Healthy Eating Policy

A good balanced diet is vital for children to develop healthily along with fresh air and regular exercise.   
We are happy to provide all children in our care with healthy meals, snacks and drinks, or to cook/serve food provided by their parents.

Snack time - toast/bagels/crumpets or similar and fruit (we will provide gluten free alternatives if necessary)

Lunch – we work on a 5 week rolling bases with our menus. These have details of any allergens which may be present, if your child is allergic to any of the ingredients we will substitute where possible and keep the meal the same, in the rare case this isn’t possible an alternative meal may be offered. We do occasionally change meals e.g. if time is short a roast may have boiled rather than roasted potatoes however we do not change allergens on offer. On special occasions, we may offer alternatives e.g. party food at the end of term. We will check all allergens beforehand in line with our records to ensure we will not offer food to children who may be allergic. We will notify all parents of menu changes in advance.

If you want to supply food for your child for consumption on the premises, you must be aware of food hygiene when preparing packed lunches or snacks. This includes checking dates for consumption of both dried and perishable foods, and correct storage of food items when sent to the setting. As consumption of all food on our premises, inclusive of packed lunches provided by parents, is ultimately our responsibility, the following must be observed at all times. Please can you label your child’s lunch with any allergens which may be present, these will be listed on the packaging your food came from. Any perishable foods inclusive of dairy and meat products must be identified and labelled with your child's name. These will then be stored in the refrigerator until required.   
Any food not consumed by your child will be discarded on the same day, subject to conditions below:   
Any foods beyond their use-by date will not be given to your child, as they cannot be stored on the premises, they will be discarded and you will be informed.   
Food brought to the setting to meet your child's specific dietary requirements can only be stored on a weekly basis and must be collected at the end of the week.   
We encourage children to choose healthy options and to experiment by trying new foods from other cultures. Older children are encouraged to help in the preparation of food and meals. We are happy to cater for children with different food allergies and cultural/religious requirements. If your child has any particular dislikes or favourite dishes please let me know.   
We are happy to support you if you are weaning your baby. We will supply a blender and are willing to make puréed dishes if required.   
We do not permit children to have fizzy drinks. Children are offered water, milk (full-fat or semi-skimmed unless requested differently). Fruit juices or squash if they will not drink an alternative is offered especially in the summer months however to protect teeth we try to limit these drinks to meal times.   
We do not encourage children to eat sweets or chocolate on a regular basis, however we do sometimes offer these for special occasions, e.g. children may have a small chocolate egg at Easter. Please let us know what, of any sweets you permit your child to eat. We will also take into account the home routine i.e. if you like to give your child sweets/chocolate on collection as a treat we won't offer it within the setting.   
Please note no child in my setting will go without. Whilst we will try our best to work in partnership with you and your child and promote healthy eating habits if a child attends with no suitable food (e.g. out of date or forgotten) we will try to contact you but if we can't we will provide meals within any dietary limitations we are aware of. Also a child will not be asked to go without drink because they are limited to water. We have often heard the theory 'They will drink if they are thirsty/eat if they are hungry'. In our experience children are capable of being incredibly stubborn if they so choose and you cannot make them do anything as such we will offer them what they like plus healthy food/drink options and continue with heavy praise when they select healthily.