

Healthy Centre Policy
(Including healthy eating, no smoking, hot drinks and breastfeeding)

Rationale

As a Children's Centre we take pride in a pro-active approach to the wellbeing of children. We promote physical and emotional health through our policies and practice within the centre.

Healthy Eating

Our belief is that a balanced healthy, nutritious diet is important for the development of a child's physical state, as well as for their intellectual abilities.

Food and Drink Provision throughout the Centre

To ensure that all aspects of food and drink at the centre promote the health and well being of pupils, families, staff and visitors the following standards will be promoted and undertaken.

- **Breastfeeding will be promoted at all times**
 - A welcoming atmosphere will be provided.
 - If a woman accessing Bushy Leaze asks for a private area to feed, the centre will do its best to provide a quiet and suitable room or space.
 - Where possible at the time, a woman may breast-feed in any area of the centre, if the woman is happy doing so.
 - Should anyone express concerns about women breast-feeding in the centre or its outreach services, it should be explained that we welcome women breast-feeding within the centre.
 - If any breast milk is expressed and is left as surplus, the owner should be encouraged to take it home to dispose of. If breast milk is left on the premises, it should be flushed down the toilet to comply with safe disposal of a body fluid.
- Water will be available at all times.
- Milk will be made available and promoted in groups.
 - *Breast milk (or, where this is not possible, infant formula) should provide the main drink in the first year of life.*
 - *Pasteurised full fat milk should be used as a drink after the age of one.*
 - *Semi skimmed milk can be used after two years of age unless there are concerns about a child's appetite or if underweight. Skimmed milk should not be given to children under 5 years of age.*
- Any snacks made available will be low in sugar, salt and fat.

- Fresh food, as opposed to processed food/fast food will be made available and promoted in groups.
- On special occasions and celebrations healthy options will be made available and balanced with less healthy options. Parties – are about fun and food is appropriate to the occasion.
- Special dietary, sensory or cultural needs of any children will be met and these needs must be identified and made known to all relevant Centre staff.
- A range of free flow cups (non valve) as opposed to non spill cups will be available for children to drink from. These will be promoted for use from 6 months of age; lidless cups will be promoted from 1 year of age.
- The use of sweets and chocolates as a reward is discouraged. Rewards can be given in the form of smiles and praise or items such as stars, stickers and badges.
- Sponsorship from fast food outlets e.g. McDonalds/Kentucky fried chicken/formula feeding companies will not be accepted.
- Bringing takeaway food to events/groups is not permitted and will be discouraged.
- Parents/carers and children are requested not to bring sweets/chocolates/crisps or any other confectionery to groups.

Food and Drink Provision and Consumption by Users and Visitors

Any users or visitors will be encouraged to adhere to the healthy eating policy of the Centre and made aware of acceptable provision.

- It is the responsibility of the course/session leader to ensure that any food and drink provision provided whilst at Bushy Leaze adheres to the standards set above.
- Any foods supplied from home should adhere to the standards above and it is the responsibility of visiting groups to make their clients aware and adhere.
- Families should not bring in their own snacks and drinks into the centre for consumption whilst attending groups / courses. This is not only to support the healthy eating policy and ethos of the centre, but to safeguard against any food allergies and choking hazards. (Exceptions will be made where there is a known food intolerance, cultural or health issue)
- There may be exceptions to this for special occasions such as cultural weeks, family barbecues and Dads Matter.

Lunch Provision

The Centre will encourage parents to include in lunchboxes foods which promote a healthier lifestyle and healthy food choices. The centre will aim to provide information for families on suitable foods that could be included in lunch boxes from home.

Parents are advised to include an ice pack, as food products, prepared and stored in ambient temperatures can, after a period of between two to four hours, have increased levels of bacteria in them, which may be harmful to children. Although the centre provides storage facilities, the centre cannot take legal responsibility for foods prepared at home and then brought into centre.

In addition, the Centre will discourage parents from including the following items in packed lunches:

- Sweets, chocolate, etc.
- Crisps or any packet savoury snacks high in salt and fat
- Fizzy drinks / sugary drinks
- Sweet cakes, e.g. sugary cakes, doughnuts, etc.
- Any product containing nuts.
- Pre-packed processed food.

Children are encouraged to eat all or at least try to eat most of the food provided, either by the children's centre or in their lunch box.

Education

The centre will promote healthy balanced diets and exercise as part of the curriculum.

The Centre may also enlist the help of external agencies or professionals to help promote healthy eating habits and improve knowledge.

Health & Safety

- Parents and carers will be encouraged to sit with children while they eat and to be a good role model for healthy eating.
- **Nuts are not allowed in the centre** – the centre aims to be a nut free zone
- All food will be prepared by handlers following food hygiene rules e.g. hands washed thoroughly, clean apron and hair tied back. Kitchen safety guidelines will be followed at all times.
- **Hot drinks**
 - Are **NOT** permitted in areas of the nursery where children are present.
 - Are **NOT** permitted in any groups where toddlers are present. Hot drinks will be permitted at groups where babies are non-ambulant, at the discretion of the group leader and providing the correct safety cups are used and lids are secure. Users must ensure that lids are not cross threaded.

- For activities/groups run by outside agencies, it is up to the individual organisation to decide whether they feel the situation is 'controlled' enough to allow hot drinks to be available. Hot drinks will only be available in safety cups, with secured lids.

No Smoking

Smoking is a preventable cause of premature death and ill health in our society. Passive smoking (breathing other people's tobacco smoke) is also potentially fatal and has been shown to cause lung cancer, as well as many other illnesses, in non-smokers. We actively support people who wish to give up smoking by partnership working and signposting to NHS Smoking cessation advice.

Bushy Leaze is a **SMOKEFREE ZONE**

- Smoking (including e-Cigarettes) is not allowed anywhere on the site at any time, including the car park. This applies to all staff and all visitors to the Centre.
- Smoking breaks are not permitted during the working day, except for during the staff member's lunch break, when they must leave the premises to comply with the above.

Emotional Wellbeing

We aim to promote a safe and supportive environment and ethos which is conducive to the mental health and wellbeing of the whole Centre community.

Please see our

- relationship policy
- positive mental health policy

Signed:

Date:

Next Revision: Autumn 2026