



Safeguarding children

1.25.2 Health and wellbeing: Advice to parents

A healthy lifestyle is crucial to the development of the under 5s. Children need to eat well and engage in physical activity, both at nursery and at home.

What follows is an extract from 'Childhood Obesity: A plan for Action', the Government's 10-year plan published in August 2016. You'll already be following much of the advice it contains, (we certainly are here at nursery), but it's worthy of repetition as the points made are the cornerstones of a healthy lifestyle.

Healthy eating

Children who eat a healthy balanced diet tend to be ill less often, have more energy and a better attention span. Here's what you can do at home to encourage healthy eating habits that will last a lifetime

- Plan healthy, balanced, nutritious menus
- Get your children involved in the planning by explaining to them why some choices are healthier than others
- Help children to understand where their food comes from
- Plant and grow vegetables
- Plan food tasting activities
- Sit with children at mealtimes and eat the same healthy food.

Did you know?

More money is spent each year on the treatment of obesity and diabetes than on the police, fire service and judicial system combined? ¹

Physical exercise

Pre-school children who can walk unaided should be physically active for at least 3 hours throughout the day (DoH, 2011). Physical activity has numerous health benefits for children including:

- Muscle and bone strength
- Control and co-ordination of movement
- Maintenance of a healthy weight



- Health and fitness
- Improved quality of sleep
- Improved cognitive development.

Babies who are not yet mobile should have plenty of opportunity to stretch and move their limbs and whole bodies in order to develop muscle strength and coordination. Support babies to be physically active by:

- Giving plenty of opportunity for 'tummy time'
- Encouraging them to reach out towards and grab objects that capture their attention
- Reducing the time spent in bouncers, walking aids, highchairs, buggies etc. which can restrict movement.

Toddlers and young children love being active! Support their enjoyment of physical activity by:

- Providing daily opportunities and activities which use all the major muscle groups e.g. arms, legs, trunk for climbing, balancing, crawling, obstacle courses etc.
- Encouraging energetic games such as running and chasing, skipping, riding a bike etc.
- Planning outings in the local community e.g. walking to the local shops, the park etc.
- Organising team games or games with rules
- Allowing children as much space and freedom as possible to move their bodies in different ways through free, unstructured and imaginative play
- Carefully monitoring screen time e.g. the time children have access to the computer, tablets and other technology.

Children should spend as much time outdoors as possible, and not just in the warmer summer months. Ensure children still have the same opportunities to be outdoors in the fresh air and be active even in the cooler autumn months and in winter. Ensure children have appropriate clothing to be outside in all weathers. Remember, there's no such thing as bad weather, just inappropriate clothing!

Provide stimulating activities and experiences for children to stay active throughout the year, including:

- Be a good role model Kicking, throwing and catching leaves
- Running with a kite
- Spinning and twirling with ribbons and scarves in the wind
- Jumping and splashing in puddles and paddling pools
- Splodging in mud
- Going on nature treasure hunts
- Catching rain in a bucket (sadly, an all year round activity)
- Building a shelter

- Jumping and catching snowflakes.

And finally, make sure you are a role model to your children by keeping fit and healthy yourself.

For more on healthy lifestyles, visit the following sites

- Childhood Obesity: A Plan for Action (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/childhood-obesity-a-plan-for-action>)
- UK Physical Activity Guidelines (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-physical-activity-guidelines>)
- Children’s Food Trust (<http://www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk/>)
- Healthy Start Scheme (<https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/>)

This policy was reviewed on:

Date	Owner / Manager	Signature
January 2018	Lindy Baldwin	

The importance of healthy eating for young children

Eating habits are developed early in life.



A healthy, balanced diet and regular exercise are essential for young children's health and wellbeing.



What is a healthy balanced diet?

Young children need a healthy, balanced diet based on the four food groups, which provide the nutrients to help them grow and develop.

The four food groups:

- 1.** Potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbohydrates
- 2.** Fruit and vegetables
- 3.** Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins
- 4.** Dairy and alternatives

Almost one in four children are overweight or obese before they start school. Obese children are more likely to become obese adults, who are more likely to develop a range of health issues.



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Texture progression

- Recipes can be blended, mashed, minced and chopped to create a range of textures suitable for different age groups from the same recipe.

