

Healthy eating / Oral health

Policy statement

We recognise the need to encourage healthy eating from an early age, as this will help children to reach their full potential in terms of growth and development. We support children and their families, creating an awareness of healthy eating and promoting as appropriate.

We provide opportunities and experiences to develop children's knowledge and understanding of healthy eating concepts and give the children well balanced and nutritious snacks.

We also promote oral health throughout our learning and development using topics, discussion and resources to encourage this, which goes hand in hand with healthy eating.

Procedures

Provision of healthy eating

The preschool regards snack and meal times as important parts of the setting's sessions. Eating represents a social time for the children and adults and this helps children to learn about healthy eating. We have also noticed that the consumption of healthy food has a marked effect on children's behaviour and ability to learn.

- Parents of children who are on special diets will be asked to provide as much information as possible about suitable foods and in some cases may be asked to provide food for them.
- Cultural dietary habits are respected. Parents or carers are requested to provide details of foods eaten and not eaten by the child and make sure everyone involved in caring for the child know about these.
- Meal and snack times are used as an opportunity to encourage good social habits.
- Children will be encouraged to develop good eating skills and table manners and will be given plenty of time to eat.
- Children will never be left unattended while eating or drinking.
- All snacks will be served on plates or dishes.
- Water will be available at all times.
- Milk is available at snack time.
- The morning snack that preschool provide will consist of wholemeal toast or crackers as well as fruit and vegetables, this is charged at £15 a term. If parents want to provide a snack for their child, it must be put in a clear plastic bag and clearly named, for each snack period in the session they attend, brought in at the beginning of each session along with all the consumables each day clearly labelled in a clear plastic bag.

Lunch

- Parents are to provide a healthy lunch for example, sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit / vegetables and **one** full-fat milk-based dessert such as yoghurt or fromage frais. Low fat versions tend to contain more added sugar/sweeteners, young children need good whole-food sources of fat for proper development.
- Small fruits must be quartered/sliced such as grapes, tomatoes and blueberries.

- We ask you not to include processed sugary treats in your child's lunch such as cake, biscuits or chocolate. If these are included, we will return them in your child's lunch box to be consumed after their preschool session.
- If you want to put a 'treat' in for your child, a small cereal bar is suitable. If more than one is put in your child's lunch box we will return it in their lunch box and again, this can be eaten later, after their preschool session.
- No juice or fizzy drinks. We provide water to drink during lunch time for all children.
- Processed, salty foods should be limited, such as cured meats, (eg ham, bacon, salami, pepperoni), crisps and other fried snack foods. If you wish to include crisps, then it must be half a bag or a few crisps in a pot. Baked savoury snack options are healthier and preferred to fried versions. Lentil, pea, oat and rice cake type snacks are also good alternatives.
- St Marys Primary School site has a strict no nuts policy.
- All wrappers, drink cartons and uneaten food will be put back in the child's lunchbox.
- Please provide a spoon in a named lunch box.
- It is not necessary to provide a cup, bottle or sipping cup as children quickly learn to use the cups at preschool along with their peers.
- If parents/carers have concerns around what their child is eating throughout the day, a member of staff will enter this information onto the 'meal' tab on Famly and monitor the child.
- Dragonflies ask parents not to provide packed lunches that consist largely of crisps, processed foods, sweet drinks and sweet products such as cakes or biscuits. We reserve the right to return this food to the parent in their child's lunch box.
- We ask parents not to include food that may pose a choking risk to their child, or to cut these items into small pieces to mitigate this.
- Please see the following links for ideas of lunches for your preschool child:
[Lunchbox ideas and recipes – Healthier Families - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/lunchbox-ideas-and-recipes)

Safety

- All staff will complete a L2 Food Hygiene course.
- Staff and children should practice regular and good hand washing procedures.
- All food handling staff are to wear adequate clean protective clothing.
- All food to be served straight after preparation.
- All storage, preparation and service of food will be carried out in accordance with relevant food hygiene and safety regulations.
- Food handlers suffering from diarrhoea and or vomiting will be excluded from preschool until recovered and free from symptoms for at least 48 hours.

