

# Stepping Stones Childcare

## Mealtime and Feeding Policy

Mealtimes are a social occasion to be shared with both adults and children. Adults sit at the table with the children and eat their meal, talking to the children and encouraging eating and good manners.

Children's placements will indicate their seat and before the meal begins ask the children to put their hands on their knees while waiting for their dinner to be served. Do not allow the children to play with the cutlery and check that their chairs are under the table (to make it easy for them to reach their food and to reduce the amount of food spilt on the floor).

When the children and adults are ready, Debbie our cook who serves the meal will invite the child servers to come and give out the dinners. The children should do this in an orderly manner – no running or rushing. The children seated at the tables should be reminded to keep their hands on their knees to enable the servers to place their dinner in front of them.

During the meal there should be quiet conversation between adults and children – no calling across the room or loud voices. Staff feeding the babies should also engage in conversation with them while gently encourage them to eat their dinner.

Please note:-

- Any child who shows signs of distress at being faced with a meal they do not like, despite encouragement to eat, will have the food removed without any fuss.
- If a child does not finish their first course, they will still be offered a dessert but not a second helping.
- The force feeding of children will not be tolerated in the nursery.
- Children are given time to eat at their own pace and not rushed.
- Quantities of food offered take into account the ages of the children being the recommended portion sizes for babies and young children.
- Children who refuse to eat at mealtime are offered food later in the day ie after sleep time.
- No child is ever left alone when eating/drinking to minimise risk of choking.
- Special diets are catered for and children with this requirement should not be made to feel uncomfortable about this. The placemats of children with special diets will have their name and dietary requirement written on the placemat.

When a child has finished their dinner and would like a second helping they must wait until the adult at the table says they may go to Debbie. Children go one at a time to Debbie, to avoid knocking into each other. If a child does not want a second helping then they should keep their empty plate in front of them until the adult sitting at the table clears the empty plates for desserts.

All children whether they finished their dinner or not, are given dessert. Only children who ate all their dinner are allowed a second helping of dessert, this encourages children to eat their dinner so they

can have a second dessert if they wish. Children are offered a drink of water during the meal. The older children can pour their own drink from the jug on the table.

During the meal if a table comes messy with spilt food or drink, the staff supervising dinner should wipe immediately, do not wait until the end of the meal.

When the meal is over the younger children must be taken to the toilet, hands and mouth washed and taken to their bed as soon as possible. The older children remain seated until their turn.

Please remember that only the adult serving should wait the tables, all other staff remain seated throughout the meal. The staff serving will clear all the tables returning all the cutlery and dishes to the serving trolley – scrape any food into the ‘waste dish’ and stack the plates tidily and place the cutlery into the bowl of soapy water.

Tables and chairs must be wiped down and all the chairs stacked in a neat pile beside the tables.

<b>This policy was adopted on</b>	<b>Policy re-written</b>	<b>Signed by:-</b>	<b>Review date</b>
18.09.1989	02/04/2019	<i>Susan Perkins</i>	02/04/2020
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