

Stockport Food and Drinks Policy for Early Years Settings



Name of Setting:

Completion date:

Review Date:

Contents

1. Introduction

2. Aims and Objectives

3. Procedures

4. Appendices

A - Suggested 'Tooth Safe' snacks

B – Food customs of different religious and cultural groups

C – Rewards

D - Birthdays

E – Key food and drink messages for 0 – 5 year olds

F – Hygiene Checklist when preparing food for children

5. Useful Website Links

1. Introduction

The purpose of this policy document is to provide a consistent approach to the food and drinks provided to babies and young children in Stockport Early Years Settings, to support their health, development and learning. In particular this will support children to achieve or maintain a healthy weight and prevent tooth decay and will help them to achieve the best start in life and to be school ready.

This policy supports meeting the requirements of the statutory framework for the early years foundation stage 1 September 2021 which is mandatory for all early years providers. (All EY providers on the Ofsted early years register, registered with a childminder agency, maintained nursery and primary schools and independent schools including free schools and academies).

- **What is a Healthy Diet for Under 5's?**

Children should be eating a varied diet consisting of three meals (breakfast, lunch and dinner) with two healthy snacks per day. Each snack should constitute approximately 10% of the child's daily energy intake and should be based on cereal foods and vegetables rather than confectionery and soft drinks, i.e. 150 calories approximately for one snack (under 5's), e.g. slice of toast.

The safest drinks for the promotion of optimal oral health and to prevent obesity are milk and water.

- **Healthy Weight**

Overweight children are more likely to suffer from depression, low self-esteem, type 2 diabetes, respiratory problems, muscular skeletal disease, lower school attendance and attainment. Overweight children are also more likely to become overweight adults and increase risk of cancer and cardiovascular disease, depression and type 2 diabetes.

Data collected through the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) has provided accurate information about the trends in child weight status for reception children aged 4-5 years old and year 6 children aged 10-11 years old since 2006.

The most recent data from 2017/18 shows that 22% of reception aged children in Stockport are overweight or very overweight. Research conducted on the NCMP data suggests that children who are overweight by the time they are measured in reception are extremely likely to remain overweight or become more overweight by the time they are in year 6. Very few children who are overweight at reception age achieve a healthy weight by the time they are in year 6.

- **Oral Health**

Children who experience tooth decay are likely to experience pain that can affect sleep, eating, speech and cause emotional distress. They are more likely to miss days from school due to pain and to receive treatment. Dental decay in children can result in extraction of the teeth under general anaesthetic and it is not unusual for children as young as 3 to have 12 or more teeth taken out. Hospital admissions for tooth extraction far outweighs admissions for other childhood illnesses. During Covid access to dentistry has been extremely limited so prevention of dental disease is even more important.

The most recent data for Stockport shows that 22% of children age 5 have at least one decayed, missing or filled tooth.

- **EYFS and School Readiness**

The statutory framework for the early years foundation stage sets the standards of care and learning and development for children from birth to five years.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential.' Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with adults caring for them.'

It is in a child's earliest years of life that the essential foundations are laid for their future strong development and later happiness and success. It is a time when early help and support if needed, can impact significantly on reducing health and development inequalities supporting every child's well-being and readiness for pre-school, readiness for school and readiness for life.

The EYFS welfare requirements for health are that all providers must promote the good health, including the oral health, of children attending the setting. Where children are provided with food and drinks they must be healthy, balanced and nutritious. (EYFS section 3. Food and drink)

2. Policy Aim

The aim of this policy is to enable our setting to take a consistent approach to food and drink and support children's healthy weight, oral health, emotional wellbeing, all of which contribute to school readiness and giving children the best start in life.

3. Objectives

The objectives of the policy are:

- To support our setting to meet the statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) September 2021. Health 3.45 page 32 and Food and drink 3.48 page 33.
- To ensure that all food and drink provided outside of mealtimes contains no added sugar and is 'tooth safe' and appropriate in portion size.
- To support the recommended quantity of food and drink intake for babies and young children of different ages.
- To create healthy habits and encourage enjoyment of a wide range of healthy foods.

Procedures

To meet the aims and objectives of this policy the following procedures should be followed:

1. All food and drinks offered at our setting outside of mealtimes will be tooth safe. (see Appendix A for suggested snacks).

An exception can be made for marking religious or cultural occasions (e.g. Christmas, Divali, Hannukah, Easter and Eid), fundraising events at the discretion of the manager of the setting.

