



Food and Drink Policy - Supporting information

This paper gives information, links and resources to help you decide what to include in your policy.

The 2017 Updated UK guidelines on feeding in the first year of life “Eat Better, Start Better” will provide you with the details needed to develop your food policy and menus. It also includes:

- a code of practice that you can personalise for your setting
- a checklist for you to complete to identify what you might need to change
- a checklist for you to complete to demonstrate that you follow best practice.
- sample menus: <https://www.foundationyears.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Eat-Better-Start-Better1.pdf>

Guidelines relating to food and drink

Breast feeding:

<https://www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/>

<https://www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/baby-friendly-resources/guidance-for-health-professionals/implementing-the-baby-friendly-standards/guide-to-the-baby-friendly-initiative-standards/>

Menus and recipes for early years setting:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/example-menus-for-early-years-settings-in-england>

Eating well for 1 – 4 year olds:

http://www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2017/03/EYFS_STATUTORY_FRAMEWORK_2017.pdf

See page 28 for information about food and drink.

Healthy Start:

<https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/>

Other guidance you may wish to reference:

Warwickshire’s Health & Wellbeing Strategy: <http://hwb.warwickshire.gov.uk/about-hwbb/strategy/>

UK Guidance on healthy eating: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-eatwell-guide>

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Goodfood/Pages/Goodfoodhome.aspx>

Sustainable procurement: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sustainable-procurement-the-gbs-for-food-and-catering-services>

Food for Life: <http://www.foodforlife.org.uk>

Love Food, Hate Waste: <http://england.lovefoodhatewaste.com/>

Composting information: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/composting>

Information about food labelling: <http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Goodfood/Pages/food-labelling.aspx>

Warwickshire Dietetic Service: portion sizes (Tel: 01926 495321 x4258)

Food Allergy: www.allergyinschools.co.uk website for accurate, reliable information on managing allergies.

Warwickshire Heartbeat Award: Some of the district and borough councils across Warwickshire run an award scheme for venues with healthy menus. There is an award for people catering for the under Fives, and another for standard healthy eating provision. Contact your Environmental Health Officer for more information.

Water and other drinks

Fresh drinking water must be available and accessible at all times. Guidelines regarding drinks can be found at: <https://www.foundationyears.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Eat-Better-Start-Better1.pdf>

- Children should have access to free and fresh tap water throughout the day.
- You may provide cups and beakers, appropriate to the child's age or ask parents to bring these for their children each day.
- Children should be allowed to drink water whenever they feel thirsty.
- Encourage drinks at appropriate times e.g. before their session starts, beginning and end of breaks, lunchtimes, end of day etc.
- Have fresh, chilled water on tables at meal and snack times.
- Children should have access to free and fresh water on trips.
- Water and plain milk are the only drinks that are tooth friendly, so are the best choices between meals.
- Cordial, fruit juices, fruit juice drinks and fizzy drinks are acidic which can increase the risk of tooth erosion so we do not use them in nursery.
- The high sugar content of many drinks can cause tooth decay. This includes pure fruit juices and fruit juice drinks as well as drinks containing added sugar. For this reason they should not be used in nursery.
- If poor oral health is a particular problem you may decide only to permit plain water and plain milk as a drink. Other organisations may permit "no added sugar drinks" or diluted pure juice. Drinks containing an artificial sweetener should not be given to children under 3 years of age.

Breakfast

It is known that significant numbers of children do not eat breakfast before leaving home and research has shown that this impacts negatively on their ability to learn. A healthy breakfast or a breakfast club (to which parents are invited) helps children have the best start to the day.

Providing food at breakfast:

- provide healthy choices. (Plain, wholegrain cereal with milk or natural yogurt, toast with an unsaturated fat spread, baked beans or tomatoes on toast, fruit, a drink) as described in the Eat Better, start better menus.
- some organisations invite parents to attend breakfast to give them a good start to the day as well as an opportunity to spend more time with their children.

Teas and Snacks

Providing food for snacks and tea:

- provide plain water or plain milk to drink – the safe drinks for children's teeth.
- provide healthy food choices for children. It is important that if snacks are offered that they are nutritious and promote good oral health (avoiding high sugar and “sticky” food and drink).
- ensure that the selection of food and drink meets the same standard as your other meals.

Food and drink brought in by parents or carers

Best practice is that food and drink brought in by parents or carers should meet the same standard as meals.

You will need to decide what you will do if parents do not comply. Will you send a leaflet informing them of the Policy? If a child regularly brings in food or drink that does not conform to your policy then you will need to contact the parents to discuss this. If parents inform you that they cannot afford better food and drink, recommend the child tries your meals.

There is a Warwickshire Lunch box leaflet that can be used. Ask your school nurse, Food for Life or Changemaker contact for a copy.

