

STEPPING STONES CHILDCARE

FOOD POLICY

At Stepping Stones we aim to start children on a healthy diet will help them to develop good eating habits and provide the nutrients they need to grow and develop.

Debbie our cook who also is a qualified Nursery Nurse prepares all our meals freshly each day on the premises. We have two menus that alternate weekly.

Food is chosen not only for the nutritional value but also because of taste, smell, texture, and colour to entice the children to taste and enjoy different foods Also we need to consider individual children's religious and dietary requirements. Parents inform us of any allergies their child has and this information is:-

1. document across the front of the child's enrolment record
2. A dietary chart on the wall in the kitchen and nursery
3. Children who have a dietary requirements have their name and dietary requirement written on their placement.

Children need a balanced diet of meat, fish, poultry, starchy food, dairy products, vegetables and fruit. At Stepping Stones we offer food in a variety of ways to help introduce the children to different foods and extend their experience.

Dinner time

Staff and children sit together every day for dinner. A healthy balanced two course meal is provided together with water to drink. The menu describes in detail the types of meals provided over a two week period. The menu can be found on the notice board in the foyer.

The meals are served in small portions with particular attention paid to the colour, texture and presentation, so as to encourage the children to eat well and enjoy their food.

Mealtimes in nursery offer fantastic opportunities for learning. They provide an ideal occasion to involve children and model positive behaviour around food with the possibility of a lifelong impact.

Also eating together is when a great deal of learning takes place:-

Social Development

Our children sit together in small groups and see others eating, they can listen, talk and share, taking turns when passing the food around to each other.

Learning table manners such as waiting to be served, putting their knife and fork down between mouthful, remaining seated until their meals is finished, waiting their turn to have a second helping, saying please and thank you, serving food to each other

Physical Development

Using knives, forks, spoons and cups or also with babies using their fingers encourages the development of their fine motor skills.

Language Development

As mealtime is a social occasion, children and staff chat together throughout the meal, so they are hearing words associated with food which describe different types meals ie Chicken Curry, Spaghetti Bolognese, Lamb stew etc, as well as general conversation.

*'Make the most of mealtimes as a valuable learning opportunity for children embedding skills they will carry with them through life'
(The Food Teacher, Katharine Tate)*

Tea time

Children are offered freshly made sandwiches, soup with finger rolls, cheese, pineapple and crackers, pizzas, a variety of fresh fruit and water or milk. Types of food offered are ham, cheese, chicken, bread, cucumber, apples, oranges, grapes, raisins, pears, bananas and plums.

The children have access to water all day, in special drinking bottles which are left on a tray in the nursery so they are encouraged by the staff to have a drink or they can help themselves at any time, or ask the staff whenever they need a drink.

Birthdays

Children celebrate their birthdays but because of different allergies instead of a birthday cake we use a beautiful wooden cake to while we all sing 'Happy Birthday' to them after tea. Some parents choose to bring in 'goody bags' containing sweets, these are given to the other parents at the end of the day, so it is left to their discretion whether they offer them to their child or not.

Cooking and general knowledge, science & maths.

Children also have at nursery the opportunity to experience cooking activities. This might include cake making, sandwiches, pancakes, jelly, biscuits and fruit salad.

Through this activity children learn about different food ingredients and where they come from, also learning about weighing, sorting and what happens to food when it is mixed, cooked and chilled.

They also learn:-

- social skills like sharing and taking turns
- language skills by using new words ie weigh, pour, measure.
- Maths ie 2 eggs, 30 mls milk
- Personal hygiene - hand washing

Stepping Stones Food Policy encourages healthy sensible eating in children, while at the same time giving them the opportunity to explore different types of food and learn about and respect all the types of food from other cultures.

We are also a 'nut free' nursery all ingredients used daily have been check by Debbie our cook. Staff or Parents are not allowed it bring cakes, biscuits or nut related cereals into the nursery at any time to prevent cross contamination

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| This policy was revised on | | 02.04.16 |
| Signed on behalf of the nursery | | <i>Susan Perkins</i> |
| Renewed on 19.04.17 | <i>Susan Perkins</i> | To be revised on 19.04.18 |
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