



## Hillside Nursery School Healthy Eating Policy

### The Purpose of this Policy

A healthy, varied diet and a healthy attitude to food play an essential part in the maintenance of young people's health, both now and in the future. Research has shown an increase in the numbers of obese young people, and that the diets of young people are not meeting the healthy eating recommendations for optimum growth and development.

Immediate benefits of healthy eating include:

- Improved concentration
- Preventing asthma, dental decay, diabetes and obesity
- Longer term health benefits include: prevention of coronary heart disease, diabetes, some cancers and osteoporosis.

### Statement/Aims:

At Hillside Nursery School we encourage children to develop a positive attitude to food and healthy lifestyles. This is achieved through adopting a whole setting approach which encompasses children, their families and staff. 'Good health in the early years helps to safeguard health and wellbeing throughout life. It is important that children develop healthy habits when they first learn about food and activity' (Early Years Foundation Stage, DfES, 2008)

### Introduction

This policy recognises that children under the age of 5 years have different nutritional needs to those of older children and adults. They have a high energy and nutrient requirement in relation to their size. Healthy eating messages aimed at adults are not wholly appropriate for children in early years. Early years is an important time to shape food preferences and habits, by allowing children to make their own selections through guided choice, this can have a positive impact on health in later life. This policy covers general nutrition guidance; children have individual needs which should be acknowledged. If parents/carers have any concerns they should discuss these with their Health visitor, GP or a dietician.

Hillside Nursery School is working towards the **Smile4Life** award. This is a programme that has been developed to improve the oral health of children

and young people and to lay solid foundations for good oral health throughout life. The programme supports anyone working with children and young people to undertake activities to ensure that the environments in which children spend their time supports both their oral and general health.

### **General**

Those responsible for food preparation and handling of food must be competent to do so (EYFS) and will have the appropriate food hygiene/safety qualifications. Staff will be good role models for healthy eating.

The School Prospectus provides information to parents/carers regarding food and drinks provided for the children and this is discussed during home visits and at school induction meetings.

### **Allergies/Food Preferences/Special Diets**

Hillside Nursery School will obtain and record necessary information from parents/carers regarding any ethnic/cultural or special dietary requirements, preferences or food allergies in advance of the child being admitted to the nursery. This will be reviewed during attendance at the nursery.

### **Snacks**

Snacks will be offered between to ensure children receive appropriate levels of energy and nutrition.

Snacks will be low in sugar

Suitable snacks include fresh fruit, vegetable sticks, and toast during the winter months. A choice of milk and water is offered during rolling snack times.

### **Drinks**

Children will have access to fresh drinking water at all times.

### **Teaching and Learning**

- We regularly include opportunities for the learning and teaching of Healthy Eating in our planning
- A range of activities will be used to promote eating e.g. stories, visitors, art, music, role-play, sensory play and seasonal celebrations
- Children taking part in cooking activities and experience preparing a wide range of healthy foods and drinks over the year.

- We regularly emphasise the importance of oral hygiene and of the need to brush teeth regularly

### **Celebrations and Birthdays**

Exciting ways to celebrate birthdays are used instead of providing cakes, biscuits and/or goody bags.

Parents/carers will be discouraged from bringing birthday cakes and 'party bags' of confectionary into the setting.

Parents/carers will be consulted over appropriate ways to celebrate ethnic/cultural and religious occasions.

### **Top Tips for Good Practice**

Children to wash their hands before touching food.

Use wipes clean table cloths to create a 'dining room' environment at snack times.

Use child sized cutlery and crockery.

Encourage children's independence in table setting, pouring drinks and clearing away after snack, including helping with the washing up.

Snack times can be used as an opportunity for children to learn about healthy eating and socialising.