



# Worstead Pre-school

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Charity Number: 1041749

## Healthy Eating, Nutrition and Physical Activity Policy

At Worstead Pre-school, 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.

### 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 auto-injectors, 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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### Meals

All staff are trained in food safety and hygiene and 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, length ways. Children are to be seated at all times when eating and drinking. All meals should conform to our healthy teeth policy.

- Fresh drinking water is available to the children at all times. 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 emptied and replaced with water.

- Breakfast is provided for children arriving at 8am, consisting of a choice of toast or non-sugary cereal, fresh fruit and yogurt, milk or water.
- A healthy snack is provided at 10am and again at 3pm for those staying until 4pm. Snack consists of for example, one cracker with butter, half a piece of fruit or vegetable and whole and pasteurised milk or water. Alternatives include bread or toast, breadsticks and yogurt. Fresh fruit is 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 pre-school 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, eg. 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 actually result in them eating less.

Meal times are used as an opportunity to encourage social skills, conversation and good table manners. Pre-school 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.

### **Activities**

A healthy lifestyle is promoted through a variety of activities including cookery, stories, active play, 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.