

## 8.1

### Healthy Food and Drink Policy

#### **Contents:**

Statement of intent

1. Legal framework
2. Our aims
3. Healthy eating statement
4. Drinks
5. Snacks
6. Lunch
7. Packed lunches
8. Treats and prizes
9. Exemptions
10. Curriculum
11. Allergies and dietary requirements
12. Communicating with parents
13. Monitoring and review

#### **Statement of intent**

At St Chads Community Project, we will support children to eat healthily and keep hydrated while in the childcare setting. We also aim to teach children to make healthy food and drink choices using the curriculum and to reflect these principles in the setting's food menu and cooking provisions.

We acknowledge the important connection between a healthy diet and a child's ability to learn and concentrate. We also acknowledge that we can play a key role in supporting the wider community to adopt a positive attitude to a healthy lifestyle. We are, therefore, committed to promoting a lasting healthy lifestyle for everyone.

As part of our healthy eating and living campaign, our catering will uphold the highest standards of quality, nutrition and cleanliness; adhering, without exception, to food standards and legal obligations. As such, this policy has been implemented to allow us to provide food in a safe and hygienic manner and will help staff and parents deliver consistent messages to children, enabling them to develop a positive and independent approach to a healthy lifestyle.

## 1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- The Food Information (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2019 (Natasha's Law)
- Food Safety Act 1990
- The Products Containing Meat etc. (England) Regulations 2014
- The Food Information (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2019

This policy operates in conjunction with the following non-statutory guidance:

- DfE (2021) 'School food standards practical guide'
- The School Plan (2014) 'School Food Standards: A practical guide for schools, their cooks and caterers'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Supporting children with Medical Conditions Policy
- Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Allergen and Anaphylaxis Policy
- Infection Control Policy
- Records Management Policy

## 2. Our aims

The charity will adopt the following aims:

- Integrate a whole-organisation ethos towards healthy eating; therefore, helping both staff and children to perform well, concentrate better and improve general wellbeing.
- Ensure all children to be well nourished and hydrated, and to ensure they have access to nutritious food and safe drinking water during sessions.
- Encourage children to make informed food and drink choices in the setting and at home, contributing to life-long healthy eating habits.
- Use the curriculum to teach children safe, hygienic methods of preparing, handling and storing food, and to inform them about the benefits of choosing healthy options.

- Ensure there are consistent messages about healthy eating throughout the charity.
- Keep food, health, and nutrition aspects of the curriculum up-to-date.
- Ensure the charity reflects the ethical, medical, and religious dietary requirements of staff and children, and that suitable provisions are available.
- Celebrate diversity with cuisines from different cultures and other individual choices, e.g. vegetarianism, encouraging children to learn about and try new foods.
- Encourage fluid intake and help children keep hydrated, maintain concentration, reduce lethargy, and learn effectively.
- Inform staff and parents which provisions are permitted in setting and to ensure they can effectively monitor what children are eating.
- Encourage staff to participate in our healthy eating ethos and act as role models to children.

### **3. Healthy eating statement**

The charity uses healthier cooking methods to contribute to healthy eating, such as the following:

- Using less fat in cooking
- Baking foods rather than frying them
- Where fats are used, increasing the use of healthier varieties
- Reducing the use of sugar in recipes
- Avoiding using additional salt in cooking processes
- Increasing the use of food items containing high amounts of fibre

All menus are developed in accordance with the nutritional standards set by The School Food Plan in 'School Food Standards: A practical guide for schools, their cooks and caterers'.

The charity encourages children to adopt healthy lifestyles, both through a nutritional diet and regular exercise, and relevant activity sessions.

The charity adopts a healthy eating strategy and embeds its principles throughout the curriculum.

### **4. Drinks**

The charity teaches children the importance of drinking plenty of fluids and how hydration helps contribute to effective learning, good health & wellbeing and improved physical performance.

The charity provides safe drinking water throughout sessions. This is available in water jugs placed in the rooms during sessions. Staff have access to drinking water in the staff room.

Semi-skimmed and lactose-free milk is also available to drink.

The charity encourages children to consume extra fluids on hot days and during and after physical activity.

Children are encouraged to bring bottled water with them to the setting. This can be consumed in in the childcare rooms and garden area.

Children are permitted to refill water bottles via water jugs during sessions.

Drinks with added sugar are not available in the setting.

The charity does not permit fizzy drinks in bottles or cans on the premises at any time. These items will be confiscated by staff and returned to the child at the end of the session.

## **5. Snacks**

The charity encourages children to eat a snack during childcare sessions. As part of our healthy eating ethos, this will be a piece of fruit or vegetable without added sugar, fat or salt.

## **6. Meals provided by the Charity**

All the meals provided by the charity meet the national guidelines for nutritional standards and food safety regulations. Our meals are prepared by fully trained catering staff.

Our meals include fruit, vegetables or salad per meal.

Portion sizes are in line with the School Food Standards to help provide children with a nutritionally balanced meal and prevent excessive calorie intake.

Our meals include foods that are naturally rich in vitamins and minerals to support children's health and physical development.

