



Important Information for Parents:

New Government Early Years Nutrition Guidelines

The government has recently updated the Early Years Nutrition Guidelines to help support children's health, growth and development. These guidelines set out recommendations for nurseries, preschools, and parents to ensure children have the best possible start in life.

Key Changes and What They Mean for You:

- **Balanced meals:** Children should receive a variety of foods from all food groups – fruit and vegetables, starchy foods, protein-rich foods, and dairy or alternatives.
- **Reduced sugar and salt:** Meals, snacks, and drinks should be low in added sugars and salt to protect children's teeth and overall health.
- **Portion guidance:** Clear portion size recommendations ensure children get the right amount of energy without overeating.
- **Drinks:** Water and milk are the recommended drinks. Sugary drinks, including juice, are discouraged. Parents must provide a named water bottle to allow their child to independently access water throughout the day, in addition to our scheduled snack & drink breaks.
- **Snack guidance:** Healthy snacks should be provided at home. Fruit, vegetable sticks, or toast should replace less healthy options. Preschool already provide healthy snacks during the morning session, and this will continue.
- **Cultural and dietary needs:** Guidelines encourage settings to respect and accommodate children's cultural, religious, and medical dietary requirements.
- **Mealtime environment:** Shared mealtimes, where adults model healthy eating behaviours, are encouraged.

At preschool, our menus and snack options reflect the new guidance. You may notice small changes such as fewer sweet items, more fresh fruit and vegetables, and water being offered more regularly. These steps are designed to support your child's wellbeing and help establish healthy habits for life.

We are committed to working in partnership with you to follow these new guidelines and to give every child the healthiest start possible. If you have any questions or dietary concerns, please speak to a member of staff.

For further information, please read the government guidance: [Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition guidance](#)



Early Years Nutrition Guidelines – At a Glance

Balanced Meals	Children should eat from all food groups: fruit & veg, starchy foods, protein, dairy/alternatives.
Less Sugar & Salt	Snacks and meals should be low in added sugars and salt to protect health and teeth.
Portion Sizes	Clear guidance ensures children get the right amount of energy without overeating.
Healthy Drinks	Water and milk are recommended. Sugary drinks and juice should be avoided.
Snacks	Choose fruit, veg sticks, or toast instead of biscuits, crisps, or sweets.
Cultural & Medical Needs	Respect and adapt to dietary, cultural, and medical requirements.
Mealtime Environment	Shared meals and role-modelling healthy eating are encouraged.

How Parents Can Support at Home

- Offer water or milk at home instead of juice or squash
- Bring a named bottle of water into preschool each day
- Give a variety of fruit and vegetables every day
- Choose healthy snacks (fruit, cheese, toast)
- Encourage children to try new foods
- Support children in learning to use cutlery and drink from a cup
- Eat meals together when possible

*Working together, we can give children the best start in life.
If you have any questions, please speak to a member of staff.*