2. Children will be offered a balanced variety of foods taking into account multi-cultural and special dietary requirements (see Appendix B for food customs of different religious and cultural groups).
3. If children are thirsty, they should be offered water or milk. These are the recommended drinks to promote good oral health.
4. Snacks will be offered at appropriate times. Children will be expected to sit down within a set time period to eat their snack in order to establish regular eating patterns and discourage grazing. This models healthy habits and

supports good relationships and communication. This will allow appropriate intervals between eating to encourage appetite control.

Children should be encouraged and supported to help themselves in choosing snacks, pouring own drinks, choosing who to sit with etc. within a set snack time as recommended in Early Years guidance for promoting independence.

This helps to establish good eating habits and routines, which will also support regular family mealtimes at home.

See <https://www.firststepsnutrition.org/eating-well-early-years>

5. Any rewards given to children should be non-food (see Appendix C for ideas).

For hygiene, health, safety and allergy risks, it is not advisable to let parents give out birthday cake even to take home This could bring on liability for food poisoning. Alternatives to food should be used to celebrate birthdays and other special events that aren't religious or cultural occasions, however, there may be occasions where professional discretion is required. (See Appendix D for ideas for celebrating birthdays without food)

6. To ensure food safety and hygiene, all staff, parents/carers will follow an agreed code of practice (see Appendix F)
7. We will welcome, support and promote breastfeeding (see Appendix G).
8. We will support staff in the knowledge and understanding of the importance of oral health and effective ways to promote this with children and their families. (See link to the GM e learning resource).
9. Staff will be expected to be positive role models and support the food and drink policy during their working hours.
10. All external agencies or visitors working in partnership with settings will be expected to develop their activities in line with the Healthy Snacks & Drinks Policy.
11. We will work towards completing the Stockport Start Well 'Tooth Safe' award and display our certificate when completed.

4. Appendices

Appendix A

Snack suggestions that provide 10% of a child's energy requirements (aged 1 – 4 years)

- 200ml full-fat milk,
- 1/2 a large banana and 100ml full-fat milk,
- an average-sized eating apple and 130ml full-fat milk,
- Plain popcorn (20g) (not salted or sugared) and sliced pear (40g)
- Wholemeal toast fingers (20g) with margarine (4g) and apple (40g)
- Cucumber sticks (40g), dip (25g) and pitta bread (50g)
- Wholemeal toast (20g) with cheese chunks (15g)
- Cucumber (20g) and carrot sticks (20g), cream crackers (12g) with soft cheese (20g)
- Pitta bread (50g), dip (25g) and cherry tomatoes (40g)
- Wholemeal toast fingers (20g) with soft cheese (10g) and carrot sticks (40g)
- Natural yogurt (60g) with banana slices (40g)
- Wholemeal toast fingers (20g) with salmon dip (25g)
- Celery (20g), grapes (40g) and red pepper (20g) with tortilla strips
- Plain scone (30g), Vegetable fat spread (3g), Strawberries (40g) and 100ml full-fat milk
- Mixed platter: Red pepper (20g), Celery (20g), Grapes (40g) and 100ml full-fat milk
- Pancake (25g), Butter (4g), Apple (40g) and 100ml full-fat milk
- Spicy potato wedges (65g), Mozzarella balls (20g), Orange wedges (40g) and 100ml full-fat milk

The younger children may need slightly smaller portions and older children slightly more. Larger portions may be given if the children are having water, not milk, as a drink.

Choose bread and bread products with a low salt content where possible.

Appendix B

Food customs of different religious and cultural groups

Food	Jewish	Hindu*	Sikh*	Muslim	Buddhist	Rastafarian**
Eggs	No blood spots	It varies	It varies	Yes	It varies	It varies
Milk/yoghurt	Not with meat	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	It varies
Cheese	Not with meat	It varies	It varies	It varies	Yes	It varies
Chicken	Kosher only	It varies	It varies	Halal only	No	It varies
Mutton/lamb	Kosher only	It varies	It varies	Halal only	No	It varies
Beef/beef products	Kosher only	No	No	Halal only	No	It varies
Portk/pork products	No	No	Rarely	No	No	No
Fish	Fish with fins & scales only	Fish with fins & scales only	It varies	It varies	It varies	Yes
Shellfish	No	It varies	It varies	It varies	No	No
Butter/ghee	Kosher only	It varies	It varies	It varies	No	It varies
Lard	No	No	No	No	No	No
Cereal foods	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nuts/pulses	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fruit & vegetables	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

'It varies' means that some people within a religious group would find these foods acceptable

* Strict Hindus and Sikhs will not eat eggs, meat, fish, and some fats

** Some Rastafarians are vegan.

Source: Caroline Walker Trust (2006) Eating well for under 5s in child care

Appendix C

Rewards

This policy states that 'any rewards given to children should be non-food'.

