



Southampton's Healthy Early Years Award (HEYA): Healthy Eating & Nutrition Policy Template

This template aims to provide guidance for settings on what to include in their healthy eating / nutrition policy to make it as strong as possible, and to cover all required aspects needed to submit for the award. This template sets out a number of headings, with questions / ideas under each heading. You do not have to use every heading word for word, but ensuring you cover all sections in this template will help you towards achieving the award. This template can be used if you are working towards your bronze or silver submission. **The points highlighted in purple text indicate the sections / parts of the template that only need to be considered at silver (and gold) level.**

All Southampton Sure Start Centres have already adopted a standard healthy eating / nutrition policy which should be informing the approach to healthy eating/nutrition within them.

Background Information

- Basic information about your setting, e.g. location, whether you offer full day care, the number of meals and snacks provided, the numbers of your roll, the age range you cater for
- Date the policy was agreed
- Date the policy will be reviewed
- Name of the person responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented, monitored and evaluated (healthy eating lead)
- Links to other curriculum requirements and policies, e.g. health and safety, risk assessments, how it links to EYFS framework

Policy development

Who was consulted in order to develop your policy? E.g. children, parents, staff

How was this done? E.g. parent surveys, discussion, meetings.

Rationale

Why is this policy important?

E.g. the importance of establishing good eating habits early in life, reducing nutrient deficiencies, reducing overweight and obesity, maintaining healthy teeth, contributing towards gaining the HEYA.

Aim

What are your overall healthy eating / nutrition aims? E.g. ensuring all food and drink promotes health and well-being to children, staff and visitors, to improve the nutrition of under 5s, meeting EYFS statutory requirements.

When & who the policy applies to

Who does the policy apply to? Consider how it applies to staff, parents / carers, children, visitors, volunteers and the wider community linked to the settings. When does it apply? Consider how it applies to all food and drink provided by the settings. **What about all food and drink brought in from home by parents / carers?**

Objectives

What specific things do you want to achieve? What are your setting's particular priorities around nutrition? Some examples could include:

- Delivering a consistent approach to nutrition



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- Meeting the Healthy Eating Standards and Healthy Eating Theme Criteria for the Award
- Ensuring all food provision reflects the ethical, cultural, legal and medical requirements of children
- Helping staff and children maintain healthy teeth
- Providing facilities for staff to be adequately hydrated at work
- Enabling staff to be effective role models to children and families around nutrition and healthy eating
- **Providing healthy foods, as well as non-food activities at special occasions**
- **Promoting the use of healthy recipes during cooking, healthy eating topics and other food-related activities**
- **Linking healthy eating through the curriculum / seven areas of learning and development**

Your setting's commitment

What are your setting's roles and responsibilities around nutrition and healthy eating? This should include:

A). A section on healthy food and drink provision, including:

- How foods and drinks meet the Healthy Eating Standards
- How you display menus and food / drink information for parents / carers / children to see
- How you provide access to fresh drinking water to staff and children throughout the day
- How you deal with fussy eaters
- How you provide a variety of foods to encourage new tastes and textures
- How you meet the cultural, religious and medical dietary needs of children
- How you monitor food choices
- **How you ensure an appropriate dining environment, e.g. by creating opportunity for positive social interaction**
- **If you do not provide snacks / lunches, what guidance do you provide to parents on appropriate choices, e.g. snacks, healthy packed lunches, drinks?**

B). A section outlining how staff role model healthy eating to children and families

- Do staff eat together with the children?
- How you promote positive social skills
- **How you communicate healthy eating / nutrition messages home**

C). A section outlining how you provide and communicate effective and quality assured education and resources around nutrition / healthy eating, including:

- How you provide consistent information on healthy eating
- How your staff remain up to date with changes in nutrition / healthy eating advice
- How you quality assure any leaflets, booklets and displays
- How do you ensure healthy eating messages are communicated home? How is this done?
- How you monitor / evaluate the impact of any groups you run within your setting, e.g. cooking groups, healthy eating groups

D). A section outlining how your setting promotes and encourages staff health and well-being

- How are staff supported to improve their own nutrition? E.g. appropriate breaks in an appropriate environment, water freely available throughout the day, walking club, healthy recipe swap club, staff meetings, staff appraisals

The commitment you require from parents / families

What commitment do you require from parents sending their children to your setting around food / nutrition?



