



## **Montessori Children's House** **Healthy Eating Policy**

### **Rationale:**

At Montessori Children's House we recognise the importance of a healthy lifestyle and diet and realise that establishing a balanced diet in childhood helps establish healthy eating habits for life.

### **Aim:**

To work with our families to develop healthy and sociable eating practices for the children which will become part of their lives.

### **Objectives:**

To provide children with positive, healthy eating experiences.

To respect the different dietary, cultural, religious and health needs of all our children

To encourage children to develop positive attitudes towards food through different learning opportunities

To promote understanding of a balanced diet

To develop children's understanding of the importance of the social context in which eating takes place

### **Food at Montessori**

We feel mealtimes should be social, learning times when we can sit down with our friends and enjoy food. A substantial snack is prepared by a couple of the children to be shared by all. It consists of bread and butter, oatcakes, cheese or hummus, fruit, vegetables and water. The children choose when to have this when a space is available at the table. They serve themselves and pour their own water. When they are finished they wash and dry their dishes, thus learning skills and taking responsibility for themselves and the environment.

Lunch is not provided by school but each child brings a packed lunch. This can consist of warm food in a flask or sandwiches. Unfortunately we can no longer heat food in the microwave. If the food is cold we suggest putting ice packs in the lunch bags to keep it cool. We would

encourage parents to follow government guidelines and include a portion each of fruit and vegetables, protein, carbohydrate and milk or dairy item. We ask you not to send:  
crisps,  
sweets or  
fruit juices

as these are empty calories and harm the children's health and teeth. There is always water available. We encourage the children to eat their most nutritious food first and finish with their yogurt, cereal bar or home-made cake etc.

Examples of healthy packed lunches:



Given that a large part of our curriculum is about respect and care for the environment, we would also ask that you consider the packaging the food comes in and where possible it should either be reusable or recyclable.

Lunch is eaten altogether and good, social behaviour is modelled by the adults and older children. Children help to set the table and prepare for the meal. Much discussion takes place around the food everyone has and comparisons are made, thus following the same guidelines becomes a positive learning experience for all.

Regular baking, cooking and preparing occasional lunches provides more opportunities to understand healthy eating and understand the social and cultural importance of food.

Any allergies, food intolerances and cultural food habits are noted and care is taken to help children avoid those foods.