Treating children with respect and words of appreciation are better motivators than rewards of food. Telling a child, "I appreciate your help" is a healthy alternative to giving a sweet for good behaviour. Non-food rewards are better as they help children establish healthy attitudes towards eating and do not interfere with natural hunger cues. Using food rewards teaches children to eat when they aren't hungry and can cause them to develop lifelong habits of rewarding or comforting themselves with unhealthy foods. Children can view certain foods that are used as rewards to be better or more valuable than other foods. As a result, they learn to prefer unhealthy foods over healthy foods. They may also tie food to emotions, such as feelings of accomplishment, "I did a good job so I deserve the treat of a piece of chocolate cake". Over time this can lead to an unhealthy relationship with food and even eating disorders.

Ideas for non-food rewards

- ❖ Stickers or badges
- ❖ Pencils or other stationary items
- ❖ Small (age appropriate) toys such as balls, bubbles, figures
- ❖ Raffle tickets to win a bigger prize
- ❖ Privileges such as being at the front of the queue, having first choice
- ❖ Getting to choose a book to be read to the class or a song to sing
- ❖ Golden time
- ❖ Certificates or postcard sent home
- ❖ Getting to choose an activity
- ❖ Washable ink stamps for hands
- ❖ Round of applause
- ❖ Having a special receptacle, e.g. a pretty glass jar, in which the child can put an object, e.g. ping pong ball; shell; pebble etc. This is an 'action reward'. The doing element of this type of reward helps to reinforce the reward. It also helps them internalise that they have done something good.



Appendix D

Birthdays

This policy states 'For hygiene, health, safety and allergy risks, it is not advisable to let parents give out birthday cake even to take home. This could bring on liability for food poisoning. Alternatives to food should be used to celebrate birthdays and other special events that aren't religious or cultural occasions, however there may be occasions where professional discretion is required'.

Non-food ideas for celebrating birthdays:

- ❖ Birthday dressing up costume
- ❖ Birthday bear that child can take home
- ❖ Display their name in a special place
- ❖ Special chair to sit on, e.g. with velvet over it
- ❖ Paper garland
- ❖ Paper crown
- ❖ Singing birthday hat
- ❖ A badge, e.g. it's my birthday
- ❖ Class display / birthday card of handprints (each child makes a print of their hand on this display or card)
- ❖ Bring in a small gift for other children instead of cake or sweets such as bubbles or pencils
- ❖ Birthday child brings in a book for staff to read to the children
- ❖ Birthday child chooses a nursery rhyme or song for everyone to sing
- ❖ Birthday child is made 'guest of honour' for the day and has special tasks to do or gets to go first e.g. at snack or lunch time





Appendix E

Key food and drink messages for 0 – 5 year olds

- Wash hands before eating.
- Choose appropriate 'me size' healthy snacks. Limit to twice a day.
- Eat a rainbow of fruits and vegetables. The more colours, the better the mix of vitamins and minerals. Continually encourage children to try new ones.
- Eat breakfast – if cereal, choose un-sugared and low salt, served with whole milk.
- Eat when hungry rather than grazing. To get into healthy habits and allow time to respond to appetite, sit down to eat and drink meals and snacks.
- Eat oily fish – N.B. canned tuna is not classed as oily fish, but fresh/ frozen tuna is. 87% of youngsters don't eat any oily fish. It is the omega 3s that are important for brain development and a healthy heart. Girls can eat oily fish up to twice a week and boys up to 4 times a week *
- Eat fewer salty foods.
- Drink whole milk and water – they are the only safe drinks for teeth.
- No milk other than breast or infant formula should be given as a drink to children who are under 1.

- Introduce a free-flowing feeder cup (avoid cups with spouts with non-spill valves) from 6 months of age and discourage the use of a feeding bottle from 1 year old to enable children to learn to drink from a cup rather than suck.
- Reduce the amount of sugary food and how often they are consumed, especially sugary drinks.
- Teeth should be brushed twice daily using family fluoride toothpaste for 2 minutes. Wait 30 minutes after food and drink before brushing, to avoid enamel damage. Just spit out, don't rinse. Cost price toothpaste & brushes are available from children's centres.
- Eat 2-3 servings per day of full fat dairy foods.
- Work towards children eating family foods at mealtimes by the age of 1.

