

All meals and snacks will be freshly prepared on site and will be nutritionally balanced, avoiding large quantities of fat, salt, sugar, additives, preservatives and colourings.

The majority of food served will be fresh and home cooked, with frozen or processed foods kept to a minimum. Economy ranges of meat products will not be purchased, since the quality of the meat they contain can be poor and from questionable sources.

Menus (rotated on a weekly basis) will be displayed for the information of parents and centre users. Occasionally it may be necessary to change an item on the menu for an alternative of equal quality.

Menus will be reviewed on a regular basis, informed by the views and suggestions from children, parents and staff – and to take account of seasonal foods.

Water and milk will be the drinks of choice.

Children will have free access to drinking water during nursery sessions.

Individual dietary and special need requirements will be met (eg. communication strategy 'motivators')

Cultural differences in eating habits will be respected and opportunities will be provided for all children to try unfamiliar food from a range of cultures.

We will provide information for families on suitable foods that could be included in lunch boxes from home. Parents will be encouraged to include those foods which are known to have a positive impact on children's physical development.

On special occasions and celebrations healthy options will be made available and balanced with less healthy options. Parties are about fun and food may be appropriate to the occasion.

All children are encouraged to try at least a small portion of new food, although any child who shows signs of distress will have their food removed without fuss and offered toast or a sandwich as an alternative.

Food and Drink Provision throughout the Children's Centre

Breastfeeding will be promoted at all times and comfortable areas are available around the centre.

Any meals or snacks made available in groups will be low in sugar, salt and fat.

Water and milk will be the drinks of choice for children and a range of free flow cups (non-valve) as opposed to non spill cups will be available for children to drink from.

The use of sweets and chocolates as a reward will be discouraged (except in the case of 'motivators' for children with conditions such as autism)

Sponsorship from fast food outlets e.g. McDonalds or formula feeding companies will not be accepted.

Bringing take away food to events/groups is not permitted and will be discouraged.

Parents and children are requested not to bring confectionary or crisps to groups.

It is the responsibility of the course/session leader to ensure that any food and drink provided whilst at Haven adheres to the standards set above.

Any foods supplied from home should adhere to the standards above and it is the responsibility of visiting groups to make their clients aware of this policy.

Families should be discouraged from bringing their own snacks and drinks into the centre for consumption whilst attending group/courses. This is not only to support the healthy eating policy and ethos of the centre but to safeguard against any food allergies and choking hazards. Exceptions will be made where there is a known food intolerance, cultural or health issue.

HOT DRINKS

Hot drinks may only be offered in a designated, safe area not accessed by children.

If a child should inadvertently be brought into a room where hot drinks are being consumed, then every effort must be taken to minimise potential risk to the child.

Approved by Standards and Curriculum Group: June Smith
(Head of Centre)

On: March 2014

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