



Policy No: SJD/YP/35	Authorised by: Davina Powell	Review Date: 13th June 2023
Policy Date: 12th April 2021		Date of Next Review: 13th June 2024
FOOD AND NUTRITION		

Aim of Policy

This policy is in place to inform SJD staff members about nutrition and meal-times. It is in place to help identify and cater for individual food requirements and to promote healthy eating in a relaxed atmosphere. It aims to promote consistency in food provided to our Children and Young People.

SJD Homes is committed to ensuring that the food provided supports the development of healthy eating practices. We understand that food experiences have an important effect on adult eating patterns and may influence attitudes to eating. Meal times are enjoyable social occasions which provide an opportunity to encourage good communication skills and language development.

National guidance: The policy was drawn up using a range of national documents including a toolkit and a draft policy from the Children's Food Trust and Food policy in schools – a strategic policy framework for governing bodies (National Governors' Council, (NGC) 2005).

We will ensure that:

- A balanced and healthy breakfast, lunch and evening meal with two daily snacks are provided for our Children and Young People.
- **Packed Lunches** Children / young people who have additional requirements or prefer a packed lunch to go to school will be provided this by SJD Homes.
- Menus will be planned in advance with our Children and Young People, rotated regularly and reflect cultural diversity and variation. These will be displayed in the kitchen for all to read.
- We provide nutritious food at all snack and meal times, avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar and salt and artificial additives, preservatives and colourings.
- Menus will include servings of fresh fruit and vegetables
- Fresh drinking water will be constantly available and frequently offered to children
- Individual dietary requirements required for medical or cultural reasons will be respected and where possible catered for. We will gather information from parents, Social Workers regarding Children and Young People dietary needs including any allergies. Where appropriate we will carry out a risk assessment in the case of allergies to put into place an individual diet plan for Children and Young People
- We provide foods from the diet of each of the Children and Young People cultural backgrounds, providing familiar foods and introducing them to new ones
- Promote healthy eating using resources within SJD Homes
- Oral health will also be promoted.

Team members providing meals and snacks for the children and Young People will:

- Be offered opportunities for relevant training and development
- Under the Food Safety Act, 1990, persons preparing food will hold a food hygiene certificate or have been given training in the food hygiene procedures of the home.

During meals, the SJD Homes team will:

- Make meal times an enjoyable, social occasion
- Use meal and snack times to help promote children and young people to develop independence through participate in the preparation of meal when appropriate, making choices, serving food and drink.
- Encourage Children and Young People to try a bit of everything, but not make a fuss if they don't want to
- Encourage Children and Young People to eat the 'healthy' components of their meal before any 'treats'.
- Praise a child / young person when they try something new
- Model good eating habits by sitting and eating meals with the children and young people in the dining area.
- Encourage lots of conversation, table manners, and use of words such as 'please' and 'thank you'.
- Encourage the children and young people to stay sat at the table until most of the children have finished
- Encourage the children and young people's independence by letting them take turns to hand out plates, cups, cutlery etc., then wash up, dry up and wipe the table after the meal if appropriate to their age and development.

Guidance for what to include:

Every day:

- At least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetables
- Meat, fish or other source of non-dairy protein (e.g. lentils, kidney beans, hummus, falafel)
- A starchy food (e.g. bread, pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes or other types of cereals)
- Dairy food (e.g. milk, yoghurt, cheese, fromage frais or custard)

It is recommended that an oily fish (e.g. salmon) is included around once every three weeks.

Drinks: Only water (still or sparkling), fruit juice, milk, yoghurt or milk drinks and smoothies. Fruit cordials or 'squash' should be weakly diluted.