



Healthy Eating Policy

Approved by:	Governing Body	Date: 1 st June 2026
Last reviewed on:		
Next review due by:	September 2026	

Harrington Hill Day Care Nursery recognises that it has a shared responsibility and duty of care for those who work in and receive a service from our provision and recognises the importance of a healthy diet in children's development. The impact a poor diet has on the health and general well-being of children has been well documented. What children eat plays an important part in keeping them happy, healthy, growing and developing properly. We will continually strive to promote a healthy lifestyle for the children in our care. Work in partnership with relevant agencies to promote a healthy environment and healthy lifestyle in the Early Years settings.

We will provide children and infants in daycare with meals and snacks that are appealing and that meet their nutritional needs:

- Parents will be informed of the healthy eating policy from the beginning and consulted on their child's dietary needs regularly. They will be advised if their child is not eating well in daycare.
- Parents with children with special dietary needs will be asked to provide details on any special food needed.
- Children under one year old will have appropriate food and fluids to meet their nutritional needs.

- Menus will be planned to meet food safety requirements. Menus will be displayed for parents and staff to view.
- Menus will include foods which are rich in vitamins, iron and calcium, in particular fruit, vegetables, meat, beans, bread and low-fat dairy products; as well as starchy foods as a source of energy (such as bread, pasta, rice and potatoes) rather than fatty foods. **The day care is a nut-free provision.**
- A wide range of healthy, additive-free food will be available. This will include foods that meet the dietary, religious and cultural requirements of all children including, vegetarian, halal and kosher as appropriate. Children who have dairy-free diets should be offered suitable calcium-enriched alternatives.
- All children will be given a portion of vegetables/salads as part of their meals. They are encouraged to try some, even if it is a small portion.
- To achieve a pleasant social dining experience and to enhance the social development of each child, practitioners may set an example by eating the same food as the children and sharing in this social time. The only food available to the children should be consumed during group meals and snack times (with medical exceptions).
- Drinking water will be available for children at all times and the children will be encouraged to drink water particularly after active play and in hot weather. Other drinks on offer will be full-fat milk only. Each child has a personalised water bottle in Toddler and Preschool to support the regular intake of fluid and self-care.
- Cups with non-drip lids should not be used; the sucking method used can delay the development of muscles used for chewing and speaking and dental caries.
- All other drinks such as fruit juice drinks, squash, cordial, and milkshake syrups are not permitted in order to discourage sugary drinks and fewer healthy snacks between meals.
- Special occasions such as birthdays and cultural and religious festivals should be celebrated with a focus on the event rather than sugary and fatty foods; a small cake and fruit are suggested if parents wish to bring in food these will be handed to parents. Party packs and other 'party foods' will be actively discouraged.

We will provide food to children which has been stored, prepared and served safely and hygienically and will ensure hygienic food practices:

- All staff will have an awareness of safe food handling and hygiene and will promote good practices to the children e.g. washing their hands before handling food or eating meals and snacks.

- A first aider will be present at all times.
- All staff will be aware of children with additional needs relating to eating and drinking at mealtimes.
- They will provide food to children which has been stored, prepared and served in a safe, hygienic manner and promote hygienic food practices. This includes the sterilisation and preparation of bottles.
- Food will be stored at a safe temperature – keeping cold food below 8°C or keeping hot food above 63°C
- Fridges must be kept at 5°C or below
- Children and staff will wash their hands **before handling food or eating meals and snacks**
- Staff will discourage children from handling other children's food and utensils.

We will teach children about food and nutrition:

- All practitioners should keep abreast of local and national initiatives to promote healthy lifestyles in the setting.
- Provide a consistent programme of cross-curricular nutrition education that enables pupils to make informed choices and involve other partners to incorporate them in the set curriculum and provide up to date information for parents and carers.
- Children will be encouraged to get practical experience in food preparation.
- Children will begin to use cutlery from 12 months and should be encouraged to feed themselves from 18 months onwards.
- The foods being served to children will be discussed with them during snack and meal times.
- Every effort should be made to provide a meal experience which reflects the children's varying backgrounds and dietary needs.
- Involve children and parents in discussion regarding views and ways forward (e.g. parent's forums, questionnaires, newsletters, open day food sampling).

Breakfast:

Day-care ensures that food served is healthy and nutritious, milk and water are freely available and fruit and brown bread are always served as well as other healthy options. Food served is based on the Nutritional Standards for School lunches and other foods.

Packed Lunches:

Parents are given a leaflet about what is a good pack lunch in their Parent Pack. Packed lunches should include some fruit or vegetable; e.g. piece of fruit, dried fruit, cherry tomato, raw carrot, or cucumber wedge.

Sweets, sugary drinks, chocolate and crisps, etc. are prohibited. All waste and uneaten food is returned to the lunch box so that parents know what has been eaten.