



HEALTHY EATING, NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY POLICY

Worstead preschool is a nut free setting.

At Worstead Preschool, we recognise that a child's early years are important for their future health and wellbeing, and good nutrition during this time lays a healthy foundation. Eating a balanced diet is vital for good health and wellbeing. Food provides the energy, protein, essential fats, vitamins and minerals to live, grow and function properly. Children need a wide variety of different foods to provide the right amounts of nutrients for good health and development. The food a child eats in their early years, influences their eating habits as they grow and develop. It is important to teach young children about healthy food choices and staying well hydrated, and to help them develop good habits and a healthy relationship with food from an early age. The interactions relating to healthy eating are also important. We support the development of healthy eating habits in children, while encouraging their enjoyment and appreciation of eating and drinking as a positive, social experience. The eating experience provides not only sustenance, but also an opportunity for learning. It affects not only children's physical growth and health, but also their social and emotional development. All staff use a consistent approach and can recognize when a child may need support with their emotions. Teaching children to recognise and manage their emotions at a young age helps support foundations for doing this throughout their life.

Special Dietary Requirements

- All staff take precautions to ensure children with allergies are not put at risk of allergic reactions from food or drink, by getting to know every child in our care and their specific needs, which are displayed sensitively and discussed with parents/carers on admission. Please refer to our medication policy with regards to autoinjectors, if your child has been prescribed one by a doctor, for use in an emergency. All staff on the premises are first aid trained.
- Special diets are respected. Parents/ carers are asked to provide a copy of the diet sheet from a registered dietitian or specific guidance in agreement with the child's doctor.
- Religious and/or cultural dietary habits are also respected. Parents/carers should provide the pre-school with details of these on admission. Staff will ensure that certain foods are withheld from a child upon a parent's/carer's request and an alternative may be substituted if appropriate. For example, a meat free alternative for a child following a vegetarian diet or an animal product free alternative for a child following a vegan diet.

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Snacks/food

All staff are trained in food safety and hygiene and allergy awareness. Our kitchen is inspected regularly by the local authority for cleanliness. When staff prepare food for children, they reduce the likelihood that a child may choke, by chopping food into thin strips instead of chunks when appropriate and cutting grapes in half quarters, length ways. Children are to be seated at all times when eating and drinking. All meals should conform to our healthy teeth policy.

There is a traffic light system on food labels to tell you if a food has high, medium or low amounts of fat, saturated fat sugars and salt.

Red means – high

Amber means – medium

Green means – low

- Portion sizes

A portion size for a 1 to 5-year-old is generally smaller than an adult's portion. You should monitor your child's appetite and adjust portion size to make sure they get enough energy and nutrients.

You should avoid making children finish everything on their plate or more than they want to eat.

Guidance for 1-5 years

- Make sure children eat a balanced
- Fresh drinking water is always available to the children. Water and milk are the only drinks offered to children. Children may bring a fruit juice to have with their lunch, however as stated in our healthy teeth policy, if children bring squash in their water bottle, this will be checked to ensure it is diluted properly. We understand some children prefer to drink squash and to prevent dehydration this will be allowed if it is highly diluted. This is to prevent the amount of sugar, salt and saturated fat in children's diets and increase the variety of foods and drinks they are offered.
- Breakfast is provided for children arriving at 8am, consisting of a choice of toast, non-sugary cereal, fresh fruit and yogurt, milk and water.
- A healthy snack is provided at 10am and again at 3pm for those staying until 4pm. Snack will be laid out for the children in a self-serve manner and will be monitored by an adult. It will consist of a carbohydrate for example crackers, bread sticks, flat breads with healthy dips such as hummus and salsa. Fruit or vegetables will be offered (cut up appropriately) as well as whole and pasteurised milk and water. Alternatives include bread or toast,

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breadsticks and yogurt. Fresh fruit and vegetables are always available. Portion sizes are small to ensure that children have a sufficient appetite by lunchtime.

- A healthy packed lunch must be provided by parents/carers for all children staying at preschool over lunchtime between 12 and 1pm. This should include.
 1. A Savoury Course, e.g. a cheese, meat or fish sandwich or wrap or a pasta dish.
Children are encouraged to eat this first.
 2. Two pieces of fruit or vegetable, e.g. a small tub of chopped cucumber and a banana.
 3. A desert course, e.g. a yogurt or small piece of fruit cake.
 4. A healthy drink e.g. water, milk or fruit juice in a carton with a straw.

