



## Guide to lunch sessions & a healthy lunchbox

Little Hands offers a lunch session each day between 12-1pm with children bringing their own packed lunch. This is a very popular session and should be booked in advance. The lunch sessions are planned and organised using guidelines provided by the Children's Food Trust - Voluntary Food and Drink Guidelines for Early Years Settings (2012)

## Attending Lunch

The lunch session provides many opportunities to teach children about healthy eating & lifestyle, hygiene and organisation as well as developing important social skills and independence. The children eat lunch together in small groups with a staff member; they are encouraged to eat healthy foods before any treats.

### *Lunch Session timetable*

Preparing for lunch	toileting/ nappy chang Hand wash Organising lunch
Lunch time	children sit in small groups with a staff member
Playtime	15 minutes to either play or spend quietly

Please label the lunch box and any containers with your child's name - staff will label any unnamed boxes. Lunch boxes are stored in a cool area or fridge whenever possible however should you have any food in your child's lunch which must be chilled please pack a named frozen cool block in your child's lunch box. Staff will send home uneaten food and packaging in your child's box so that you can easily see what has been eaten.

### **Allergies, Intolerances and Cultural diets**

We have many children at nursery with intolerances to a wide variety of foods and children following cultural diets. If your child has any dietary needs the nursery staff should be made aware prior to your child starting nursery so we can plan. We closely supervise snack and lunch time to ensure children do not eat or drink prohibited food.

In addition for children having medically diagnosed food allergies we also work closely with their health team to develop a medical protocol specific to their needs. (For further detail see Allergies, Intolerances and Dietary Requirements Policy)

Please speak to the nursery manager if you wish to discuss any aspect of dietary needs

### **Healthy Eating Information**

This information is summarised from the Food and Drink Guidelines for Early Years Settings and gives ideas and advice for healthy diets for children aged 2-5 years.

For further details including portion sizes visit the Children's Food Trust website [www.schoolfoodtrust.org.uk](http://www.schoolfoodtrust.org.uk) A healthy, balanced diet and regular physical activity are essential for children's health and well-being. A healthy balanced diet for children aged one to five years is based on

the four food groups which provide a range of essential nutrients that children need to grow and develop.

**Starchy foods**

provide energy & fibre

Bread, potatoes, sweet potatoes, starchy root vegetables, pasta, noodles, rice, other grains and breakfast cereals

Provide one portion per meal & snack 4 portions per day

**Fruit and vegetables**

provide vitamins, minerals & fibre

Fresh, frozen, canned, dried and juiced fruit, vegetables and pulses

Provide one portion per meal & snack 5 portions per day

**Meat, fish, eggs, beans and other non-dairy sources of protein**

Provide protein minerals & vitamins

Meat, poultry, fish, shellfish, eggs, meat alternatives, pulses and nuts

Provide one portion per main meal 2 portions per day

**Milk and dairy foods**

provide energy, protein, calcium & vitamins

Milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais, custard and puddings made from milk

Provide 3 portions per day

Children are unlikely to take in more energy than they need if they are offered a range of healthy meals and snacks that meet the food and drink guidelines. Conversely, foods that are high in fat, sugar and salt are unlikely to provide the balance of energy and nutrients that young children need and including them in the diets of very young children may contribute to them becoming overweight and having a poor nutrient intake.

Young children need fat in their diet to ensure they get enough energy. However, if they eat too much fat, they may consume more energy (calories) than they need, and may gain excess weight. The type of fat that children eat is also important, and the amount of saturated fat, found in foods such as meat and meat products, butter, cakes and biscuits, should be limited.

It is also important that children do not eat too much sugar and salt. Eating sugary food and drinks too often can lead to tooth decay and provide 'empty calories' which fill children up but do not provide other essential nutrients.

Too much salt can give children a taste for salty foods, and eating a diet high in salt can cause serious health conditions in later life.

Between the ages of two and five years, children should gradually move towards the diet recommended for older children and adults, with less energy provided from fat, and more fibre.

## **Examples of food and drink to include in a packed lunch:**

### **portion of starchy food**

White or wholegrain bread, rolls, pitta bread or wraps.

Chapattis. Plain naan bread. Bagels.

Cooked pasta, rice, noodles, couscous or potato.

Include a wholegrain variety once a week

### **At least one portion of fruit and/or vegetables**

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.

Fruit juice (diluted half juice, half water).

### **A portion of meat, fish, eggs, beans or other non-dairy sources of protein**

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 - kidney beans, chickpeas, lentils, as part of bean salads.

Nut butter in sandwiches

### **A portion of milk or dairy food**

A pot of yoghurt or fromage frais.

Cheese in sandwiches or wraps.

semi-skimmed (for children two and over) to drink.

### **A drink**

Fruit juice - diluted half juice, half water

Semi-skimmed milk

Water.

Avoid salty snacks such as crisps.

Limit confectionery such as chocolate chips and use as part of cakes or desserts.

Provide a variety of different foods from each group over a week