



**Houghton Conquest**  
Early Years Centre.  
Growing together

## Food and Drink Policy

Within the Centre snack and meal times are seen as an important part of the day. We can arrange hot meals for Lunch Club and snacks for children attending the Pre-school. Lunchtimes especially offer an opportunity for social interaction between staff and the children. It also presents a good opportunity to promote and learn about Healthy Eating. Staff will be encouraged to sit with the children, as this presents the opportunity to promote good manners and social skills.

We aim to provide nutritious food for snack times during morning and afternoon pre-school sessions. Meals at lunchtime are provided by the school, they offer a good selection of nutritious meals.

These menus will be displayed for parents to view. The menus include meat, fish and protein alternatives for those who follow a vegetarian diet, dairy foods, fruit and vegetables, grains, pulses and cereals.

Before the children eat their meals they will be encouraged to wash their hands, being taught the importance of hygiene with regard to their health.

Snacks offered during sessions will be provided from a snack bar that will run from 9.30 am to 11 am, earlier if a child has not eaten, and 2.15 to 3 pm. This gives children the opportunity to choose their own snack and drink when they are ready. This also gives children the opportunity to manage their own needs. If a child is deep in play, we do not want to interrupt their learning opportunities. Children will be encouraged to collect and prepare their own snack. Staff will supervise the snack table to ensure that any spillages are cleaned up and that food is replenished. Also, to encourage correct use of cutlery, and use of fresh plates and cups. Children with specific dietary requirements will be observed delicately. A check list for the children is above the snack table to inform staff of special dietary and allergy requirements for named children. A photograph is included so all staff recognise the child and his/her needs. There will also be a duplicate copy in the Pre-school kitchen. Staff and students will be informed of this information in their induction procedures.

We encourage children to use self-help skills, by cutting up their own food and pouring their own drinks. We use cutlery that is similar to what would be used at home. Correct use of cutlery is shown and the reasons why given.

Children will have access to water at all times; a jug is replenished throughout the day for children to help themselves. We do ask that they sit at the snack table to drink and eat. If certain children are not having a drink and we feel that they need one, we will sit them down to drink at any time during the session. Milk is also accessible during snack time.

Before a child starts at the setting, parents will discuss in the Parent Consultation requirements regarding any allergies or dietary needs of the child. If they require a hot school dinner at lunch time they will need to complete a form from Caterlink. This form gives the information to staff preparing foods within the school kitchen about the child's individual nutrition needs. Parents are responsible for updating us on developments regarding dietary needs. We will take into account the dietary needs

and rules of religious groups. Children with allergies or dietary needs that are different to other children attending the setting will not be singled out. They will be placed at a table with the rest of the children to enjoy the social aspect of lunchtime, under delicate observation.

We will discourage children from sharing their food or drinks with others in order to protect the children who have dietary needs or allergies.

Parents will be kept informed of the settings policies with regard to healthy eating which will be displayed on our parents notice board.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher, staff and Governors.