



Ballygawley Early Years Playgroup

Menu Planning and Healthy Eating Policy

Ballygawley Early Years Playgroup aims to offer a high quality service to the children we care for and their parents/guardians. We recognise the need to encourage healthy eating habits from an early age to help children to reach their full potential.

Menu Planning

All aspects of health promotion are carried out with the support, advice and assistance of the following professionals:

- Health Visitor,
- Community Dental Service
- Early Years Social Worker

Procedures

- Parents and Guardians are requested at the beginning of school year to provide details of foods which may not be eaten by their children. Any medical dietary requirements or cultural requirements will be respected and catered for, however playgroup does ask for the support and assistance from our Parents.
- Menu for each week will be displayed in the foyer. All Menus are kept on file. Staff take guidance from the "Nutrition Matters for the Early Years" booklet published by Public Health Agency.
- All children are provided with a healthy and nutritious snack every day. Fresh fruit is regularly offered along with whole milk and many other healthy alternatives. Fresh drinking water is available throughout the session. Sweets and fizzy drinks are not routinely offered but may be offered on special occasions.
- Children will be encouraged to taste foods from different parts of the world which they may not have tasted before. This may be carried out through cookery, home corner play, snack times or small group time.
- During snack time children will sit with their key worker. Staff encourage self-help skills and to promote social interactions.



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Food Allergies

Ballygawley Early Years as previously stated requests all parents/ guardians to provide all information on their child's food allergies or foods they may not be permitted to eat. In severe cases of food allergies, where medication like epi-pen is required, a personal care plan will be put in place with the help of parent and health care professional. In some instances parents/ guardians may also be asked to provide a snack.

Parties/ Special Occasions

To celebrate birthdays, the parent/ guardian may provide a birthday cake to be shared with the other children. If parent provides sweets for their child's birthday celebration the staff will give them out at the end of the session.

On special occasions, the focus will be on the occasion rather than ensuring a healthy menu, however the playgroup will aim to keep these occasions to a minimum.

This policy was reviewed and accepted by Ballygawley Early Years playgroup management committee on 06/2015, and reviewed again on 01/2016 and 12/2016.

This policy links with the following;

- Food and Drink Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Managing Aggression and Challenging Behaviour including Bullying
- Infection Control Policy