

# Hocus Pocus Nursery Ltd

## Food and Drink Policy

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Policy Written by: D'Reena Pennington (supported by BHEY's Team)

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### Introduction:

- Background information
- Aims and objectives
- Mission Statement
- Development and implementation of the policy
- When and who the policy applies to

### Our Approach To:

- Food and drink provision
- Communicating with children and families
- Our eating environment and approach to social aspects of mealtimes
- Celebrations and special occasions
- Special dietary requirements
- Encouraging fussy eaters
- Food brought from home
- Learning about food
- Food safety and hygiene
- Sustainability
- Protecting children's health
- Staff training
- Transition to school
- Evaluation and review

# Hocus Pocus Nursery Ltd

## **Background Information**

Good food and nutrition are essential for both our short and long-term health and well-being at any age. However research confirms that they are specifically important in the early years before school to aid growth, development, academic achievement and the development of healthy eating habits and taste preferences that will last into adult life.

Poor early year's nutrition is associated with anaemia, dental decay and obesity in childhood which can lead to the development of obesity, type 2 diabetes, heart disease and some cancers in later life. Current evidence suggests:

- 1 in 3 UK children are currently overweight or obese
- Over a fifth of children are either overweight or obese by the time they enter reception class in primary school
- Bolton figures for 2010-2011 suggest that 21.8% of our reception aged children and 37.7% of our year 6 children are overweight or obese
- It costs Bolton tax payers approximately £81.3 million to treat diseases related to overweight and obesity in 2010 and this is set to rise to £6.9 million by 2015. The cost to society as a whole is far greater
- If current trends continue, a third of our 11-15 year olds will be obese by 2050
- In 2006 52% of Bolton five year olds had experienced tooth decay (compared with 47% in the north west and 38% in England) and each child had an average of 2.49 decayed, missing or filled teeth, compared with 2.00 in the north west and 1.47 in England

Therefore it is important that children and their families are supported to establish healthy weaning practices, progress on to a healthy balanced diet and keep active, and early years settings are key to helping achieve this by acting as role models

# Hocus Pocus Nursery Ltd

## **Policy Aim**

Mealtimes should be a happy, social occasion for children and staff alike. Positive interactions should be shared at these times and enjoyed. Hocus Pocus Nursery is committed to offering children healthy, nutritious and balanced meals, snacks and drinks which meet individual needs and requirements of all children within its care

## **Policy Objectives**

- Follow the guidance set by '*Eat Better Start Better*' for food and drink
- Disseminate information surrounding food and drink that is prepared and served within our setting to parents and carers
- Promote healthy food and drink choice through displays posted throughout the setting
- Ensure training and professional development is ongoing thus supporting practitioners obtain a better understanding of nutrition and a healthy weight
- Children will be involved in learning about food through planned experiences that involve food, growing food and preparing food
- We will ensure that parents and carers are supported to gain knowledge and skills to support children to eat well
- We will ensure that our policy is shared with all parents and carers
- We will ensure that parents, carers, children and staff receive consistent messages surrounding healthy eating and best practice within our setting

## **Our Mission Statement**

At Hocus Pocus we offer the best possible care outside the family home. This includes the delivery of opportunities that will promote a healthy lifestyle through food and physical activity.

## **Development and implementation of the food and drink policy**

This policy was devised with the aid of:

- Parental involvement through questionnaires
- Monitoring and evaluating existing practice
- Feedback from children
- Literature supplied by '*Eat Better Start Better*'

The policy will be shared by:

- Becoming part of the induction process for staff and parents of new children

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- Included in the settings operational plan
- Given out to existing parents
- Reviewed through staff meetings, room meetings and middle management meetings

## **Who the policy applies to:**

- All food and drink provided by Hocus Pocus
- All staff employed at Hocus Pocus
- Parents who bring food into the setting from home

To promote awareness of the policy we have:

- Displayed our policy on parent and carer information board
- Shared the new policy with all existing parents and carers and included it in our new child induction pack
- Included in parents operational plan

## **Our Approach:**

### **Food and Drink Provision**

At Hocus Pocus we strive to ensure that every child receives healthy, nutritious and balanced meals and snacks whilst in our care

We will ensure that:

- A balanced and healthy breakfast, midday meal, light tea and three daily snacks are provided for children attending a full day at the nursery:
  - Breakfast between 7.30 – 8.45 (20% of energy requirements)
  - Early morning snack between 10.00 – 10.30 (10% of energy requirements)
  - Lunch between 11.45 – 1.00 (30% of energy requirements)
  - Afternoon snack 2.30 – 3.00 (10% of energy requirements)
  - Tea 3.30 – 4.00 (20% of energy requirements)
- Menus are planned in advance by the manager and nursery cook using the *Eat Better Start Better* menu check list. Menus are rotated on a three week rota and reviewed seasonally and reflect cultural diversity and variation. These are displayed for children and parents to view
- Children are offered food that is appropriate in size and texture
- We provide nutritious food at all snack and meal times, avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings
- We avoid foods that contain artificial sweeteners
- Sweet foods such as cake, biscuits and dried fruit are only served as part of a main meal
- Fresh drinking water is constantly available and accessible. It is frequently

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offered to children and babies and intake is monitored

- Limit the amount of fried and pastry foods to once a week, and use fat spreads made from vegetable oils

## **Communicating with Children and Families**

At Hocus Pocus the sharing of information is an ongoing process in every aspect of nursery life. Food intake, menus and drinks are shared using the following methods.

