



Healthy/Safe Mealtime Policy

At Fairytale our aims are:

1. To provide our children with a wide and nutritional balanced diet to develop their healthy growth and well being.
2. To show children that meal times are an enjoyable time to socialise with each other and share food together.

We believe that children should eat a varied diet because this is associated with better health as it is more likely to contain all the vitamins and minerals the body needs. They should eat foods from each of the four main food groups every day. The four main food groups are:

Bread, other cereals and potatoes
Fruit and vegetables
Full fat milk and dairy foods
Meat, fish or alternatives such as pulses, peas, beans, lentil and soya.

As part of our healthy eating children at Fairytale are encouraged to avoid sugary foods and drinks as they are high in calories and low in vitamins and minerals and they may cause an increase in tooth decay. The healthy diet provided in nursery is the best possible diet as it enables children to have the correct intake of sugars within their everyday meals. Boiled and Filtered water and milk will be the only drinks given in line with this, also any sweets, cake etc brought into nursery will always be sent home for parents to choose if they wish for children to eat them and we will not provide any chocolate or sweets at nursery.

Children are encouraged to take an active role when preparing and taking part in meal times.
They are encouraged to:

1. Take turns, setting tables
2. Learn to use knife, fork and spoon appropriately
3. Develop skills and increase knowledge of healthy eating through exploration and cooking and discussion
4. Share experiences with peers and adults
5. Behave appropriately at the dinner table
6. Develop social skills with reference to their age and stage of development
7. Develop understanding of healthy foods and confidence to explore new tastes.

Practitioners at Fairytale have a key role in influencing children's attitudes and choices with regards to healthy eating within the setting.

Practitioners strive to:

1. Be a positive role model and provide an opportunity for children to learn about food, food sources, nutrition, health, seasons and growing cycles and other people's ways of life.
2. Talk about holidays and festivals as food plays an important part in most people's celebrations
3. Develop children's social skills, sitting in small groups at lunch times

4. If possible eat the same foods and drink the same drinks as the children, to encourage children to taste new and different food E
5. Encourage a pleasant and social atmosphere and environment
6. Promote the concept that mealtime is for eating but it is also a time for learning and socialising.
 7. Encourage children to listen and take turns, speaking to each other without shouting
8. Support children with special needs when eating i.e. Children with diabetes, tracheotomy, Cystic Fibrosis etc.
 9. Support developing independence and confidence when children are table setting and clearing away.
 10. Encourage children to try foods offered
 11. Use meal times as an opportunity to talk about healthy eating
 12. Teach table manners, i.e. to be seated, to encourage
13. Encourage children not to talk with food in their mouths, to give children enough time to eat, to encourage children to use please and thank you.
 14. Encourage health and safety when eating e.g. using utensils

All children and their parents/carers should be respected as individuals and their food preferences and religious requirements should be accommodated. This is done by celebrating different festivals and encouraging families to share how they celebrate the festival and the food, which is associated with it.

All that children bring with them to their place of care is their race, gender, family background, language culture and religion, this should be valued for children to feel accepted and accepting of them. It is important to value the contributions which diverse cultures and nationalities make to the variety of foods eaten.

As in all aspects of our work, we seek to enter into a partnership with parents. We do this by: Finding out about special diets before the child starts, or as they happen e.g. Allergies. We ensure that parents/carers are aware that we are committed to promoting healthy, varied and enjoyable food. Parents are asked for suggestions for menus and this is reflected in the daily meals. Clear information on what children eat each day is given to the parents on collection of their child.

We will provide adequate drinks for all children at regular intervals; each room has free access to a filtered water machine. Drinking cups are always available to babies .

All food and drink being used within the confines of the room must be isolated from the children always. Children should be sat at the dining tables prior to the serving of food. All food should be served away from the dining tables and left to cool until an acceptable temperature has been met. Food should be tested by a member of staff dipping a clean knuckle in the food. Hot fluids i.e. gravy should be left on a high surface and should be poured onto food away from the children as quickly as possible to enable it to cool. NEVER underestimate the time it takes food to cool, ALWAYS check food prior to giving it to children. Staff are responsible for the food when serving and supervising children with it.

Suitable bottles, cups and utensils will be provided for each child appropriate to their age and development.

The three main meals provided throughout the day are: Breakfast, Dinner and Tea. Children are also offered morning and afternoon snack of fruit/salad and milk/water.