For ideas for packed lunches for children and adults:

<http://www.nhs.uk/Change4Life/Pages/healthy-lunchbox-picnic.aspx>

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/childhealth6-15/Pages/Lighterlunchboxes.aspx>

Celebrations

While it is important that children are aware of the different celebrations that take place across the year and have the opportunity to taste foods and drink used to celebrate, care has to be taken that celebrations do not result in less healthy foods being offered too often. While each child only has one birthday a year, the setting may have more than one a week. Some families may want to bring in food or presents for everyone to share which may result in others feeling pressure to do the same. This can be prevented by agreeing how you will celebrate and including this in your policy. Planning ahead so parents know what will be celebrated and how is important.

- For birthdays you could have an artificial cake and celebrate blowing out candles, have a birthday sash or hat, or sing a song rather than providing cake or sweets. Some nurseries have a birthday box and the child having a birthday picks a non-food treat from it. Parents can be asked to donate treats for the box.
- For other celebrations you could design cards, invite someone to teach the children a song or dance relating to the celebration or change your menu for the day to reflect meals consumed by the groups celebrating rather than just having snacks and treats.

Teaching about food and drink

There are many opportunities for children (and their parent / carers) to develop knowledge and understanding of healthy eating and the practical skills needed to shop, grow, prepare and cook food. It is important that staff, children and parents are provided with evidence based information and resources based on UK eating habits.

Eatwell Guide: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-eatwell-guide>

UK Dietary Requirements: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/547050/government_dietary_recommendations.pdf

General information for the public on healthy eating: <http://www.nhs.uk/livewell/healthy-eating/Pages/Healthyeating.aspx>

Teaching oral health messages: <http://www.dentalbuddy.org/>

Teaching about food in schools: <https://www.nutrition.org.uk/foodinschools.html>

Teaching about food – 3 years old, upwards: <http://www.foodafactoflife.org.uk/>

The Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage suggests the following educational programmes must involve activities and experiences for children. Food can be used as an example, as follows:

- Communication and language development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations using food and food-related issues as a stimulus.
- Physical development involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food for example working in the garden.
- Personal, social and emotional development involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities. Sitting to eat and drink together teaches this.
- Literacy development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest. E.g. The Hungry Caterpillar, Cloudy with a chance of meatballs, Stone Soup.
- Mathematics involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measure, e.g. shape of fruit and vegetables, counting food, measuring water.
- Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology, the environment and what people eat.
- Expressive arts and design enables children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology. For example vegetable printing, singing songs about food, designing plates containing images of their favourite foods.

Food and behaviour

A relaxed but structured eating environment gives children the opportunity to learn good social skills and behaviours associated with eating and drinking.

For example,

- we encourage social interaction at mealtimes.
- we expect good manners.
- we make the eating area a pleasant environment in which to dine.
- we use family style dining and encourage the children to serve the food.
- we encourage staff to monitor the amount of food eaten (i.e. looking at quantity, and quality eaten: especially if there is concern about too much/too little eaten!).
- we record what the child eats and drinks each day in a diary which is returned to parents.
- In the summer (weather dependant) children may be able to eat their lunch 'picnic style' outside, in the grounds or a local park.
- we take account of the suggestions of the children and parents before changing the way meals are delivered.
- To ensure consistent messages, food and drink, especially sweets, crisps and sugary drinks are **not** be used as rewards. Badges, stars, congratulations etc. are used as rewards.

Good Oral health

Children, staff and families will benefit from information and activities relating to good oral health. This may be a priority for settings in which children have decayed, missing and filled teeth. The key messages regarding oral health are:

1. Reduce the amount and frequency of sugary foods and drinks - only give at mealtimes.
2. Choose milk and water to drink - they're kinder to teeth.
3. Visit the dentist when the first tooth appears and then as often as your dentist recommends.
4. Brush teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste - last thing at night and on one other occasion.
5. Spit out; don't rinse the fluoride toothpaste away!

Promoting a healthy weight

- Provide a range of activities such as sports and exercise to promote a healthy weight.

Evaluating your policy

You will need to identify if you have met your aims. Evidence could include:

- Completing the Eat better, start better checklist.
- Use of the breastfeeding room
- Certificates, congratulation letters
- Albums containing photos of samples of work, breakfast choice, children eating together.
- Healthy choices will be rewarded by.... (stickers / certificates / congratulatory letters home / etc)
- Record the number of parents and pupils who do not adhere to the Policy and are given a leaflet informing them of the Policy.

Please note: children following therapeutic special diets or with special needs will be given due consideration.

Action Plan Template

Policy Aim		Lead	
Priority action (what are you going to do?)			
Intended outcomes (what are you hoping this will achieve)		How we will tell people what we are doing	
Actual Outcomes (to be completed annually or at project end)		Links to other aims / action	

No.	Action	Resources needed	Who needs to know	Date for delivery	Who will do this	Progress /Date
1						
2						
3						
4						