

Young Children's Review

During a few staff meetings we evaluated our provision using the audit tool for the Healthy Early Years Certificate. We decided to review our food and drink provision and to ensure our policy reflects any changes made. We spent time with our key children to find out their expectations, likes and dislikes about snack and lunch times and gathered parent opinions. We also reflected upon our systems and routines at snack and lunch times.



Healthy Early Years Certificate

Green Shoots Pre-School January 2016

Before working on the Healthy Early Years Certificate, we had thought that our provision for snack and meal times were of good quality – staff sit and eat the same meals, healthy on-site cooked meals available each day, children responsible for scraping their plates, and good hand washing routines.

It was really interesting to hear the views of the children and parents in our setting. There were lots of good comments regarding our social nature at mealtimes, how children are eating great food each day and that parents were happy with the price of the meals.

A couple of things were highlighted that we could improve – having good table manners, adding more variety and fruits into our puddings, refreshing knowledge and practice about portion sizes and updating our menu to offer more opportunities to try new food.

“We always have this for pudding!” Elsie

“I’ve noticed that Tuesdays are normally pasta based meals – it would be nice to have more variety” Parent

“There are not many children saying thank you on our table” Practitioner

We decided to explore these highlighted areas further:

- Key person and key group circle times about the types of meals they do and don't like, and what makes good manners at meal times
- Self service milk and water week!
- Children making fruit salad, fruit flapjacks, banana yogurt for our puddings
- Focused staff meetings on portion sizes and responsive eating
- Team reflection and planning for the new spring menus.
- Reviewing and updating our Food and Drink Policy with staff, children and parents.

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Every child was encouraged to 'have a go' at serving themselves, it was a reminder of how capable even the youngest of children are when given the opportunity.



Each day for three weeks, we ensured the children had opportunities to either prepare their own snacks or help to make the new more fruiter puddings for pre-school. We noticed lots of participation and children had questions about the different texture and fruits and vegetables.

Children's comments regarding 'Green Shoots is healthier now because...'

"I tried some new fruit and I liked it" Anna

"We can sit and wait quietly, and then we get our food first" Honey

"I did it, and chop it, I didn't cry, because I did it safe" Mally

From undertaking the audit, making changes and reviewing our practice and policies, the staff team at Green Shoots are really pleased with the continued progress that is being made by practitioners, children and families to ensure we are a healthy pre-school.

We have had some great conversations with the children about different foods, helping others to try, and celebrating when someone has finished or tried something new. The children have also responded very well to sharing good manners and are calm and happy during meal times.

Sample of new menu

Day	Snack am	Lunch	Snack pm
Tuesday	Grapes Rice cakes	Sausages and mash Green beans Fruit salad	Crumpets Raisins
Wednesday	Pepper sticks Breadsticks	Sweet and sour pork Noodles Fruit flapjacks	Cheese on toast Grapes
Friday	Satsuma Cracker bread	Vegetable chili and rice Ice cream shop	Malt loaf Cucumbers

Next Steps

To purchase new smaller serving jugs and serving bowls so that all children can be served by their key person at the table and to have the opportunity to self serve.

To plan one World Food Day meal to each term's menu incorporating our families' culture and backgrounds.