This policy was adopted by

Dragonflies

On

April 2026

Date to be reviewed

April 2027

Signed on behalf of the provider

Name of signatory

Role of signatory

Trustee

Further information and resources:

Portion guidance from the British Nutrition Foundation - click on the following link:

[Portion Sizes for Toddlers - Infant & Toddler Forum \(infantandtoddlerforum.org\)](http://infantandtoddlerforum.org)

Some brilliant resources are also available on the First steps nutrition trust website - see link:

[Eating well early years — First Steps Nutrition Trust](http://www.firststepsnutrition.org)

Examples of ideal lunches for 1-4 year olds:



British Nutrition Foundation

5532-a-day

Perfect portions for little tums (1-4 years)

5 -a-day
Starchy Foods
(Potatoes, bread, rice & pasta)

- 1/2-1 slice bread
- 1-2 oat cakes
- 3-6 tbsp breakfast cereal
- 1-3 tbsp mashed potato
- 2-5 tbsp cooked pasta/rice

5 -a-day
Fruit & Vegetables
(Apples, oranges, broccoli & carrots)

- 2-6 carrot sticks
- 1/4-1 banana
- 3-10 grapes (halved lengthways or ideally quartered)
- 1/2-2 tbsp peas
- 1/2-2 tbsp broccoli

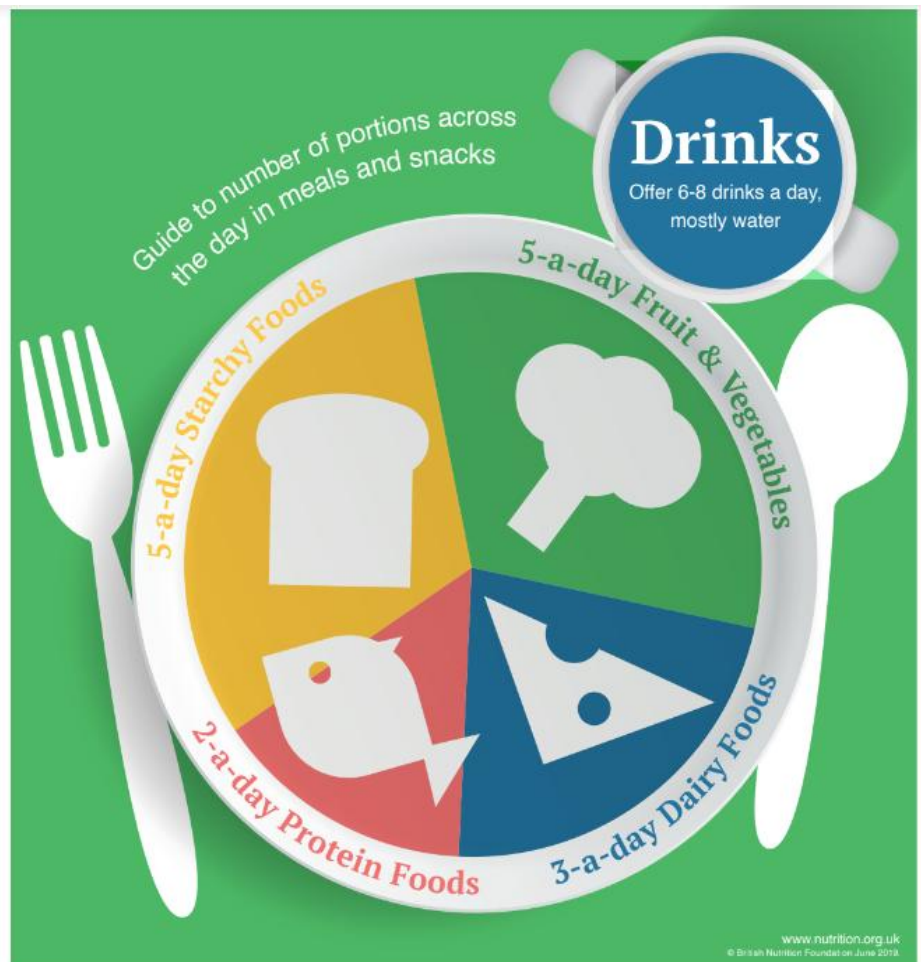
3 -a-day
Dairy Foods
(Milk, cheese & yogurt)

- 1 beaker of milk (100-120ml)
- 1 pot of yogurt (125ml)
- 1 cheese triangle

2 -a-day (3 portions if child is vegetarian)
Protein Foods
(Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins)

- 2-4 tbsp chickpeas, kidney beans, dhal, lentils or beans
- 2-4 tbsp cooked minced meat
- 1/4-1 small fillet of fish

See overleaf for more examples...