Veggie sausage wholemeal pasta bake

As a guide from:
around 7 - 9 months



As a guide from:
around 10 - 12 months



As a guide from:
1 year



Turkey meatballs

As a guide from:
around 7 - 9 months



As a guide from:
around 10 - 12 months



As a guide from:
1 year



- All the recipes have suggested adaptations as a guideline for different aged infants and young children.

At a glance: Breakfast

Breakfast is an important meal for young children. Try to make sure children always eat breakfast, whether at home or when they arrive at an early years setting. Try to include foods from the four different food groups.

Drinks

- Provide only fresh tap water and plain milk for children to drink.



Dairy and alternatives

- It is good practice to provide three portions of milk and dairy foods each day (including those provided at home); one of these can be provided as part of breakfast.



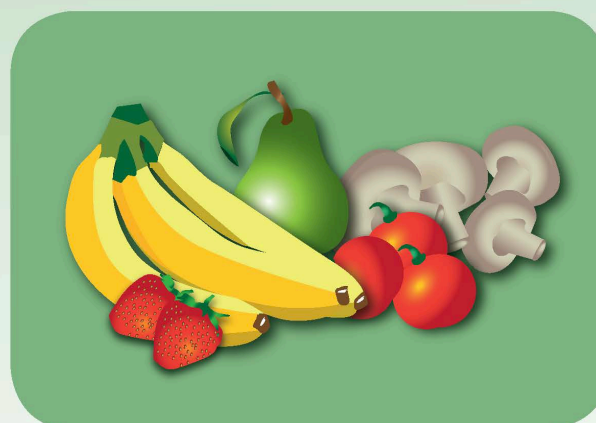
Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins

- Food from this group provides a useful source of iron and zinc and can be provided as part of breakfast.



Potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbohydrates

- As well as providing protein, foods from this group also contain a useful source of iron and zinc and can be provided as part of breakfast.



Fruit and vegetables

- Provide a portion of fruit or veg with breakfast every day.



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At a glance: Lunch

Drinks

- Provide only fresh tap water and plain milk for children to drink.



Dairy and alternatives

- It is good practice to provide three portions of milk and dairy foods each day (including those provided at home); one of these can be provided as part of lunch.



Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins

- As well as providing protein, foods from this group also contain a useful source of iron and zinc and can be provided as part of breakfast.

Each lunch should include a main course and a dessert. Try to include foods from the four different food groups.



Fruit and vegetables

- Provide at least one portion of vegetables and/or fruits as part of lunch each day. These can be fresh, frozen, dried or canned.
- Check product labels to choose canned vegetables and pulses without added salt and sugar, fruit canned in juice not syrup, and reduced salt and sugar baked beans.



Potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbohydrates

- Provide a portion of starchy food as part of each lunch.
- Limit starchy foods which have been fried to once a week at lunch.
- Limit canned pasta in sauce.
- Avoid flavoured dried rice, pasta and noodle products eg packets and pots of instant flavoured noodles, pasta and rice.



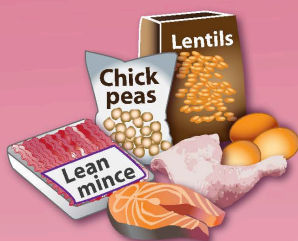
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7 steps to menu planning

Why menu plan?

- Planning menus for meals and snacks in advance helps to reduce time and can also help to control ingredient costs.
- Using tried and tested recipes can help to keep track of allergens, source ingredients and reduce time.

1 Plan menus for all the meals and snacks you provide for children in your care.



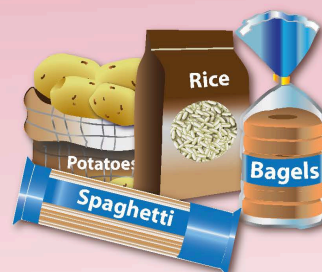
2 Plan menus covering between one and four weeks to ensure children are given a variety of foods.

3 Use the 'at a glance' sections of the early years menus guidance to plan each meal and snack.

4 Plan menus to include a variety of foods, tastes, textures and colours.



5 Make sure you cater for the cultural and dietary needs of all children in your care.



6 Introduce a new menu cycle at least twice a year to incorporate seasonality and give children the chance to try different foods.

7 Share the menus for meals and snacks with parents to help them provide balanced meals and snacks at home.



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