

Healthy Eating Packed Lunches and Snack Policy – Little Stars are rated Level 5 by the Foods Hygiene Agency.

Little Stars Nursery wish to promote the right environment for our children to understand the importance of making healthy food choices. Packed lunches and snacks represent at least a third of a child's daily intake of foods and nutrients, which presents a great opportunity to promote healthy food choices for children.

Aims

To make sure that children who bring a lunch from home to eat in Nursery have food that is just as healthy and nutritious as food served at schools that is regulated by National Standards. To give clear guidance to parents, carers, children and staff on providing a healthy packed lunch and snack. We believe that a healthy packed lunch can contribute to the health of children and needs to be consistent with the nutritional standards provided by Early Years Nutritional Guidelines. The policy applies to all packed lunches and snack consumed within Nursery.

Development of policy

The policy was drawn up using a range of national documents. The Nursery will continue to work with parents to ensure packed lunches and snacks at Little Stars Nursery abide by this policy.

Special Diets and allergies (we have a high number of children in this category)

We ask parents/carers to be aware of nut and other allergies. For this reason, pupils are not permitted to swap food items. As some children/staff in Nursery may have nut allergies, we ask parents to refrain from including nuts or peanut butter in their lunch boxes/bags.

We are also fully aware of the religious beliefs on certain food items as well parent's individual views on their child.

Content of Packed Lunches

- Fruit and vegetables; at least one portion of fruit, vegetables or salad a day.
- Carbohydrates; starchy food such as bread, pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes (not fried)
- Dairy; food such as milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais, or soya products
- Drinks; water, pure fruit juice (no added sugar), milk, yogurt drinks or smoothies.
- An un-iced cake or small packet of biscuits – not to contain chocolate
- Sandwich fillings to be savoury only - no jam, honey, peanut butter or chocolate spread
- All packed lunches should be age appropriate, so that the child can eat independently and should not need preparing by a staff member.
- Age-appropriate crisps or snacks (should not be eaten every day).

The following should not be included in packed lunches or snack

- Chocolate, including chocolate spread
- Nuts or nut products
- Please if possible, can all bones be removed from the children's lunch boxes.
- Fizzy/sugary drinks in cartons, bottles or cans (including diet or energy drinks which contain high levels of caffeine and other additives which are not suitable for children)
- Confectionary such as chocolate bars, chocolate covered biscuits and sweets.
- Cooked food, such as pasta, rice, meat etc. cannot be reheated on the premises, so please ensure your child's lunch can be consumed either at room temperature or from the fridge.

Packed Lunch Containers

We ask that parents/carers provide a packed lunch container, which is to be labelled where food items can be stored securely and appropriately until lunchtime. You may wish to include an ice water bottle or freezer block to keep the food cold.

Facilities for Packed Lunches

We will: -

- Have staff sitting with the children, helping them and ensuring their personal hygiene.

- Use a designated area which will be hygienically cleaned before and after eating,
- Provide appropriate facilities to store packed lunches.
- Make sure all Children have access to drinking water at all times (EYFS)
- Milk is available at snack time for all 2-5 year olds.

Snack

Snacks will be offered between meals to ensure children receive appropriate levels of energy and nutrition, for example at mid-morning and mid-afternoon.

Monitoring

To promote healthy eating we will regularly monitor the content of packed lunches and snacks. We will talk to parents/carers where necessary and offer guidance on bringing healthy packed lunches and snack. If lunches are not deemed to meet nutritional standards parents will be advised on changes that need to be made. Any sweets or sugary drinks will be sent home at the end of the day. Water and milk will be provided as an alternative. If a child's packed lunch continues not to follow the guidance, then the parent/carer will be asked to come in for a consultation with the manager.

Birthdays and other celebrations

Whilst we understand that you like to bring in cakes and wrapped sweets for the children by their peers to celebrate birthdays or any other celebrations, it would be preferable that you donate a book to represent that child's birthday as we have so many dietary requirements.

If you decide on the former, when these are brought into Nursery to share amongst the children we will give them out at the end of the session, and we will ensure we review each child's individual food requirements when handing these out.

Working with parents and carers

We hope that all parents and carers will support this packed lunch and snack policy. We will offer advice and guidance to parents and carers on packed lunches and snack if required. Children on special diets following verified medical advice will be given due consultation.