*The Food Standards Agency advises these limits because these larger predatory fish contain more low levels of pollutants than other types of fish. These pollutants can build up in the body and may affect the development of a baby in the womb in the future. This limit of two portions applies to all girls and women who might have a baby one day, and women who are pregnant or breastfeeding. Boys, other women and men and can eat up to four portions of oily fish a week. In addition, marlin, shark and swordfish are not recommended for consumption by boys or girls under 16 (or by pregnant women or women who may wish to become pregnant) This is due to high levels of mercury.

[Appendix F](#)

Hygiene Checklist when preparing food for children

All businesses and organisations should have a written food safety management system based on a hazard analysis and critical control approach such as in 'Safer Food Better Business'. The following points should be included:

Always wash and dry your hands thoroughly using warm water and soap

- on entering the kitchen
- after using the toilet
- before and after breaks
- after handling raw food
- after handling rubbish

Stay away from work and seek advice from your manager/supervisor if

- you have vomited in the last 48 hours
- you have had diarrhoea in the last 48 hours
- have infected (red, swollen, pus-containing) sores or cuts
- you have flu-like symptoms/heavy cold
- you had diarrhoea and vomiting whilst on holiday
- anyone in your household is sick or has diarrhoea and vomiting

To prevent cross-contamination

- wear clean protective clothing when handling food
- make sure that raw meat does not touch other foods, colour coded equipment will assist you with this
- wash and disinfect all equipment including boards and knives after use with raw food and before using with ready to eat foods
- cover raw meat and store it on the bottom shelf of the fridge

- wash and disinfect worktops before you start preparing food
- wipe up spilt food straight away
- always clean and disinfect worktops thoroughly after they have been touched by raw food
- wash kitchen cloths and sponges regularly and leave them to dry before using them again.
- try to keep different cloths for different jobs. (use different colour cloths for different uses, the safest cloth is a disposable one)
- wash tea towels daily and do not use them for drying hands
- empty all waste bins at least daily

To maintain safe temperatures of food

- make sure that perishable foods, including foods brought from home are stored below 8C
- keep your fridge at or below the recommended temperature of 5 degrees C
- keep the fridge door closed as much as possible
- wait for food to cool before you put it in the fridge. Cover and refrigerate it as quickly as possible, maximum 1 hour 30 minutes
- make the fridge temperature colder if the fridge is very full
- avoid keeping food out of the fridge
- use a cool bag or cool box when eating outside or on a trip
- check cooked food is steaming hot in the middle – there should be steam coming out
- make sure that food is not reheated more than once
- make sure that reheated food is cooked all the way through
- make sure that food is eaten as soon as possible after cooking or reheating

Guidance for preparing infant formula in care settings

<https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/sfbb-childminders-babies.pdf>

https://www.who.int/foodsafety/publications/PIF_Poster_en.pdf?ua=1

Guide to bottle feeding for parents

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/breastfeeding-and-bottle-feeding/bottle-feeding/advice/>

5. Useful Website Links

- GM Oral Health online training for EY practitioners and parents:
<https://www.gmthub.co.uk/dentistry/workforce/childrens-oral-health/training-for-early-years-practitioners>

and on supervised toothbrushing programme

<https://www.gmthub.co.uk/dentistry/workforce/starting-well-improving-childrens-oral-health/stb-early-years>

- Start 4 Life and Change 4 Life campaigns:

www.start4life.nhs.uk

www.change4life.nhs.uk

- Food and nutrition information for Early Years:

www.firststepsnutrition.org

www.firststepsnutrition.org/eating-well-early-years

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/742746/A quick guide to govt healthy eating update.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/742746/A_quick_guide_to_govt_healthy_eating_update.pdf)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/example-menus-for-early-years-settings-in-england>

<https://foundationyears.org.uk/eat-better-start-better/>

<https://www.foundationyears.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Healthy-packed-lunches-for-early-years-FACT-SHEET.pdf>

- Early Years education on oral health:

<https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/schools/resources/sugar-smart-world-early-years-lesson-powerpoint>

<https://www.dentalhealth.org/early-years-foundation-stage>

- Breastfeeding guidance

<https://www.nhs.uk/start4life/baby/breastfeeding/>

https://www.stockport.nhs.uk/page_73