



6.4 Food and drink, Oral Health and Physical Activity (PANCO)

Policy statement

We promote healthy eating, nutrition, oral health and physical activity, in line with UK Public Health guidelines for Early Years. This encourages optimal growth and development in the under 5's, which is valuable in developing motor skills, promoting a healthy weight, enhancing bone and muscle development and for the learning of social skills. We also use guidance from initiatives including Change4Life, Start 4Life, Delivering Better Oral Health PHE 2014, PANCo Cambridge Childhood Partnership and Forest School Association.

We promote the good oral health of children attending our setting. We recognise that brushing teeth with fluoride toothpaste last thing at night and at one other time in the day is highly effective in preventing tooth decay. We understand that it is important that children establish good tooth brushing habits at an early age, and should also be supervised by an adult until they are at least 7 years old. We promote toothbrushing and aim to support good oral health.

Our Lead PANCo (Physical Activity and Nutrition Co-ordinator) takes responsibility for coordinating our approach to nutrition, healthy eating, oral health and physical activity for children within our setting. The Pre-School Deputy/Manager/Lead support this role, to help develop a consistent approach to improving outcomes for children at the setting.

We regard snack and meal times as an important part of our day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults, and helps children to learn about healthy eating. At snack and meal times at Breakfast Club and After Pre-School Club, we aim to provide nutritious food, which meets all children's individual dietary needs.



Ladybird Forest Pre-School

Procedures: Food and Drink

- Before a child starts attending the setting, we ask about their:
 - dietary needs;
 - preferences according to their religious and cultural backgrounds;
 - allergies; and
 - parent's wishes.
- We record information about each child's dietary needs in the Child Registration Form and parents sign the form to signify that it is correct.
- We consult with parents to ensure that our records of their children's dietary needs, including any allergies, are up-to-date. Parents sign the updated record to signify that it is correct.
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all our staff and volunteers are fully informed about them. A list of children with allergies is kept in the kitchen and inside the Caterpillar Room snack cupboard.
- We implement systems to ensure that children receive only food and drink that is consistent with their:
 - dietary needs,
 - preferences according to their religious and cultural backgrounds,
 - allergies, and
 - parent's wishes.
- We plan menus for meals and snacks in advance, and share with parents via the website and our online journal.
- We provide nutritious food for all meals at Breakfast Club and After Pre-School Club, and snacks, avoiding large quantities of saturated fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- We include a variety of foods from the four main food groups:
 - meat, fish and protein alternatives
 - dairy foods
 - grains, cereals and starch vegetables



Ladybird Forest Pre-School

- fruit and vegetables
- We are nut product free setting and take care to ensure that no nuts or nut products are consumed on the premises.
- Through discussion with parents and research reading, we obtain information about the dietary rules of the religious groups to which children and their parents belong, and of vegetarians and vegans, as well as about food allergies. We take account of this information in the provision of food and drinks.
- We provide a vegetarian alternative on days when meat or fish are offered and make every effort to ensure Halal meat or Kosher food is available for children who require it.
- We show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. We do not use a child's diet or allergy as a label for the child, or make a child feel singled out because of her/his diet or allergy.
- We organise meal and snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and adults participate.
- We use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and feeding themselves.
- We provide children with utensils that are appropriate for their ages and stages of development and that take account of the eating practices in their cultures.
- We provide nutritious food at snack time, and all snacks are fruit/dairy/vegetables.
- We ask children to provide a named bottle of fresh drinking water each day, and inform children how to obtain the water and that they can ask for water at any time during the day.
- We also provide semi-skimmed pasteurised milk at snack and lunch times. Other drinks are not allowed.
- We offer children arriving for Breakfast Club and/or staying at After Pre-School Club, an appropriate meal or snack.
- Children, staff, and visitors will wash their hands before mealtimes, snack times and after toileting and playing with animals.



