



Ladybird Forest Pre-School



Healthy Eating and Lunch Club Guidelines

EYFS and the Promotion of Healthy Eating in Pre-School

It is well recognised that a healthy diet promotes good health and prevents future problems with obesity, heart disease, diabetes and other chronic diseases. The revised EYFS 2021 states that *'where children are provided with meals, snacks and drinks, they must be healthy, balanced and nutritious.'*

We have already gained the 'Healthy Smiles' award and we follow the 'Eat Better Start Better' guidance to promote healthy eating. We are committed to providing a high level of childcare and education and maintaining our "Outstanding" Ofsted rating.

Food and Drink, Oral Health and PANCO Policy

Our policy has been updated to reflect the changes in the EYFS.

Please read the section on Packed Lunches from the updated policy (see Appendix 1, below). We ask you to work with us to help ensure that all children eat and drink healthily while at Pre-School. As such, we cannot accept items such as chocolate, crisps, biscuits, cakes, fruit winders, fruit juices, smoothies, squash or flavoured milk.

Most of our children already enjoy tasty, healthy lunches at Pre-School. It is important for us to give all children a good understanding of the benefits of eating healthily and the importance of oral health.

Please read the full policy for more information about our procedures around food, drink, and how we promote physical activity and nutrition.

Reminders:

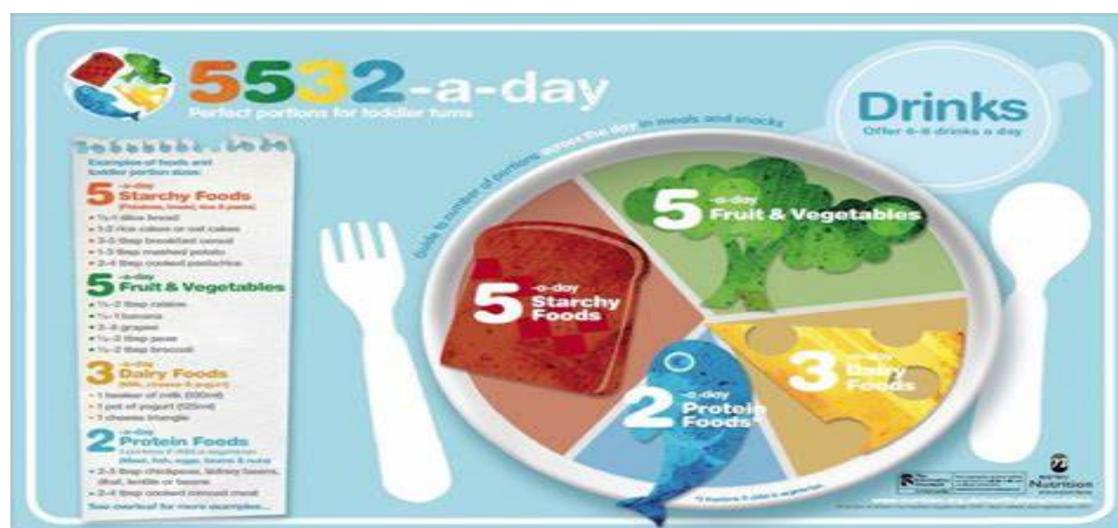
- we do not have the facilities to keep lunch boxes refrigerated, so unfortunately cannot allow meals containing rice, as there is a risk of bacteria infection.
- we do not reheat any food on site, so please only provide food that should be served unheated.

- we limit the time spent eating lunch to half an hour, therefore, please do not send your child in with too much food. A suggestion would be: one slice of bread sandwich; piece of fruit; small salad snack.
- All cherry tomatoes, grapes, olives and blueberries need to be cut into quarters, please. The staff will not be able to cut any food up during the Lunch Club due to the number of children attending. Due to choking hazards, any food items in your child's lunch box that need to be cut up will be sent back home with your child.

Ideas for Healthy Lunches:

See below the 5532 Guide for Pre-schoolers by British Nutrition Foundation.

<https://www.nutrition.org.uk/>



We understand that some children at this age can be fussy with eating, especially when it comes to eating a healthy, balanced diet. So, here are a few useful and practical ideas on how to pack a healthy lunch box for pre-school:

- As well as being nutritionally balanced, your child's lunch box should be interesting and attractive too. Try and involve your child in deciding some of the contents of their lunch box, for example, which piece of fruit they would prefer, or whether they would like a sandwich or a salad. The chances are, if they have helped to prepare their lunch, they will be more interested in eating it.
- It is important to avoid putting too many items in the box. This can be overwhelming for children and discourage eating. We advise a maximum of five items including a drink.

- To add interest, you could try cutting the sandwiches into shapes. Does your child want triangles or squares today? Your child could help you do this; you could even use some cookie cutters to make the sandwiches extra special.
- Try different breads, for example, bagels, pittas, rolls, or even oatcakes, rice cakes or crackers. Some great fillings for sandwiches are cheese, ham, chicken, or tuna.
- If your child is not fond of sandwiches, why not try a salad including pasta or couscous. Other options may be vegetarian cheese roll, breadsticks, and a dip.
- Children love snack sized foods so try thinking small. Cherry tomatoes and grapes are brilliant as long as they are cut into quarters, lengthways to reduce the risk of choking when eating
- Small boxes of dried fruit and raisins are always a favourite; you could even try small pots of fruit in natural juice or yoghurt coated fruit flakes.
- Choose a different 'extra' every day to add some variety. Suggestions of these could include yoghurt, fruit loaf, cheese sticks or sliced cheese, malt loaf or a pot of sugar-free jelly.

If your child has a medical condition or special dietary needs, a care plan will be put in place.

Thank you very much for helping us to encourage children to eat well and stay healthy.

If you have any questions relating to any of this, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us by ringing the office or emailing enquiries@ladybirdpre-school.org.uk.

Appendix 1

From Food and Drink, Oral Health and PANCO Policy

Packed lunches

Children are required to bring packed lunches in a named lunch box when attending Lunch Club. Lunch boxes are kept in the kitchen. We do not have the facilities to keep lunch boxes refrigerated and do not reheat any food. We limit the time spent eating lunch to half an hour, therefore, ask that parents / carers do not give their child too much food. A suggestion would be: one slice of bread sandwich; piece of fruit; and a small salad snack.

We:

- request that perishable contents of packed lunches contain an ice pack to keep food cool;
- inform parents of our policy on healthy eating by sharing this policy;
- encourage parents to provide a balanced meal, e.g. sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit, and milk-based deserts, such as yoghurt or crème fraiche.
- do not allow sweet drinks, smoothies, carton drinks, or squash and can provide children with water and milk. If such drinks are brought in, we will provide the child with an alternative of water / milk;
- cannot allow rice dishes in packed lunches, as we do not have the facilities to keep food refrigerated, and have been advised by Food Safety Standards that unrefrigerated rice can cause bacteria to grow.
- allow packed lunch contents that are healthy, and so do not allow sweets, chocolate, biscuits, fruit winders, cakes, crisps etc.
- discourage children from sharing and swapping their food with one another, in order to protect children with food allergies.
- follow advice from the Food Standards Agency regarding choking risks, and so request that grapes, large blueberries, cherry tomatoes, hot dog sausages and hard cheeses are cut into quarters, lengthways to reduce the risk of choking when eating.
- ask that if an item is homemade or not in its original wrapping, parents / carers indicate that it is a no nuts product.