- Menus are displayed in reception areas and the kitchen
- Menus are readily available for parents who require a copy
- Sample menus are included in our induction pack
- Feedback from parents/carers is requested in the form of newsletters, questionnaires and social networking
- The nursery provides parents with daily written records of feeding routines for all children who attend Mini Stars 1 & 2 and Little Stars. Parents of older children are verbally informed of their child's food intake.
- Sample food is available during open days
- Parents/cares are invited to share food that is prevalent to their culture during celebrations and planned experiences

## **The Eating Environment**

At Hocus Pocus we view mealtimes as a social occasion and an opportunity to promote the many aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

- Children are encouraged to talk to each other (language and lunch) during meal times
- Staff eat lunch with the children and act as good role models
- The environment where children eat differs depending on age group
  - Mini stars and little stars eat in their room either in a low feeding chair or at a small table
  - Wizz kids and Pre-school eat lunch and tea in the dining room. Snacks are served in their room
  - During summer months children eat outside as a picnic tea is planned on the menu
  - Snacks are served outside during planned activities
- Pre-School and Wizz Kids are served the correct portion size of their main meal and light tea followed by deserts. Mini Stars and Little Stars are served the correct portion size of their main meal and light tea followed by deserts however, due to developing skills, this age group may lose some of their food whilst trying to feed themselves. This is closely monitored and extra food is available to compensate for loss.

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- Children are encouraged but not pressured into trying new foods
- Children are not made to finish the food on their plate and desserts are given irrespective of whether the main course is finished or not
- Children wash their hands before meals and faces and hands are cleaned after
- Table manners are promoted
- Children are given time to eat at their own pace and not rushed

## **Celebrations and Special Occasions**

At Hocus Pocus we celebrate many different cultures and festivals, and on occasion food plays an integral part. However, some foods are often high in fat, sugar and salt. Therefore, to celebrate special occasions and events in a healthy way we will:

- Birthdays will be celebrated by giving your child a birthday gift and card and his/her photo will be put on the birthday board. Your child will also receive a personalised cup cake with a candle as a dessert after either lunch or tea.
- Parents and cares are kindly asked not to bring birthday cakes or sweets into nursery however, if you wish to mark the event we recommend a book donation that can be shared with the group
- Religious and cultural events will be celebrated through music, dance, stories and craft. Menus will be reviewed for such occasions and meals altered accordingly to incorporate healthier options

## **Special Dietary Requirements**

At Hocus Pocus information is gathered at the onset with reference to dietary requirement be it cultural, religious or food allergies. To ensure we meet every child's individual need we:

- We gather information from parents regarding their children's dietary needs including any special dietary requirements, intolerance to specific food, food allergies or cultural or religious requirement that a child has and any special health requirements before a child is admitted to the nursery. Where appropriate we will carry out a risk assessment in the case of allergies and work alongside parents to put into place an individual dietary plan for their child
- The cook has a concise list of children with special dietary requirements and records are kept
- Lists are compiled and update regularly and shared with every room
- Staff show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. They 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 provide foods from the diet of each of the children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones. Cultural

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differences in eating habits are respected

## **Encouraging Fussy Eaters to Eat Well**

In order to support and encourage children, including those experiencing fussy eating or fear of new foods, we will:

- Any individual concerns will be brought to the attention of management, who will monitor the situation and speak to parents and carers advising them of what support we can offer and what support is available from outside agencies
- Children who are fussy eaters will be sat with good eaters, thus acting as good role models
- Staff will also sit alongside fussy eaters and offer lots of praise and encouragement
- Offer regular and repeated chances to taste new foods at meal and snack times, offering smaller taster portions if required
- Staff will receive training on encouraging children to eat well and manage fussy eaters

## **Foods Brought from Home**

We would prefer that children only eat food that is provided by the setting however, we appreciate that sometimes there will be exceptions to this. Therefore we ask if you could adhere to the following:

- Formula milk to be brought in powder state clearly labelled with the child's name
- If packed lunches are brought into nursery please consider healthy options (guidance can be sought, please ask our food champion D'Reena)
- Please **do not** send children into nursery with food that could be a choking hazard, for example whole grapes, un-peeled apples etc. If a child arrives at nursery with any such food you will be asked to remain with your child until they have eaten it.