Ladybird Forest Pre-School

- We run snack during the morning and afternoon sessions with one member of staff, and children are encouraged to socialise with other each other.
- Parents and carers will be informed if children are not eating well.
- All children are given opportunities to cook during the year. Where possible, items cooked are healthy and nutritious, and savoury rather than sweet.
- When children celebrate a birthday, we do not allow children to bring in sweets or chocolate to share with other children.
- We recognise that treats can be enjoyed sensibly outside of the Pre-School.
- We have an area in the Forest School that is used for growing herbs and vegetables throughout the year.

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 and 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;



Ladybird Forest Pre-School

- 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.

Procedures: Oral Health

We provide planned activities and resources to support children's understanding of the importance of Oral Health.

We promote good oral health by:

- talking to children about the effects of eating too many sweet things
- promoting regular toothbrushing - twice a day for 2 minutes using a fluoride toothpaste
- encouraging children to visit the dentist regularly (twice a year is recommended)
- encouraging parents to promote good oral health at home.

Procedures: Physical Activity

We operate free flow play sessions for all Pre-School children in our setting, enabling children access and free movement between rooms, which includes access to indoor and outdoor environments.

We aim:

- to ensure all children have regular access to physical activities throughout the day.



Ladybird Forest Pre-School

- for all children to be encouraged to be active to a level appropriate for their ability.
 - for all children to minimise their time spent sedentary for extended periods, except for time sleeping.
 - to promote and facilitate play opportunities by providing stimulating and enabling environments for structured and unstructured physical activity and movement experiences.
 - to work in partnership with children, parents, and their families to promote healthier lifestyle choices regarding nutrition, healthy eating, and physical activity.
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- Our outside areas are equipped to provide children with opportunities to move freely and with pleasure and confidence in a range of ways such as crawling, walking, running, jumping, skipping, sliding, hopping, balancing, and climbing.
 - All children in our setting have access to the outdoors area, which has a range of equipment such as planks and tyres for balancing, walking, and jumping, large troughs for digging and planting, an outside classroom for planned Forest School activities and a natural area for exploration, e.g., planted trees, a bug house, small tree stumps, and a bird house. There is a continuous provision for children to practice physical skills and to encourage physical activity e.g., tyres, sand pits, outdoor reading areas, painting and drawing easels, outdoor kitchen, chalk boards, planting troughs, access to small equipment like balls, hoops, and beanbags.
 - We plan structured and unstructured physical activities for the indoor and outdoor environment, e.g., music and movement, interactive story/rhyme/ring game activities during circle time, our phonics and well-being sessions and during free flow play as focused activities, using a variety of props and puppets. We have resources like parachutes, tunnels and steps which can be adapted to both the indoor and outdoor environment. We use a variety of ride on toys.
 - We hold an annual Sports Day, and encourage parents and carers to attend.



Ladybird Forest Pre-School

- All children have opportunities to take part in local walks during the year. We work in partnership with parents/carers to support these activities and welcome parents/carers as helpers.

Legal framework:

- The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework
- Regulation (EC) 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Hygiene of Foodstuffs.

Further guidance:

- Cambridge Childhood Partnership (PANCo Role- The Physical Activity and Nutrition Co-ordinator). www.panco.org.uk
- Eat Better Start Better [Eat-Better-Start-Better1.pdf \(foundationyears.org.uk\)](http://foundationyears.org.uk/Eat-Better-Start-Better1.pdf)
- Department of Health- Start Active, Stay Active. A Report on Physical Activity for health from the four home countries. Chief Medical Officers.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/start-active-stay-active-a-report-on-physical-activity-from-the-four-home-countries-chief-medical-officers>
- NHS Healthy Eating guidance: [Eat well - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)
- Change4Life and Start4Life <https://www.nhs.uk/change4life/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes>.
- Safer Food, Better Business (Food Standards Agency 2011)
- Healthy Smiles ([Healthy Smiles - Community Dental Services](#))

Relevant Ladybird policies:

- 6.2 Immunisations and managing children who are sick, infectious or with allergies
- 8.1 Health and Safety
- 10.2 Admissions



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This policy was reviewed by	Amanda Sanders - Pre-School Manager Victoria Grimes - Admin Manager Rebecca McGough - Chair
Date of review	13 th January 2024
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Chair's signature	