5532-a-day

Your child needs a variety of foods from the 4 main food groups.

Each day offer about:

- 5 portions of starchy foods
- 5 (or more) portions of fruit & vegetables
- 3 portions of dairy foods
- 2 portions of protein foods (or 3 if vegetarian)

These foods can be offered as meals and snacks. This handy chart gives examples of portion sizes as a guide, but these will vary for children of different ages and appetites. Children's food preferences and appetites vary from day to day so let your child decide how much to eat and keep offering new foods alongside familiar favourites. Fats and oils contain essential nutrients and small amounts can be included in childrens' diets – use spreads sparingly and small amounts of oil in cooking. Children under 5 should have a daily supplement of vitamins A, C and D – ask your GP, health visitor or pharmacist for more information. Foods like chocolate, biscuits and cakes and higher salt snack foods like crisps or corn snacks are not needed in the diet and so shouldn't be a regular part of children's everyday foods. Small portions can be offered occasionally.



5  -a-day Starchy Foods (Potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbohydrates) Examples of portion sizes:	5  -a-day Fruit & Vegetables Examples of portion sizes:	3  -a-day Dairy Foods (Milk, cheese, yogurt and non dairy alternatives) Examples of portion sizes:	2  -a-day Protein Foods *3 portions if child is vegetarian (Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins) Examples of portion sizes:
 1/2-1/3 pitta bread  1/3 plain breadsticks  1/2 oat cakes  2-4 potato wedges  3-6 tbsp breakfast cereal  2-5 tbsp cooked rice  1/2-1 chapati  2-4 tbsp canned spaghetti hoops  2-4 tbsp cooked couscous  1/2-1 medium boiled or baked potato  1/2-1 scotch pancake  1/2-1 acone	 1/2-1/3 medium apple  3-10 strawberries  1/2-1 peach  1-4 cherry tomatoes  1/2-1/3 medium orange  1/2-2 tbsp cooked vegetables  1/2-2 tbsp cooked spinach  2-6 vegetable sticks  2-4 tbsp canned fruit in juice  1-4 button mushrooms  1/2-2 tbsp roasted vegetables  1/2-2 tbsp sweetcorn	 2-4 tbsp grated cheese  2-5 tbsp rice pudding  1-3 tbsp yogurt dip e.g. raita  1-3 tbsp cheese sauce  1/2-1 tbsp cottage cheese  5-7 tbsp dairy dessert e.g. custard  3 tablespoons of plain yogurt  1-3 slices Mozzarella cheese  2 small pots (60ml each) fromage frais  1 cheese triangle  1 pot (120g) soya-based dessert (with calcium)  100-120ml cow's milk or breakfast as a drink	 1/2-1 slice of beef or lamb  1/2-2 tsp shellfish  1/2-2 small slices of chicken, turkey or pork  1/2-1 poached, boiled, or fried egg  1/2-1 burger  peanut butter on bread/toast  1/4-1 small fillet of fish  1-2 tbsp chopped or ground nuts  1-2 fish fingers  1-2 tbsp houmous  1/2-1 1/2 tbsp canned fish  2-3 tbsp baked beans

Developed by the British Nutrition Foundation. Originally funded by Danone Nutricia Early Years Nutrition and updated using an educational grant from the Early Years Nutrition Partnership. Food images in toddler portion sizes provided by the Infant and Toddler Forum. Please refer to leaflet for more food examples and further advice.

You can also read the two following attached pdf files:

Packed Lunches

Pre-schooler portion guide – BNF