## **Educating Children about Food**

At Hocus Pocus we believe the best way to understand food and its benefits is to involve children in the process of growing (where possible) and cooking food. We achieve this by:

- Using real food in creative activities
- Offering food stuffs to investigate, such as fruit, vegetables, pasta and pulses
- Children help prepare food for the whole nursery, such as oat cookies and fruit salad
- Planting and growing vegetables
- Harvesting apples and other fruits and vegetables grown in the nursery garden
- Planned activities promoting healthy eating

## **Food Safety and Hygiene**

In early year's settings, it is important that food is stored, prepared and presented in a safe and hygienic environment and children are taught basic hygiene, in order to do this, we will:

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- Implement the *Safer Food Better Business* food safety management system
- All staff involved in cooking and preparing food hold a level two food hygiene certificate
- All management and middle management hold a level two food hygiene certificate
- Display hand washing posters in bathrooms and the kitchen
- Children who take part in cooking activities are provided with aprons and supervised throughout the experience to ensure good hygiene practices are adhered to

## **Sustainability**

At Hocus Pocus we strive to achieve sustainability and consider the environment, we achieve this by:

- Sourcing seasonal produce
- All card and paper is recycled either by reuse in the setting or taking to a recycling plant

## **Protecting Children's Health**

At Hocus Pocus the health and wellbeing of our children is paramount, therefore in order to maintain this standard we promote the topics below in the following ways:

General healthy eating:

- Have at least one member of staff who is trained in basic nutrition and healthy eating and is able to offer basic advice and support on eating well where needed
- Invite outside agencies in to coach children on the benefits of good oral hygiene
- Display useful information that promotes health and wellbeing
- Provide information in the form of booklets and leaflets sourced from websites such as Change4life and British Heart Foundation
- Advise parents where support and advice can be sought
- We intend to sign up to Bolton Food and Health Team's HEAR (Healthy Awareness Raising) project which involves a rolling series of monthly display boards and different information leaflets on different food and nutrition topics

Infant feeding / breastfeeding:

- Ensure we have at least one member of staff who has attended the breastfeeding training as part of the BHEYS Champion Training, promotes breastfeeding and is aware of Equality Act which protects mothers who wish to breastfeed in public
- Provide a comfy quiet area (and if needed private) space for mothers to breastfeed or express milk if needed
- Order in and provide copies of information leaflets such as the stat4life 'Off to the Best Start' and 'Breastfeeding at Study or Work' a Guide to Bottle Feeding' is also available to support those who have chosen to offer formula milk

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Weaning:

- Display the HEAR project's 'Baby's First Foods' display in the babies room
- Have at least one member of staff who has received training in weaning and is able to offer brief advice on when its best to start and how to progress through the stages when needed
- Signpost parents/carers to local 'Bay's First Foods' sessions for further advice

Oral health:

- The setting operates a tooth brushing program

Child Safety:

- Safe sleeping-we follow safe sleeping procedures and display safe sleeping posters
- We display posters promoting child safety whilst being transported in vehicles and the importance of using the correct safety seat
- We promote the well-being of children by delivering activities that cover the topic of stranger danger
- We promote the well-being of children by delivering activities that cover the topic of road safety

## **Staff Training**

To achieve all of the above it is imperative that staff have training at a level relevant to their position:

- Kitchen staff all hold a level two food safety and hygiene certificate
- The nursery cook and food champion attends training with reference to nutrition and healthy eating
- Cooks are qualified to a minimum level two in catering
- All managers and room leaders hold a foundation certificate in food hygiene
- Staff responsible for children under the age of one year have up to date knowledge of current weaning guidelines and how to support feeding
- The food champion is responsible for monitoring food and drink and identifying any training needs or change in practice.
- Food and drink is an agenda item during full staff meetings, middle management meetings and individual room meetings

## **Transition to school**

The transition from room to room and then to school can be a daunting experience, not only in the settling in process but at meal times also. Therefore we wherever possible support children and families on their ongoing journey and achieve this by:

### **Room to Room**

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- Ensuring transition reports are completed by key persons
- Transition checklists are complete to ensure that all up to date information is shared
- Verbal communication are made with reference to individual needs and abilities
- Children are introduced to cups from feeders and feeders from bottles
- Cutlery changes at various stages of ability
- Seating arrangements are changed at various stages of ability

## Nursery to School

- Individual needs and abilities will be shared with teachers on nursery visits
- Children are encouraged to remove plates and cups at the end of their sitting

## **Evaluation and Review of the settings Approach to Food and Drink Provision**

Monitoring and evaluation is an ongoing process in all aspects of nursery life and all policies and procedures are reviewed annually or earlier if deemed necessary. With reference to food and drink we will:

- Review the EBSB Code of Practice checklist as part of the annual review of the policy
- Complete the EBSB Menu Planning checklist for all new menus
- Collect regular feedback wherever possible from parents and cares

Date of next review Jan 2016

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