

Healthy Child Policy

Statement of intent

YMCA Brunel Group promotes healthy living through daily routines and through our curriculum as a way of impacting on children's future lives and ensuring their healthy bodies and minds.

We regard meal and snack times as an important part of the child's day and we use these routines to ensure we are promoting the good health and the oral health of the children attending our settings, therefore contributing to a child's personal and social development and preparing them for their healthy lives ahead. All food provided by the YMCA is healthy, balanced and nutritious. Staff members receive food-handling training, our cooks always provide healthy options and our kitchens are of a high standard.

We expect parents to provide healthy packed lunches where children bring their own lunch as a way of ensuring good habits for life and reinforcing our curriculum.

We do this work alongside promoting physical play and outdoor activities to form good habits early in a child's life. We recognise that this contributes to improving cognitive ability and establishing healthy, young minds.

We help children have a strong sense of themselves and to feel confident and secure. We believe that a healthy mind is crucial as a child makes their way through life.

Aim

At snack and meal times, we provide nutritious food, while meeting a child's individual dietary requirements. We meet the full requirements of The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021), Section 3 – The Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements.

As part of our curriculum, we promote physical play and healthy minds for children. We always plan to use the outdoors for activities, trips, walks in the community and sports. We have activity groups working in some of our settings to promote physical play

We promote an understanding of healthy choices to empower children to understand the importance of how to look after their own oral health.

We promote and teach the exploration of feelings as a way of helping children develop healthy minds.

Methods

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we find out from parents their child's dietary requirements and preferences, including any allergies.
- We record information about each child's dietary needs in her/his registration record and parents sign the record to signify that it is correct.
- We regularly consult with parents to ensure that our records of their children's dietary needs - including any allergies - are up to date. Parents sign the up-dated record to signify that it is correct.
- We expect that parents will offer us new information as and when it comes up.
- We seek external advice about the management of severe allergies and reactions to contact.
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all staff and volunteers are fully informed about them. Managers are responsible for updating this and ensuring that all staff members are aware of these allergies.
- We implement systems to ensure that children receive only food and drink that is consistent with their dietary needs and preferences as well as their parents' wishes

- We encourage parents to send in healthy packed lunches for their children, meeting the main food groups for the child's health and growth. Please ask us about this if you require any advice about this.
- We display the menus of meals/snacks for the information of parents, including details of their allergen content.
- We offer choice and provide new experiences for children.
- We include a variety of foods from the four main food groups:
 - meat, fish and protein alternatives;
 - dairy foods;
 - grains, cereals and starch vegetables;
 - fruit and vegetables.
- We include foods from the diet of children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones.
- We avoid using nut products in all of our settings at all times
- Through discussion with parents and research by staff, we obtain information about the practice of their religious groups and cultures and of vegetarians and vegans. We take account of this information in the provision of our food and drink.
- We require staff to show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. Staff members 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.
- Children do not share food.
- We use meal and snack times to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink, feeding themselves, chatting to their friends with adults sitting with them to offer support, ensuring that the experience is a sociable occasion.
- We have fresh drinking water constantly available for the children. We inform the children about how to obtain the water and that they can ask for water at any time during the session/day. We offer younger children water regularly.
- All staff members who are involved in preparing and handling food receive appropriate training in food hygiene.
- Ofsted will be notified if two or more children contact food poisoning on the premises within 14 days of the incident.
- We promote a healthy mind in all that we do in our early years settings and use all opportunities to enable children to develop self-help skills and resilience through strong and secure emotional support.
- We understand that children should develop good on-line habits and this must be supported by our example and by parents understanding the importance of keeping children safe on-line. We therefore practice and promote safe on-line practice and make this part of our everyday work.

All other policies relating to YMCA Brunel Group are available for you to read at the childcare setting or on our web site.

Signed on behalf of YMCA Brunel Group
(original signed copy held at registered office)

Mike Fairbeard

Role of Signatory

Chief Executive

Date of Review of Policy

Jan 2025

