

## **HEALTHY EATING POLICY**

### **PRINCIPLES**

The UN Convention on the rights of the child (199 ) states:

‘Children have the right to be as healthy as possible, live and play in a safe healthy unpolluted environment and benefit from preventive care and education’.

### **POLICY’S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

Ballinderry Playgroup is committed to promoting children’s health and to encourage healthy eating habits. Ballinderry playgroup have been recognised for providing healthy eating by receiving the ‘BOOST BETTER BREAKS AWARD’ in 2007.

### **PROCEDURES**

The playgroup will therefore endeavour to provide snacks, which are healthy and nutritious and help to provide children with the energy and nutrients they need.

### **Meals**

- ✚ Well balanced and nutritious meals are provided for the children. A variety of foods is selected from each of the four main groups every day:
  - bread, cereals, rice and pasta
  - fruit and vegetables
  - milk and dairy foods
  - meat, fish and alternatives
  
- ✚ All puddings provided are based on fruit and/or milk
  
- ✚ Fresh fruit is always available
  
- ✚ The only processed meat product provided is cooked ham which is served a maximum once a week (sandwiches on Friday)

- ✚ Special therapeutic dietary needs are respected. Parents are requested to give playgroup staff a copy of diet sheet provided by Sate Registered Dietician
- ✚ Mealtimes are used as an opportunity to encourage good social habits. For example, whenever possible children and adults eat together
- ✚ Cultural dietary habits are respected. Parents/carers are requested to provide details of food eaten ( and not eaten ) by the child.
- ✚ It is important parents/carers inform staff of any food allergies their child may have (see policy on allergies)

### **SNACKS AND DRINKS**

- ✚ Snacks given are healthy and nutritious and help provide children with the energy and nutrients they need
- ✚ Sweets and fizzy drinks are not routinely offered
- ✚ Where possible snacks are sugar-free to avoid causing damage to teeth. Fresh fruit is an ideal snack choice
- ✚ Whole milk or water is provided for children all morning
- ✚ If on occasions juices and squashes are given, these are well diluted (one part juice or squash to eight parts water) and given only at mealtimes, to avoid causing to teeth.

### **REWARDS AND SPECIAL OCCASIONS**

- ✚ Praise and attention are used to help develop children's self-esteem and to act as a positive reward for good behaviour
- ✚ If other forms of reward are used, they support and do not conflict healthy eating principles. For example, sweets and fizzy drinks are not given as rewards

- ✚ Celebration of birthdays and other special occasions, eg. Easter, Christmas and New Year etc focus on the sense of occasion rather than simply the provision of rich, sugary food and drinks

## **ACTIVITIES**

- ✚ Healthy eating is promoted through a range of activities for the children including play, stories, music, outing, cooking etc
- ✚ The playgroup participates in special campaigns and initiatives such as healthy eating campaigns, healthy snacks awards etc
- ✚ Home corner activities are enhanced through the use of real fruit and vegetables
- ✚ The implementation of this Healthy Eating Policy will not only relate to the provision of healthy foods and drinks within the setting, in order to promote the nutritional and general well being of the children, but it will also address food related activities involving the children which should encourage and enable them to make healthy choices in the future

**This policy has been adopted by Ballinderry Playgroup Committee on:**

Signed:

Date:

Signed:

Date:

Signed:

Date: