



## Early Years Healthy Eating Policy

### Aims

At Gingerbread we aim to implement the whole setting approach to healthy eating in order to improve the health of children, their families and staff.

We will equip our children with the knowledge, understanding and skills that enable them to make the sort of choices that lead to a healthy lifestyle and develop to their full potential. In our setting children will be provided with a range of opportunities to learn about food and make healthier food and drink choices.

### Objectives

#### Environment/setting

- ❖ To promote healthy lifestyles through healthy eating and drinking
- ❖ To present consistent, informed healthy eating messages.
- ❖ The setting will support and encourage good table manners and social eating skills. Carers will sit with children while they eat and will provide a good role model.
- ❖ Children will take main meals at a table with a tablecloth.
- ❖ Children will be encouraged to serve some portion of their meal, taking into consideration their safety and stage of development.
- ❖ Children will be encouraged to exercise healthy choices with regards to eating and drinking, and given time to eat meals.
- ❖ They will be supported by staff in all of the elements above, and encouraged to observe the social rituals of mealtimes including the use of 'please' and 'thank you'.
- ❖ We will work with parents/carers around the provision of healthy food and drinks by making healthy eating information available such as leaflets, posters and policies.

### Training

- ❖ We will regularly organise opportunities for staff to receive information on healthy eating, oral health, food safety and hygiene, 1<sup>st</sup> aid and health and safety.

### Allergies / Preferences

- ❖ We will obtain necessary information from parents in advance of a child being admitted to the provision, including: the child's special dietary requirements, preferences or food allergies.
- ❖ Written parental permission will be requested at the time of the child's admission to the provision, to the seeking of any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment in the future.



### Breastfeeding

- ❖ We support the promotion and practice of breastfeeding.

### Nutrition

- ❖ All meals and snacks provided are nutritious, avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar, salt, additives, preservatives and colouring.
- ❖ Menus are planned in advance and food offered is fresh, wholesome and balanced.
- ❖ A diet encompassing food from a range of cultures ensures that children from all backgrounds encounter familiar tastes and that all children have the opportunity also to try unfamiliar foods.
- ❖ The dietary rules of religious groups and of vegetarians / vegans are known and met in appropriate ways.
- ❖ Menus of meals/snacks are displayed for the information of parents
- ❖ If a main meal is offered, the following elements are included:
  - protein for growth.
  - carbohydrate for energy.
  - essential minerals and vitamins in raw foods, salads and fruits.
  - Healthier unsaturated fats.

### Drinks

- ❖ Full fat milk will be provided for children aged one year plus.
- ❖ Children under the age of 1 year will be should have formula milk
- ❖ Water is constantly available via our water fountains and at key times of the day, For example... after physical play.

### Rewards

- ❖ Children will be rewarded with praise, stars and stickers. Food and sweets will not be used as a reward

### Birthdays and Celebrations

- ❖ Birthdays will be celebrated in ways that don't involve confectionery, cakes or biscuits, with the exception of a small birthday cake.
- ❖ To take account of ethical, religious and medical dietary requirements of children and staff
- ❖ Ideas for culturally appropriate ways to celebrate cultural and religious occasions will be discussed with parents/carers.