

Fairfield Preparatory School

Healthy Eating Policy

Introduction

Nutrition is a significant factor in the growth, development and overall functioning of a child. Good nutrition provides the energy and nutrients essential to sustain life and promotes physical, emotional and cognitive development. The development of healthy eating practices and physical activity can prevent disease and support a lifetime of good health. Good nutrition is critical to optimizing each child's potential for success. Meeting nutritional requirements throughout childhood is essential to full intellectual development. Children require sufficient energy and essential nutrients each day to concentrate on accomplished learning tasks.

Meals served should meet children's nutritional requirements, provide models of healthy eating patterns, and help children establish good eating patterns at an early age.

Aim

To work in partnership with families and other professionals to support children in developing healthy eating practices which will become embedded for life.

Objectives

1. To provide children with positive healthy eating experiences in order to promote their well being.
2. To respect the different dietary, cultural, religious and health needs of all our children
3. To encourage children to develop positive attitudes towards food through the curriculum and all the other learning opportunities that are provided in school
4. To promote an understanding of a balanced diet in which some foods play a greater role than others.
5. To develop children's understanding of the importance of the social context in which eating takes place.
6. To raise awareness with children, parents and carers in developing a positive approach to food, nutrition and oral education.
7. To encourage responsibility and accountability of all parents and carers in offering healthy choices to children.

The Importance of Nutrition for Children

A nutritionally balanced diet is important in childhood to ensure optimum development at a time of rapid growth. Infants and young children need an adequate supply of nutrients such as iron to prevent anaemia and calcium to ensure healthy development of teeth and bones. A balanced diet in childhood is not only important for growth but for learning and promoting positive habits towards healthy eating. An inadequate or unbalanced nutritional intake may

not only affect growth and development in childhood but may also impact on health problems, such as heart disease and obesity in later in life.

A child's diet must include an appropriate intake of foods from the four main food groups:

1. **Bread, other cereals and potatoes**
2. **Fruit and vegetables**
3. **Milk and dairy foods**
4. **Meat, fish and alternatives**

Being Healthy

- Eat breakfast every day
- Eat fruit and vegetables daily
- Choose snacks that will provide nutrients to compliment what is eaten during meals
- Avoid snacks and drinks with a high sugar content between meals
- Drink plenty of fluids to avoid becoming dehydrated
- Be physically active every day
- Brush teeth twice a day and visit your dentist regularly

Availability of water

We have fresh drinking water and suitable cups or water bottles readily available for children and staff at all times.

We encourage the children to help themselves to water, either with support or independently.

We support the children in recognising that they need to drink water when they are thirsty, hot or tired, or feeling unwell.

Special dietary needs and food allergies

We are sensitive to the catering needs of children with specific dietary needs, including religious considerations. Parents will be asked about any special dietary requirements their child has before their child starts school. We update our records of children's specific dietary requirements regularly and keep these records in a prominent place.

Menus will be carefully planned and adapted as necessary to meet the nutritional and feeding requirements of children with special dietary needs, such as lactose intolerance, food allergies, diabetes. In cases where we cannot provide a suitable diet, parents will be asked to provide a packed lunch for their child.

Healthy Lunch Boxes

As some children bring a packed lunch to school we promote the recommended guidelines that meet the Government nutritional standards as set out by the Health Department for healthy lunch boxes.

These include:

- One portion of fruit and one portion of vegetables

- One portion of milk or other dairy item
- One portion of meat, fish or other protein source
- One portion of a starch food.

Social skills

Meals can be times of pleasant social sharing. When children sit to eat and drink together this provides an opportunity for them to learn good social skills and behaviours associated with eating and drinking. For example, talking to other children and adults, developing good table manners and hygiene practices and learning to respect others.

Festivals and celebrations

At Fairfield we celebrate different festivals and celebrations. We recognize that festivals can provide a valuable opportunity for children to experience diversity from a wide range of cultures and nationalities and the contribution they make to the variety of foods eaten in Britain today.

Involving parents

We welcome the involvement of parents in all aspects of school life. Therefore healthy eating suggestions from parents that will help us expand and improve our selection of recipe ideas are very welcome. Our menu is published weekly on our website and displayed within each year group, in order for parents to discuss their child's preferred menu options for the week.

Food Hygiene

The kitchen facilities at Fairfield Preparatory School have been awarded three out of three stars under the "Scores on the doors" scheme run by the local authority Specialist Environmental Health Officers in relation to the Food Safety Act. All Staff directly involved in cooking and the preparation of food, have successfully completed a Food Hygiene Course

Food Safety

The school has a Food Safety Management Procedure (HACCP) which covers all aspects of the purchasing, storage, cooking, reheating and serving of food to ensure the safety of pupils at all times