

# Alexandra Nursery School and Children's Centre

## How to have a healthy child

A healthy diet and plenty of exercise are crucial if young children are going to grow and develop into strong healthy adults.

This leaflet will tell you what we do to help your child to be healthy and how you can do this at home

Alexandra Nursery School and Children's Centre is part of

Bolton's *Healthy Schools Project*.

This means that we help children to learn about different kinds of foods and the effect that they have on their body and brain.

We also encourage children to enjoy a balance diet and make healthy food choices

### exercise

*All children need plenty of exercise if they are to develop into healthy adults.*

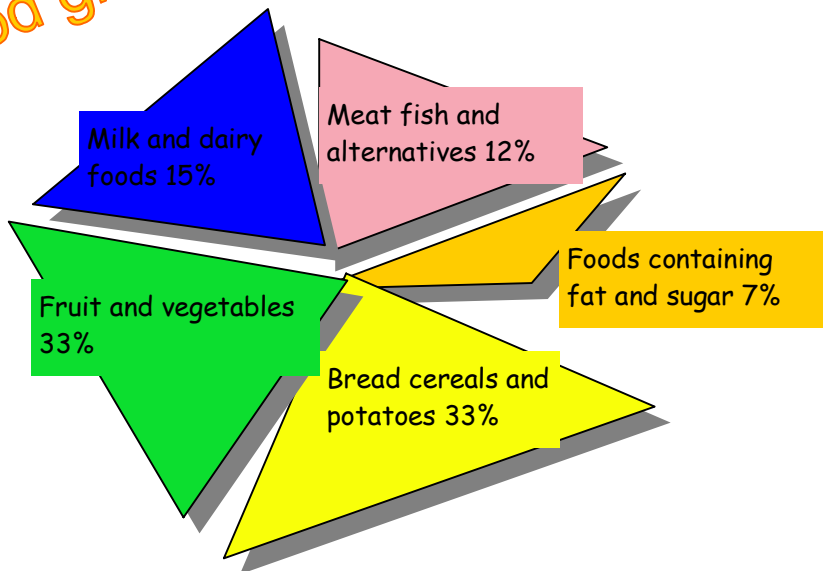
*We have lovely gardens at both buildings and children go outside everyday. You need to make sure you child has on shoes that will allow them to run and climb and a warm coat—we go outside all through the winter. Children need to get fresh air and exercise to build up immunities so that they don't get lots of cold and infections. We also plan physical activities inside. You will see this area in the under three's unit near the door to the garden—there are climbing and crawling activities to help babies and toddlers develop strong bones and muscles. Babies have "tummy time" everyday—this encourages them to stretch their necks and spines.*

*Older children have music and dancing sessions planned by the key adults. In the school. We use a range of cd's and videos to develop dancing and movement. Each group has a structured planned music session each week with their group adult as well as other sessions where anyone can join in. We use soft play and climbing equipment to help develop stamina and muscle strength.*

*We assess children large motor skills regularly using both inside and outside activities. Balance is very important for later development in reading and writing—we have lots of balancing equipment and activities to develop this.*

# five food groups

## The balance of good health



The chart above shows what food should be eaten every day and how much of each should make up your diet. Here are some tips to help provide a healthy balanced diet

- Bread cereals and potatoes are important to give children energy and fibre, which will help them go to the toilet regularly .
- Toddlers and young children need to eat more dairy foods than adults. It is recommended that children have a pint of milk each day either to drink or in yoghurt or cheese. This should be full fat or skimmed up to the age of 5.
- Fruit and vegetables should be offered to children at every meal. At least 5 portions ( an apple, a banana or a small bowl of salad or vegetables) every day. The same applies for older children and adults. There are different minerals and vitamins in certain fruit and vegetables so it is important to eat a wide selection each week
- Protein is important for growth and development- children can have meat, lentils, chickpeas, beans, eggs and fish (especially oily fish such as tuna or sardines) is very good as it has omega three fish oil which is important for bone development.

- Drinks—it is important that children have lots of fluid such as water and milk. At Alexandra Nursery School and under three's Centre we tell the children that "water grows the brain". Research shows that water is essential to healthy physical and brain development. The oxygen in the water stimulates learning and gives children energy. If your child seems sluggish give them a glass of water. We have a water station in school where children can drink water whenever they want and they are given it at snack time. The under three's have regular water drinking sessions where all children are encourage to sip small amounts. We monitor carefully how much water babies are drinking in between bottles of milk.



### Bad foods

Fizzy and sugary drinks are bad for children and we do not give them in our centres. Children have fresh fruit juice and smoothies in addition to water and milk.

- Fizzy drinks contain a lot of chemicals and can slow down brain development.
- You should try to limit the amount of sugar you give to your child. Sugar between meals in sweets and drinks is more damaging to teeth than having it at mealtimes, and artificial sugar generally has no benefit to the body and can cause diabetes in later life. If you restrict the amount of sugar your child has when they are young. then they will not develop a sweet tooth-children will get all the sugar they need from fresh fruit. If your child does not like fruit then try making smoothie drinks with fruit in a blender.
- Young children under two years get 50% of their energy from fat. This reduces to 35% by the time they are five. Fried and fatty foods should be limited and children and adults should have food containing monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fat ( look for this on food labels) Saturated fats are bad for your heart and can cause heart disease in later life.
- You should not put salt on children's food or give snacks high in salt.

# menus and mealtimes

Our lunchtime meals in both buildings are provided by the cook in the children's centre. The menus for our children have been put together by the head teacher after discussion with the cook. The menus follow a four week cycle and ensure that children are getting a healthy balanced diet using a wide range of foods, freshly cooked everyday. All the food is vegetarian to cater for religious and cultural needs. Children are given meat substitutes such as quorn and Soya. Special diets are also catered for.

You can see the menus on the parent's notice boards in both buildings,

When we eat lunch there are adults sitting at the tables with the children to encourage good eating habits. In the under three's centre all the adults sit with their key groups and key adult.

Children sit at the tables next to their place setting. They all have a cloth napkin to use to wipe their hands and face while they are eating. All children are shown how to use cutlery to eat— spoons and forks in the under three's centre and knives as well for older children in school. Children are encouraged to be independent and feed themselves and clear away when they have finished. The over three's take turns to serve other children who are expected to say please and thank you.

Breakfast and teas are prepared by our food preparation assistants who have all had food hygiene training. Our kitchens are kept to a high standard as required by the health and safety inspector and OFSTED

## Snack times

Snack times in both buildings offer a range of food for children to try

There are different snacks in the morning and afternoon so that children who stay all day have a variety. Again all the food is vegetarian.

We try to offer choice so that there is always something that the children will like. We give children lots of fresh fruit and raw vegetables- the children especially like vegetables with humus and garlic dips. We only give biscuits or crisps a couple of times a month and cake when it is someone's birthday.

Children are given a choice of water or milk to drink- we encourage all children to have a drink of water even if they don't want to eat anything. We are very careful to make sure children are not given food that they are allergic to. The children help to prepare fruit, vegetables and sandwiches for snack and bake biscuits and cakes for everyone to eat.

Children are encouraged to pour their own drink at snack time and clear way when they have finished. We use snack time to talk to children about which foods are good for their bodies and will help them to grow up strong and healthy. We encourage all children to sit at the table and eat and drink using good table manners. Snack time is an important learning time where children develop social skills and can talk to adults and children in a relaxed way.

We hope you found this leaflet interesting and useful— please ask the head teacher or daycare manager if you have any questions about the information in this leaflet. Remember—what you feed your child now will affect it's health for the rest of their life— start good habits while they are young.