As children have small tummies, it is not necessary to pack a large quantity of food. Too much choice can be overwhelming for some children and result in them eating less.

Mealtimes are used as an opportunity to encourage social skills, conversation and good table manners. Preschool staff will sit and eat with the children to act as good role models. Hot drinks are not to be consumed in the preschool room, they must be kept in the kitchen which is not accessible by the children.

Rewards and Special Occasions

- Praise and attention are used to help develop children's self-esteem and to act as a positive reward for good behaviour. Rewards do not conflict with our healthy eating principles e.g. sugary drinks and foods are not given as rewards.
- On special occasions, the focus will be on the occasion rather than providing fatty or sugary foods or drinks. If parents wish to send in cake for birthdays this will be cut and sent home with the children at the end of the day so parents/carers can choose when they eat it.

Activities

A healthy lifestyle is promoted through a variety of activities including cookery, stories, active play, fun with food, outdoor play, multi sports, forest school, yoga, music and movement. Government guidelines state that children of preschool age should be physically active for at least 3 hours a day including at least 1 hours of moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity. We aim to meet this target for all children who attend a full day at preschool, through planned activities and child led free play. Children are never expected to sit still for long periods of time and the use of the iPad for technology activities is kept to an absolute minimum. Being physically active every day is important for the healthy growth of young children. Wellbeing is a broad term that covers how you feel about yourself and your life.

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At Worstead Preschool, we recognise that children's mental health and wellbeing play a crucial factor in their learning and achievements. We aim to provide positive mental health and well-being for all at our setting (children, staff, parents, carers). Well-being encompasses the physical, emotional (and mental), social and spiritual areas of a person. Under the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) this is covered in the children's personal, social, emotional development and physical development, both of which are prime areas of learning and development.

We teach children about health, safety, and wellbeing through our practices, policies and procedures. The children learn:

- About emotional well-being and how to manage feelings.
- About empathy and understanding other people's feelings.
- To motivate themselves and be resilient.
- About change/loss and associated feelings.
- We provide a safe environment that enables them to express themselves and feel validated.

Physical well-being covers everything physically to do with the body:

- Growth and development.
- Moving and keeping physically fit.
- Caring for personal health (e.g., washing, cleaning teeth etc.)
- Eating a balanced and nutritious diet.
- Respecting rest and appropriate sleep patterns.

Mental and emotional well-being includes:

- Acknowledging, expressing and coping with feelings and emotions.
- Thought processes.
- Reducing stress and anxiety.

Social well-being includes:

- Relationships.
- Family (close and extended).
- Friends.
- The feeling of belonging and acceptance.
- Compassion and caring approaches.

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Spiritual well-being includes:

- Value and beliefs held.
- Personal identity and self-awareness.

Children's well-being is supported through our carefully planned curriculum which supports all types of gross and fine motor play both inside and outside. We also have developed a range of strategies to promote positive mental health and well-being such as:

- 1-1 time with the child's keyworker.
- Staff training.
- Resources to help children to talk/share their worries or concerns.

At Worstead Preschool we provide nutritionally balanced meals for the children and support our staff to make healthy choices in regard to their physical health. Our meals that are provided are uploaded onto FAMLY. Staff also go through training regarding allergies/dietary requirements so that they know how to manage and identify this. Following the EYFS, we ensure that at least one full PFA (Pediatric First Aider) is present whilst the children are eating and whilst on outing. We strive for all of our staff members to be First Aiders. Personal hygiene is supported in children of all ages; this is the reason we implement handwashing and tooth brushing into our daily routine.

Children are also provided with calming areas for rest, sleep and relaxation. This supports both their physical and mental well-being. We also use the "key person" approach, supporting the children to build strong attachments with staff members and peers. We offer opportunities and resources for children to play by themselves or in groups to support this area of development.

We provide activities that support the process of children building the capacity for self-regulation, and activities that help children recognise and express their emotions. This includes emotional literacy. We model calming strategies, naming and talking about feelings and provide opportunities for children to practice their self-regulation skills.

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Early years choking hazards food safety advice

For babies and young children, food can be a choking hazard, especially when they do not chew their food well or they try to swallow it whole.

