



### **Rationale**

The Children Act 1989 provides a framework for healthy eating in a setting providing childcare throughout the day. The Department of Health's guidance notes on the act states that:

“Providers should ensure that the snacks and meals provided are varied and nutritious. Meals should be chosen to reflect the cultural and religious backgrounds of the children. Parent's wishes should be respected ... meals and snacks should be regarded as social occasions with staff eating with small groups of children”.

At Spencer Nursery School we also recognise the importance of providing a healthy diet which supports the children's dental health and working with parents to support this from home. Good teeth are important to help children smile and feel confident, eat and talk. It is with this in mind that we have put this guidance together to promote a healthy diet that is good for teeth, which will in turn benefit children's overall health and well being.

### **Purpose**

Our main aims are to:

- Provide children under 5 years of age with a wide and nutritionally balanced diet to develop their health, growth and well being
- Show children that meal times are a good time to socialise with each other and to share food together, in an organised, quiet and enjoyable way.

### **Guidelines**

We believe that children should eat a varied diet, as it is more likely to contain all the vitamins and minerals that are needed to ensure a healthy body. A balanced diet for the under fives will include foods from each of the four main food groups each day.

These are:

- Bread, other cereals and potatoes
- Fruit and vegetables
- Full fat milk and dairy foods
- Meat, fish or alternatives such as pulses (beans, lentils and soya)

Foods such as chocolate, confectionary, biscuits, crisps and salty snacks may be added in moderation, as a planned occasional treat (celebrations), only at mealtimes and will not replace the foods listed above.

***The following information is for guidance only and families are asked to seek advice from their health visitor regarding feeding regimes as individual children are very different, at each stage of development.***

#### **Babies under 1 year**

- Breast milk is the ideal food for babies. The department of health recommends that breast milk or formula should be the main drink for children up to 12 months of age; after this full-fat cow's milk is suitable as the main drink.
- Weaning – this should take place between approximately 4 and 6 months and should start off with:

Non-wheat cereals

Vegetables

Non-citrus fruit with no added salt or sugar

A gradual introduction of meat, pulses and milk products.

Staff will work in partnership with parents when weaning babies. We aim to follow the routines established by parents at home in partnership with health visitor advice.

**From 6 months the diet can be expanded to include:**

- Meat, fish, eggs, all cereals, and cow's milk (only for mixing with foods). The number of milk feeds can be reduced, although up to 12 months, breast milk or formula of 500-600mls should be given every day.
- Fat will not be restricted at this age as it provides the concentrated source of energy needed for growth and development
- Sugar will be limited so weaning foods should be free from or low in sugar.
- Milk or water will be given as a drink.
- When a baby starts at the school, the staff will continue to use whatever type of milk has been used at home. This could be soya milk for children who are intolerant to formula milk. This may also mean the mother bringing in expressed milk or formula milk, which will be made up by the staff. The staff will work in partnership with parents to introduce cow's milk at around the age of 12months.
- Vegetarians – vegetarian meals are provided each day alongside the main menu choice for all age groups.

**Children aged 1 to 5**

- It is inappropriate to give reduced fat foods to children under 2.
- Skimmed milk should not be given to children under 5 years of age.
- Tea reduces the absorption of iron and is not suitable for young children, especially at mealtimes.
- Good sources of iron include meat, canned sardines, pilchards, mackerel or tuna, fortified breakfast cereals, dark green vegetables, breads, beans, lentils and tofu.
- Drinks should only include water or milk.
- Vegetarians – vegetarian meals are provided each day alongside the main menu choice for all age groups.

**Equal Opportunities**

Children bring to our school their race, gender, family background, language, culture and religion. These should be valued in order for children to feel accepted and accepting of themselves and others. It is therefore important to value the contributions, which different cultures and nationalities make to the variety of foods eaten. Whenever possible, the school will encourage children to try new foods associated with other cultures.

**Involving Parents/Carers**

We seek to enter into a partnership with parents through:

- Making sure parents/carers are aware that we promote a healthy, varied and enjoyable diet
- Displaying daily/weekly menus
- Giving clear information on what children under 3 eat each day
- Finding out about special diets before children start school or changes as they happen i.e. allergies
- Working with parents to celebrate/support festivals
- Parents sharing information with staff with regard to their child's individual needs over time
- Making it clear on entry the expectation that unless pre-arranged to support an individual child's diet, no food is brought into school from home, including sweets
- An understanding that in consultation with parents, the school will liaise with outside agencies with regard to the individual needs of a child i.e. health professional

### Adult's Role

Adults have a key role in influencing and supporting children's attitudes and choices. We seek to:

- Be a positive role model; provide an opportunity for children to learn about food, food sources, nutrition, health, seasons and growing cycles and food within other cultures.
- Develop children's social skills by sitting with groups of children at lunch-time and supporting other meal times. Adults will eat what the children are eating each day to encourage them to try a varied diet.
- Encourage all children (age appropriate) to feed themselves and become independent whilst eating.
- Encourage all children (age appropriate) to **not** use their fingers to feed themselves but to use an appropriate tool – spoon or knife and fork.
- Encourage a pleasant social atmosphere and environment, which is calm and ordered.
- Encourage children to listen and take turns, speaking to each other without shouting.
- Support children with special needs when eating.
- Support developing independence and self-confidence when children are setting tables and clearing away their own plates and cutlery.
- Encourage children to try all foods offered.
- Use all meal times as an opportunity to talk about healthy eating
- Teach table manners – to be seated throughout the meal, to encourage children not to talk with food in their mouths, to listen to others, to give them time to eat, to encourage children to say "please" and "thank you" as appropriate.
- Encourage health and safety at all times i.e. use of cutlery, scraping plates etc.
- Explain to parents the importance of children not eating food as they arrive at school. This encourages children to graze on food and does not help to establish good habits. Breakfast is available at school from 8.00am until 8.25am in Mini Macs, Mini Fi's and Seniors.