The charity provides children with drinking water, semi-skimmed milk, or sugar-free fruit or vegetable juice with their meal. Additional water is available from jugs in the childcare rooms.

Staff monitor children's food intake during mealtimes. If a child is not eating well, the charity will notify their parents.

Themed meals and meals served to celebrate festivals, holidays, or religious observances follow the same standards applied to regular meals.

Our meals do not include drinks with added sugar, crisps, chocolates or sweets. Our meals do not include more than two portions of deep fried, battered or breaded food a week.

Children are not permitted to bring chocolate, sweets, and other confectionary as part of a packed lunch. Food items that are not in line with our Healthy Eating and Drinking Policy will be confiscated by staff and returned to the child at the end of the session.

The charity does not permit fizzy drinks in bottles or cans as part of a packed lunch. These items will be confiscated by staff and returned to the child at the end of the session.

The charity allows still drinks in cartons, plastic bottles and flasks as part of a child's packed lunch.

Children bringing in a packed lunch have access to additional water. This can be found in water jugs on tables.

Children are not permitted to share or swap any food, including that provided from home in a packed lunch or snacks.

## **7. Packed lunches**

The charity will apply its healthy eating principles to packed lunches and is committed to improving the quality of packed lunches that children consume. The standards of packed lunches will comply with the nutrition standards of our meals.

Parents will be provided with clear guidance on providing a healthy packed lunch, and will be expected to provide their child with healthy packed lunches containing recommended food groups.

In line with the School Food Standards, packed lunches will contain the following:

- One portion of fruit, vegetable or salad
- Meat, fish or another source of non-dairy protein
- Carbohydrates, such as bread, pasta, rice or potatoes
- Dairy, such as cheese, yoghurt or custard
- Oily fish, e.g. smoked salmon, at least once every three weeks
- Only water, fruit juice, semi-skimmed or skimmed milk, yoghurt drinks or smoothies

Snacks in packed lunches will comply with this policy. The following food and drink are not permitted:

- Confectionary items such as sweets and chocolate
- Carbonated drinks or those containing high levels of caffeine

Staff will monitor regularly the contents of children's packed lunches to ensure they are healthy and balanced and comply with this policy. Food that is not compliant will be confiscated and returned to the child at the end of the session. Alternative food items will be

provided. If a child brings a lunch that is completely inappropriate, the setting will provide a replacement meal. Concerns about the contents of a child's packed lunch will be dealt with appropriately and proportionately. The child's parent will be contacted to remind them of the need to follow the charity's policy. If a child's packed lunch continues to not be appropriate, the charity will contact the parents to arrange a meeting to discuss the matter further.

## **8. Treats and prizes**

Chocolate, sweets, and other confectionary may be used as rewards. The charity encourages staff to award children with alternative treats such as stickers, or stationary.

Children are permitted to bring in confectionary items as treats for their peers on special occasions – these include birthdays and gifts brought back off holiday.

## **9. Exemptions**

The charity recognises the following exemptions to the Healthy Eating and Drinking Policy:

- Food, drink and treats at parties or celebrations to mark religious or cultural occasions
- Provisions at fund-raising events
- Treats as rewards for achievement, good behaviour or effort
- Provisions used when teaching food preparation and cookery skills, including where the food is served to children as part of a meal
- Food and drinks provided on an occasional basis by parents or children

Whole milk, rather than lower fat milk, may be provided at mealtime.

## **10. Allergies and dietary requirements**

The charity ensures the correct food safety measures are in place, in line with the Allergen and 7.8 Anaphylaxis Policy and the 6.1 Health and Safety Policy, to protect children with known allergies, intolerances, anaphylaxis, diabetes and other medical conditions associated with diet.

All foods that are pre-packed for direct sale (PPDS) will be labelled in line with the requirements of The Food Information (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2019, known as Natasha's Law, as outlined in the 7.8 Allergen and Anaphylaxis policy.

Parents will complete the allergy declaration form to provide the charity with a written list of any foods their child may have an adverse reaction to, as well as the necessary actions to be taken in the event of an allergic reaction, such as any medication required.

The charity is responsible for ensuring that the policies are adhered to at all times, including those in relation to the preparation of food, taking into account any allergens.



Learning activities which involve the use of food, such as cooking sessions, are planned in accordance with children's IHP's, accounting for any known allergies of the children involved.

Treats for effort or good behaviour are awarded in accordance with children's IHP's, including known allergies.

### **11. Communication with parents**

The charity will communicate any changes and updates to this policy via letter.

The charity will inform parents via letter if concerns are raised about their child not eating well.

The charity will inform parents which foods are not permitted as part of packed lunches, and how they will be returned once confiscated.

The charity will involve parents in the healthy eating ethos, enabling them to provide consistent messaging about healthy choices at home.

Parents will keep the charity updated with any changes to their child's dietary requirements, including allergies, and any cultural, religious, or ethical food requirements.

Parents will inform the Head of Children and Family Services via letter if they are concerned their child is not eating well whilst in the setting.

### **12. Monitoring and review**

This policy will be reviewed every three years by the Chief Executive Officer and the Head of Children and Family Services, or in light of any changes to relevant legislation.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to kitchen staff, parents and other stakeholders, where necessary.