

HEALTHY EARLY YEARS LONDON Food and Drink Statement

Aims

As a Healthy Early Years London setting, we want to ensure that we promote the health and well-being of the whole setting community through all aspects of food and nutrition and provide consistent messages to children, parents and staff.

Our food meets the Voluntary food and drink guidelines for Early Years settings in England/ We are working towards meeting the Voluntary food and drink guidelines for Early Years settings in England

<https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/media/9750/eat-well-practical-guide-final-check.pdf>

Our meals and snacks are scheduled at regular times

Either a meal or a snack is offered to children at least every 1½ – 3 hours. We have 2 three-hour sessions in our Nursery, one in the morning from 8.45am to 11.45 am and the other in the afternoon from 12.45pm to 3.45 pm. Children bring a healthy snack from home consisting of fruits or vegetables and a bottle of water. The snack times are usually 10.30 am in the morning and 2.30pm in the afternoon. They are also offered milk just before home time. This is because children have small stomachs and high nutrient needs as they grow and develop, to play and learn. Fresh drinking water is available at all times.

Meal and snack times are relaxed, calm and with shared conversation

Meal and snack times are recognised as an important time to develop verbal skills as well as a time to learn about healthy eating. We eat with the children at mealtimes and eat the same food. We can easily offer help, role model good manners and eating behaviour, direct conversation, and create a calm and relaxed eating environment. At the same time, we can supervise the children eating. Children bring a healthy snack from home consisting of either fruits or vegetables. The snack bags are placed on a trolley and before snack time 2 children bring the trolley to the carpet area where children eat their snack. 2 children dispense hand sanitisers to other children, so everyone eats with clean hands. Children are seated on the carpet during snack time where they can talk to their peers and exchange ideas. Milk is usually served in free flow cups and children are called on table to consume it to avoid spillage on the carpet.

We use food to support the development of children

All children in our setting are given opportunities to explore food using their different senses. Children are involved in food growing e.g. runner beans and cress and in food preparation, such as simple cold dishes: fruit salads and vegetable salads. Children are encouraged and helped to be successful in whatever self-feeding and self-serving they are capable of doing to support their growing independence, for example children are given plastic spoons and forks to eat independently.

We support parents to do the best for their children

We ask parents to provide a healthy snack from home since our school is a Healthy school. We guide parents to be compliant with Eat Better Start Better guidelines. Parents are asked to send only fruits or vegetables to school along with a bottle of plain water. Parents are asked to send at least 2 types of fruits or vegetables daily and provide a portion of fruit and vegetables as part of breakfast, lunch and dinner at home. We encourage eligible pregnant women and mothers with children under four to register with the Healthy Start scheme and access the weekly food vouchers and free Healthy Start vitamins. We provide effective support and information for parents and carers about all aspects of feeding infants and young children. Early support counsellors from the Children's centre offer 20-minute sessions to parents who seek advice on feeding young children



Special occasions and birthdays are celebrated with mostly healthy foods or with non-food treats

We promote non-food celebrations and treats, such as craft projects or stickers, which are pleasant alternatives to birthday sweets. If food is used for celebrations it forms part of a balanced meal provision and doesn't replace healthy foods.

Only healthy drinks are provided

Water and milk are the best drinks for children's teeth and bodies. We provide semi-skimmed milk for children under five. Drinking water is available at all times. Juice (even diluted juice) or other sugary drinks are not provided.

We have a supportive breastfeeding environment

Mothers are welcome to breastfeed (or express breastmilk) and a secluded space will be provided, if required. We can direct mothers to where they can access further breastfeeding support.

We have received appropriate training

We have received food safety and hygiene training if involved in preparing and handling food. We have undertaken other relevant training to keep me up to date on healthy drinks and foods suitable for children under five.

Date: 01/12/2019

Date to be reviewed: 01/12/2022