### Children's Role

All children are encouraged to take an active role:

- To take turns, setting tables.
- Clearing their own waste food, plates, cups and cutlery.
- To learn to use a knife, fork and spoon appropriately.
- To develop skills and increase their knowledge of healthy eating through discussion, exploration, preparation and cooking of a range of healthy foods.
- To share their experiences with peers and other adults, including their families.
- To behave appropriately at the breakfast/dinner/tea table.
- To develop social skills appropriate to their stage of development.
- To develop an understanding about healthy foods and the confidence to explore new tastes.

### Meals Provided by the School

The school provides the following meals:

|                 |           |                 |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|
| Breakfast       | Mini Macs | 8.00 – 8.25am   |
|                 | Mini Fi's | 8.00 – 8.25am   |
|                 | Seniors   | 8.00 – 8.25am   |
| Fruit/Milk time | Mini Macs | 10.00 – 10.20am |
|                 | Mini Fi's | 10.00 – 10.20am |
|                 | Seniors   | 10.00 – 10.30am |
| Lunch           | Mini Macs | 12.00 – 12.45pm |
|                 | Mini Fi's | 12.00 – 12.45pm |

Seniors

12.00 – 1.00pm

Tea

Mini Macs

4.00 – 4.30pm

Mini Fi's

4.00 – 4.30pm

Seniors

4.00 – 4.30pm

### **Breakfast**

Breakfast is an important start to the day and should be encouraged whenever possible.

Breakfast will include a choice of:

- Cornflakes
- Weetabix
- Rice Krispies
- Cheerios
- Milk
- Water

### **Fruit/Milk time**

This time is an important social time where children learn from each other and learn the names and tastes of different fruit. We provide the following:

- Fresh fruit - assorted
- Milk/Water

### **Lunch**

Our lunch menus operate on a three-week cycle, which will change on a termly basis, from Spring to Summer to Winter (see menus – which are displayed in all classrooms and in the main Hallway). Individual menus are available on request, via the school office. A drink of water is offered and encouraged as part of this meal.

### **Tea**

Our tea menus operate on a three-week cycle, which will change from Spring, to Summer to Winter (see menus). A drink of water or milk is offered and encouraged as part of this meal.

### **Birthdays Celebrations**

To support our policy, parents/carers are asked not to bring in sweets to celebrate their child's birthday. Instead, if parents/carers wish to mark the occasion of their child's birthday we welcome the donation of a children's story/picture book into our library collection. We place a special donation certificate into the book with the child's name and the details of the occasion – birthday or leaving day. A small collection of books is available for parents to buy to mark their child's birthday/leaving day, which are kept in the school office.

As an alternative we invite parents to bring in some fruit that can be shared at fruit and milk time to celebrate a child's birthday or leaving day. If a parent prefers to bring in a birthday cake, we ask that small food bags are also provided. Every parent will then be asked if their child would like to take home a piece of birthday cake, which will be given in the small food bag provided.

### **Foods we do not use**

It is our policy not to provide the following foods:

- Jam/spread
- Honey
- Peanut butter
- Salt (except in small amounts during cooking)
- Mono sodium glutamate
- Sweets
- Nuts or nut traces
- Neat fruit juice
- Fizzy drinks, other than water

### **Spring, Summer and Winter Menus**

- The school works in partnership with Caterlink Catering Company and their nutritionist to compile the menus for food offered by the school. This is done over a three week period and changes every term (Spring, Summer and Winter). All menus may be subject to change on an annual basis.
- Individual children's needs are met on medical, religious and cultural grounds.
- The school seeks dietary information regarding individual children's needs on entry to the school, in partnership with parents/carers.
- Parents/carers are asked to inform the school of any changes to their child's diet and the school will adjust menus if required.
- Parents may be asked to provide specialist milk or foods if the school is unable to source these through their provisions suppliers.

### **Notifying Ofsted of Food Poisoning**

As a registered provider the school will notify Ofsted of any incidents of food poisoning effecting two or more children looked after on the premises. Notification will be made as soon as is practicable but in any event within 14 days of the incident occurring.

### **Training for Staff**

Training in food hygiene matters is provided to all staff on induction and staff are also required to complete the Level 2 Food Safety in Catering award as part of their training requirements. Retraining takes place every 3 years.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

This policy is monitored by the governing body on a bi-annual basis and any necessary changes are made in line with guidance from the local authority and health service.

### **Healthy Eating Policy**

Date: October 2017  
Committee: Location Committee

Review: October 2018