Choking can happen with any foods, but 'firm foods', bones and small round foods that can easily get stuck in the throat present a higher risk. Therefore, care givers should follow these five essential steps:

- 1** Make sure food is **suitably prepared and served** for babies and children under 5 years old. For suitable foods, see <https://www.nhs.uk/start4life/weaning/>
Introduce babies to solid foods from around 6 months of age.
- 2** **Think about size, shape and texture of food.** Cut food into narrow batons, avoid round shapes and firm foods. Firm fruit & vegetables can be softened by cooking.
- 3** Ensure that babies and young children are **alert and seated safely upright** in a highchair or appropriately sized low chair whilst eating.
- 4** **Babies and young children should be supervised at all times** while eating. You will be able to identify the early signs of choking and prevent harm.
- 5** **Encourage babies and young children to chew food well.** Teach children how to chew and swallow food properly, and ensure they take their time during meals. This will reduce their risk of choking.

Care givers and parents should be familiar with how to respond to a choking incident in line with guidance on first aid for children:

How to stop a child from choking: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/first-aid-and-safety/first-aid/how-to-stop-a-child-from-choking/>

How to resuscitate a child: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/first-aid-and-safety/firstaid/how-to-resuscitate-a-child/>

Early years food choking hazards

Below is a table of advice on key foods for care givers who are involved with preparing and serving food for babies and young children (under 5 years old)

Vegetable and fruits	Advice
Pips or stones in fruit	Always check beforehand and remove hard pips or stones from fruit.
Small fruits	Cut small round fruits like grapes, cherries, berries, strawberries and cherry tomatoes, into small pieces: cut lengthways and then again cut them in halves (quarters).
Large fruits and firm fruits	Cut large fruits like melon and firm fruits like apple into slices instead of small chunks. For very young children, consider grating or mashing firm fruits, or softening them up by steaming or simmering.
Vegetables	Cut vegetables like carrots, cucumber and celery into narrow batons. For very young children consider grating or mashing firm vegetables and legumes like butter beans, chickpeas and tofu, or softening them up by steaming or simmering.
Skin on fruit and vegetables	Consider removing the skin from fruit and vegetables, especially for very young children. Peeled fruit and vegetables can be swallowed more easily.
Cooking fruit and vegetables	Consider softening firm fruit and vegetables (such as carrots, broccoli, yam and apples) by steaming or simmering until soft. Serve cut into slices or narrow batons.
Meat and fish	Advice
Sausages and hot dogs	Cut sausages and hot dogs into short strips. Cut them in half and then lengthways or as thinly as possible. Peeling the skin off the sausages helps them to be swallowed more easily.
Meat or fish	Remove bones from meat or fish. Cut meat into strips as thinly as possible. Remove skin and fat from meat and fish, it will help the food pass smoothly down the throat.
Cheese	Advice
Grate or cut cheese	Grate or cut cheese into short strips. Cut lumps of cheese as narrow as possible.
Nuts and seeds	Advice
Chop or flake whole nuts	Chop or flake whole nuts, peanuts and seeds. Whole nuts should not be given to children under five years old.
Bread	Advice
White bread and other breads	White bread can form a ball shape with a dough-like texture at the back of a child's throat, if not chewed properly. Brown bread or toasted white bread are good alternatives. Cut bread, chapatis, naan bread and other breads into narrow strips.
Snacks and other foods	Advice
Popcorn	Do not give babies and young children popcorn.
Chewing gum and marshmallows	Do not give babies and young children chewing gum or marshmallows.
Peanut butter	Do not give babies and young children peanut butter on its own, only use as a spread.
Jelly cubes	Do not give babies and young children raw jelly cubes.
Boiled sweets and ice cubes	Do not give babies and young children boiled, hard, gooey, sticky or cough sweets, or ice cubes.
Raisins and other dried fruits	Do not give babies under the age of 1 whole raisins or dried fruits. Cut them into small pieces.

Make sure food is prepared appropriately for children under 5 years old, see: <https://www.nhs.uk/start4life/weaning/>

It is also advisable that care givers are familiar with how to respond to a choking incident, see: How to stop a child from choking: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/first-aid-and-safety/first-aid/how-to-stop-a-child-from-choking/>

and How to resuscitate a child: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/first-aid-and-safety/first-aid/how-to-resuscitate-a-child/>

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Date:	1 st September 2026
Date for Review:	31 st August 2027

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