03 Food safety and nutrition procedures

**03.3 Healthy eating and lunch box policy**

To maintain healthy development and growth children need to eat a nutritionally well balanced diet. As an Early Years setting, we are in a strong position to influence and can contribute significantly to improving the health and well-being of your child. Good nutrition in early childhood can help to prevent a variety of health problems, both in the short term and later in life. There is increasing concern that many children are consuming too much fat, sugar and salt and too little fibre, fruit and vegetables. Our aim is to share information with parents around the content of a healthy packed lunch and the balance of food groups that should be provided in a packed lunch. This policy has been updated due to changes in guidance for Early Years settings (Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance).

At Bishops Cleeve Preschool we are passionate about positively promoting the health and wellbeing of every child. We aim to support your child to foster a healthy attitude to food and work with you to ensure your child benefits from a balanced diet. Your child requires a balanced diet that includes daily intake of food groups; carbohydrates, fruit and vegetables, protein, dairy and good fats that is low in sugar, salt and excess fat.

A child’s packed lunch should be based on the ‘Eatwell Plate’ model which shows items the 5 main food groups: (Food Standards Agency 2007). Any drinks provided in lunch boxes should only include either plain water, milk (semi-skimmed), sugar-free squash or flavoured water which displays all green indicators on the traffic light labelling. Guidelines recommend it is important not to fill up on too many foods that are high in fat and / or sugar at the expense of other more nutritious foods. Limiting high fat and sugar foods will help protect your child from becoming overweight as well as helping prevent tooth decay, heart disease, stroke, and diabetes. Sweets, chocolate, cereal bars, fruit bars, toffee/salted popcorn, and fizzy drinks will not provide your child with a healthy diet and must not be include in the packed lunch. Other foods and drinks high in fat and / or sugar must not be included. To guarantee consistency and to ensure a packed lunch is in line with Food Agency standards, and to ensure other children are not exposed to potential life-threatening allergens and does not pose any choking hazards to your child or any other child, packed lunches MUST NOT contain the following:

* Nuts or nut products (eg. Peanut butter)
* Fizzy / sugary drinks in, bottles or cans or cartons – including smoothies/ fruit juices/ vitamin drinks.
* Chocolate-coated products / sweets / confectionary
* Highly processed artificial fruit products eg. Fruit winders, Bear yoyos, dino gems
* Sweet and savoury pastries (including sausage rolls / brioche)
* Fridge raiders or similar
* Peperami / Pepperoni
* Chocolate spread or Jam as a filling for sandwiches.
* Chewing gum
* Crisps
* Biscuits
* Cake
* Sugared / toffee and salted popcorn.
* Whole uncut round foods; grapes, cherries, and cherry tomatoes.

This list is not exhaustive, and we encourage parents to ask staff if they are unsure if a food meets the requirements of this lunchbox policy. Parents are responsible for providing a lunchbox meeting the standards in this policy.

Our Nutrition Lead is: Emily Gordon.

Our team of staff is available to offer advice and support and we acknowledge that it may be more challenging for some parents to meet the requirements of this policy where their child may have allergies, medical reasons or if their child is a fussy eater. We intend to work in partnership with parents and support them provide a healthy & nutritious lunchbox for every child attending our setting.

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to supply an appropriate packed lunch container where food items can be stored securely. This packed lunch policy fits within a wider context of promoting a whole Centre approach to food, nutrition, and healthy eating. Due to the requirement for staff to be vigilant at times that children are eating we do not carry out any activities that would prevent us from noticing a child that was choking, including providing cutlery or preparation of food (eg. Cutting of grapes/apples). At snack time a variety of fresh fruit, vegetables and carbohydrate along with milk or water is offered to children. Full details of the daily snack offered is written on the daily story on Class dojo.