

HEALTHY EATING POLICY

At Ramas Daycare we encourage children to develop a positive attitude to food and healthy lifestyles. This is achieved through adopting a whole nursery approach which encompasses children, their families and staff.

Introduction

This Policy recognises that children under the age of 5 years have different nutritional needs from those of older children and adults. They have a high energy and nutrient requirement in relation to their size. Early Years is an important time to shape food preferences and habits, by allowing children to make their own selections through guided choice: this can have a positive impact on health in later life. This policy covers general nutritional guidance: children have individual needs which should be acknowledged. If parents/carers have any concerns they should discuss these with their Health Visitor, GP or Dietician.

General

- Those responsible for food preparation and handling of food must be competent to do so, and all Ramas Daycare catering staff will have the appropriate food hygiene/safety qualifications.
- All staff will receive training and advice in food handling and food hygiene.
- Information must be made available to parents/carers regarding food and drinks provided to the children. Menus will be displayed for parents/carers to see
- Staff will be good role models for healthy eating and drinking by only drinking water in front of the children and only eating the same healthy food that is available to the children.
- No nuts will be used in any of the recipes for meals produced on site, however we cannot guarantee an environment free from any food product including nuts due to manufacturers disclaimers on most products. Refer to Allergies policy including nut allergies for children with nut allergies

Allergies/Food preferences/Special Diets

The Nursery will obtain and record necessary information from parents/carers regarding any special dietary requirements, preferences or food allergies during the induction process.

Nutrition

- The nursery will provide healthy, balanced and nutritious meals, snacks and drinks which have been nutritionally analysed to provide a healthy balanced choice across the weekly menu.
- Food from the four main food groups will be offered every day (starchy carbohydrates, fruit and vegetables, milk, dairy foods and proteins).
- Main meals will include foods from the following food groups: starchy carbohydrates, protein, dairy and fruit and vegetables.

- No salt will be added to foods and foods high in salt will be used as little as possible. If these products are used (e.g. gravy granules, stock cubes, etc) they will be the lowest salt variety available.
- Foods containing added sugar will be confined to meal times to reduce the risk of dental decay.

Food groups

Starchy Carbohydrates include: breads, pasta, rice, and potatoes- these provide a good source of energy. Fruit and vegetables include: Fresh, frozen, tinned (fruit in juice, vegetables in water with no added salt or sugar) dried and juiced fruit and vegetables (dried and juiced fruit will only be consumed as part of a meal)- these provide a good source of vitamins and minerals. *No Pork

Dairy foods include: Milk, cheese and yogurts- these provide a good source of calcium for healthy teeth and bones.

Foods containing protein include: meats, fish, eggs and pulses- these are required for growth and repair.

Meal Times

- Nursery staff will pro-actively involve children at meal times to create a social occasion which provides opportunities to promote children's social and emotional development as well as encourage good eating habits and table manners.
- Fussy eaters will be encouraged (but not forced) to eat. Praise will be given when the child eats; food will be removed without judgement if the child refuses food.
- Children will be given as much time as they need to finish their meals.
- Children will be given the appropriate utensils and crockery according to the meal served. Where it is part of a child's culture, or developmentally appropriate, to eat with their fingers or particular utensils, this will be encouraged and supported.

Snacks

Snacks are offered between meals where required to ensure children receive appropriate levels of energy and nutrition, for example at mid-morning and mid-afternoon.

Drinks

- Children will have access to drinking water at all times throughout the sessions.
- Children will be offered milk or water during snack time.
- Juice is not allowed during session times and will only be provided at lunch for those children on school meals* "Nursery does not allow juice"