**Nursery Healthy Eating Policy**

**Purpose of policy**

To provide nutritious food which meets children's individual dietary needs, and offer a balanced diet.

We encourage children to try a little of all the food provided and believe that these moments offer opportunities for children to learn about making healthy choices and eating habits.

We follow Cornwall Healthy Under 5’s guidelines on healthy eating for nursery children. Some are reluctant to try new foods and need encouragement and support to widen their diet. We are always available to support parents in helping their child eat healthily.

Our menus are carefully planned in advance to reflect seasonal changes and the food offered is fresh. Wherever possible we use local sources to supply us with seasonal fruit, vegetables and meat. Where milk is provided for the children it will be whole and pasteurised unless otherwise discussed and the alternative will be water.

**Specific dietary requirements**

Appropriate food will be provided for children requiring medically prescribed or culturally related diet. Diets preferred by parent, where possible or appropriate, will be accommodated and where such a diet or part of a diet cannot be met this will be discussed with the parent to find a solution.

**Packed Lunches**

Parents may choose to provide a packed lunch to nursery. To help children grow and develop we recommend that packed lunches contain a portion from each of the following.

* Carbohydrate, e.g. bread, pasta, potatoes, couscous or rice
* Protein, which can be meat, fish, eggs or beans.
* Dairy, (milk, cheese or yoghurt)
* Fruit and vegetables
* A mix of wholegrain and white starchy foods each week

While pre-packed lunchbox items are quicker and easier to pack they are often higher in salt and sugar than the fresh alternatives and cost more. We recommend that lunchboxes do not contain sweets and cakes as these are high in saturated fat and sugar. Milk or water should be provided in the lunchbox.

Advice is available to parents about suitable packed lunches; a keychain of ideas has been created to help create a healthy packed lunch, or a copy of the leaflet produced by Healthy Under 5’s can be obtained from the office.

**Food Preparation**

Vegetables are prepared fresh for each meal to preserve their nutrients. Vegetables are cooked in minimal water which does not have salt in. Where appropriate this liquid is then used to make gravies and sauces. Potatoes are never left in water either prior to or after cooking. Only lean meat is used in cooking and our sausages contain 70% meat. All our cakes, biscuits and puddings are cooked on the premises from fresh ingredients and do not contain trans-fats (hydrogenated fat). All our processed foods are free from proscribed additives, these include:- Sunset yellow, quinolone yellow, carnosine, allura red, tartrazine, ponceau 4R, all artificial sweeteners, sodium benzoate and monosodium glutamate.

**Promoting healthy eating habits**

We provide opportunities for your children to cook, grow and taste a variety of foods, and our staff model good eating practice, involving the children in the preparation of foods and trying new foods together.

Our menus are on display in the corridor, and the under 3’s have a Daily Report which details their food consumption for the day, among other information. We encourage parents of babies attending nursery to provide breast milk if they are breastfeeding their babies.

We use and follow guidance from the Safer Food Better Business food safety pack, which has been developed by the Food Standards Agency to help those working with food to comply with the Food Standards Act 1999, and the Food Safety and Hygiene Regulations 2013

We are regularly inspected by the Cornwall County Environmental Health Officers to ensure we comply with current legislation and are rated on a scale of 1 – 5. We always achieve the highest rating, which is displayed in the setting.

Reviewed April 2020