

Food and drink

Islington Play Association aims to provide children with positive healthy eating experiences in order to promote their well being. IPA respects the different dietary, cultural, religious and health needs of all children and encourages children to develop positive attitudes towards food through discussion, modelling good practice and practical projects.

It is vital that our children and young people develop the knowledge and skills to allow them to eat healthily and make healthy choices not just within our sites but outside as well.

Objectives:

- To show children simple ways to understand why a balanced diet is important
- To develop children's experiences of eating with others
- To model a positive approach to healthy food options
- To encourage responsibility and accountability of all in offering healthy options to children

Key messages for children:

- Eat breakfast every day
- Eat fruit and vegetables daily
- Avoid snacks and drinks with a high sugar content
- Drink plenty of water to avoid becoming dehydrated
- Be physically active every day
- Brush teeth twice a day and visit your dentist regularly

Staff responsibilities:

- All key people working with Early Years children must complete food and hygiene training and follow relevant procedures.
- At least one Playworker on each Adventure Playground must complete food and hygiene training and follow relevant procedures.
- All snacks provided will be nutritious, avoiding large quantities of sugar, salt, saturated fats, additives, preservatives and colourings.
- Staff will actively model good practice and healthy eating during working hours.
- Meal and snack times should be treated as social occasions with staff eating with the children, where possible. Children may be encouraged to eat, but must not be pressured to finish their food.
- There should be adequate space, cutlery and crockery for meals to be served and eaten comfortably.

- We will have fresh drinking water and suitable cups readily available for children and staff
- We support the children in recognising that they need to drink water when they are thirsty, hot or tired, or feeling unwell.
- When children bring packed lunches and snacks, there must be adequate provision for storage and lunch boxes/bags should be clearly marked with names. Lunch/snacks should be refrigerated, especially in hot weather. Lunches which contain meat or dairy products must be refrigerated at 8°C (46°F) or below.
- Special dietary needs are recorded in detail and must always be checked before planning any food preparation.
- Current special dietary needs are on display in the kitchen so that all staff know what food is appropriate for all children.
- Staff must always wash hands before handling food and encourage children to do so.
- Staff should clean up any spills on the floor immediately.
- Staff should ensure all utensils and surfaces are cleaned thoroughly before and after use.
- Staff should ensure that all fruits and vegetables are washed before preparation or cooking.
- Staff should ensure that the cooker is supervised at all times.
- When food has been cooked or prepared, if it is not being eaten straight away it should be cooled and kept covered.
- Take care when using knives with children
- Menus should be nutritionally balanced, varied, of good quality, and adequate in quantity. In developing a balanced meal, a variety of nutritious food should be encouraged and promoted.
- Menus and meals should be prepared which are sensitive to cultural and religious preferences.
- Food waste will be removed from the kitchen on a daily basis.
- Food must not be used as either a reward or a punishment
- Only healthy drinks should be provided to children