



**Camrose**  
Early Years Centre for Children & Families

# FOOD AND DRINK POLICY

**Adopted by the Governing Body of the  
Camrose Early Years Centre for Children and Families**

**18<sup>th</sup> October 2016**

## Introduction

At the Camrose Early Years Centre we believe that a balanced diet through meals and snacks and celebratory events is essential to:

- maintain and protect health
- ensure that full mental and physical potential is reached each day
- optimise growth and development
- help prevent obesity
- allow children and their parents enjoy social situations.

Developing a healthy diet and good eating habits early in life will lay the foundations for future health. We also believe that snack and mealtimes present a wide range of learning opportunities in all areas of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The Camrose Early Years Centre caters for children between the ages of 0 and 5 years and aims to:

- make meal/snack times a pleasurable, enjoyable, social and safe experience
- support children and their families, creating an awareness of healthy eating and of social interactions

## Snack and Meal Times

Breakfast: 8.00 – 8.45

Snack: 9.30 – 10.00

Lunch: 11.30 – 12.00 and 12.00 – 12.30

Snack: 1.45 – 2.15

Tea: 3.30 – 4.00 and 4.00 – 4.30

## Eating and Drinking for Health

Water is available for the children at all times.

At breakfast cereals and toast are served. A main course and a pudding are served at lunch and tea times.

At mealtimes water and diluted fruit juice are available, and at snack times water and milk are available. The under 2s are offered full fat milk, while the over 2s have semi skimmed milk.

We follow advice on eating for health provided by Grub4Life ([Grub4Life is a nutrition based organisation which puts the application of good nutrition into practice across a wide spectrum of business areas](#)).

## **Physical Activity and Outdoor Play**

Children play outside every session. This encourages running, jumping, climbing and riding on ride-on toys. It ensures that the children are exposed to sunlight and the uptake of vitamin D. The more energy that children use, the more food they need to eat. Children, who are inactive may have small appetites and may find it harder to eat all the nutrients that they need. Physical activity also builds up muscle strength, overall fitness, energy and alertness.

## **Mealtimes**

The weekly menu is on display in advance. Recipes are available to parents on request. Food provided is culturally sensitive and adjusted to any medical needs as required.

Children are always allowed second helpings of all courses.

Children are allowed to have a pudding if they have not finished the main course.

Food and drink are never withheld as a means of managing children's behaviours.

All children from the weaning stage are encouraged to drink and feed themselves. Staff will guide and assist when/if necessary.

Staff members always display positive attitudes towards the meals and snacks that are provided.

Staff members eat together with the children at mealtimes so that they act as positive role models for good table manners, enjoyable and relaxed social interactions and healthy eating and drinking. Staff eat what the children eat. Staff, who choose to bring in a packed lunch, eat it in the staff room, never with the children in the dining room.

## **Nutritional Information**

The weekly menus provide children with a tasty, varied and balanced diet, which meets the nutritional requirements of the children for growth and development.

Water or milk is served with the meals.

Salt is never added to any foods produced by the centre. To add flavour, herbs, spices and vegetables are used. Processed/bought foods that contain salt/sodium are low in salt/sodium.

Refined sugar is not used in cooking for dishes other than cakes and custard. Alternatives, such as fruit and honey are used.

## **Listening to Children**

We talk to children about food, drink and exercise as part of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. We listen to and consult with children about the choices of food on offer.

## **Learning through Food**

Snacks and mealtimes are used as opportunities to develop children's independence through e.g. making choices. The older children will be encouraged to serve food and drink for themselves.

Mealtimes are also used as learning opportunities in a wide range of ways and in all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage, i.e. communication and language; physical development; personal, social and emotional development; literacy; mathematics; understanding the world and expressive arts and design.

Our family learning programme makes vast use of cooking and of food as themes for example cultural festivals, such as the Chinese New Year, Diwali, Easter, etc. to involve parents in their children's learning.

## **Feeding Babies and Weaning**

Our approach to feeding babies and to weaning is based on and compliant with the UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative and all subsequent guidelines. In 2012, UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative published revised standards for maternity, neonatal, health visiting (or specialist public health nursing) and children's centre (or equivalent early years' community settings) services. These were the result of a large consultation involving clinicians, academics, policy makers and mothers. These new standards incorporate the previous standards as specified in the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding and Seven Point Plan for Sustaining Breastfeeding in the Community, but update and expand them to fully reflect the evidence base on delivering the best outcomes for mother and babies in the UK. <http://www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/>

## **Working with Parents**

Parents are asked about their children's dietary preferences and requirements before admission. The information is recorded in the children's files.

The Centre records and acts on information from parents about their child's dietary needs.

Parents of children under 2 are informed verbally and in writing of their children's food intake when they collect them. Verbal information about the children over the age of 2 is shared with parents upon collection.

## **Special Events and Celebrations**

For children's birthdays a cake is provided by the centre. If parents wish to provide a cake, it has to be a bought cake, so that the ingredients are known and understood.

Annual festivals from different religions, cultures and countries are celebrated as part of the children's meal and snack times and are also offered through the Family Learning Programme for parents, families and children together. The food for each festival is freshly prepared and information about the food and customs explained through displays and presentations.

## **Allergies and Food Intolerances**

We talk with parents about their children's food and drink on admission. If a food allergy or food intolerance is known, then we follow the diet advice supplied to the parents by health colleagues.

If a food allergy is suspected by the parents and/or the centre, we request that the situation is investigated and then seek parental consent to obtain specific medical information about the child concerned. We adhere to all such medical information.

Parents of children who are on special diets are asked to provide as much information as possible.

A specific allergy plan is in place for children with allergies and those, who have had an allergic reaction. It is displayed for kitchen and all other staff.

## **Storing and Handling Foods**

The centre is fully compliant with relevant legislation and documents issued by the Food Standards Agency: <https://www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/sfbb>

The Early Years Foundation Stage document requires providers to have an area which is adequately equipped to provide healthy meals, snacks and drinks for children as necessary,. There are suitable facilities for the hygienic preparation of food for children, including suitable sterilisation equipment for babies' food.

## **Staff and Staff Training**

Meals are prepared by one of our two cooks. Both hold a current food hygiene certificate. Cleanliness together with fridge and freezer temperatures are monitored and recorded every day.

Staff not authorised to be in the kitchen do not enter the kitchen.

Room based staff, who prepare snacks, have current food hygiene certificates too. If staff are unwell, they do not handle food.

All staff are trained in Paediatric 1<sup>st</sup> Aid.

All staff, who handle and prepare food in the Centre's kitchen have up to date food hygiene certificates. Other staff, who prepare snacks, etc. have on-line training and the associated level 2 certificate

### **Monitoring**

**At all times there is a named designated member of staff who monitors the quality and contents of the food and drink that is provided for the children. This includes all meals and snacks.**

### **Related Policies**

Behaviour Policy.