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For example:

- Asking keyworker if they need support on helping their child(ren) to eat more healthily
- Highlighting any special dietary needs to the setting as early as possible
- Being a positive role model to children when visiting the setting
- **Following guidance when sending in food / drink, e.g. packed lunches, birthdays**

Food hygiene arrangements

Outline how you meet the requirements for food hygiene in your setting, e.g. storage of packed lunches, food preparation areas, hand washing.

Rewards and treats

How is good behaviour celebrated in the setting? Food should not be used as a reward (as outlined in the Healthy Eating Theme Standards), so please include a statement around this.

Birthdays

If you are a preschool or nursery, you probably have frequent birthdays. Consider the following questions when writing your policy (and ensure you refer to the Health Eating Theme Standards):

- How does your setting deal with celebrating birthdays? Consider the type and size of your setting, and the frequency of which birthdays are likely to occur
- How does your setting model how birthdays can be celebrated without necessarily using food? e.g. special birthday hat, birthday candles, being a special helper
- How does your setting discourage parents from sending in birthday cake or other traditional party foods? How do you involve and communicate this to families?
- How do you deal with birthday cake brought into your setting by parents?

Special occasions

Special occasions happen regularly during our annual calendar. Consider the following questions when writing your policy (and ensure you refer to the Health Eating Theme Standards):

- How do you encourage parents to send in healthier foods for special occasions / end of term parties? E.g. provide a list of healthy foods to choose from
- How do you celebrate special occasions without necessarily involving food?
- How do you communicate the messages around your setting's approach to dealing with special occasions to the home environment?

Healthy eating curriculum planning

What type of cooking opportunities do you provide in your setting and how often? Do you provide opportunities for children to use food in learning, or plan activities using food? Consider the following questions when writing this part of your policy:

- If you use foods in activities (e.g. play, education, language, cooking), how do foods used or talked about meet the Healthy Eating Standards?
- How do you quality assure any leaflets and resources used?
- How might you summarise your approach to cooking / baking / food-related activities, so parents reading your policy would understand your approach

Packed lunch policy

If children bring in packed lunches to eat in your setting, please outline your approach to this, and how you work with parents to improve the quality of packed lunches.



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You may find the following questions useful to answer:

- What comprises a healthy lunch-box?
- What resources do you use to help parents make better choices around packed lunch ingredients?
- Do you reserve the right to send home certain foods, e.g. chocolate, sweets, fizzy drinks?
- What lunchbox items (food and drink) are not acceptable to your setting and what is your setting's approach to dealing with them?
- How do you deal with parents that regularly send in inappropriate foods?

Complementary feeding (weaning) - if applicable to your setting

Include a statement around how you support the complementary feeding choice of the parents, e.g. that your setting can adapt to provide suitable finger foods for babies following a baby led weaning approach. What is your setting's approach to complementary feeding in babies under 12 months old?

Breastfeeding

Include a statement around how you enable and welcome breastfeeding in your setting.

Is there somewhere comfortable breastfeeding mothers can go to breastfeed in your setting?

Communication and dissemination plan

How will your policy be communicated to staff, children and their families? E.g. website, newsletters, agenda item at staff meetings, new staff induction

Evaluation & Review

How do you evaluate and review what you are doing within your setting around food and drink? Consider how and how often you do the following:

- Review your food provision and curriculum activities
- Gather feedback from staff, parents / carers and children to inform food / drink provision and curriculum activities
- Review staff development on food safety, hygiene and healthy eating
- Review your Healthy Eating / Nutrition Policy

Name of Setting: _____

Name and Signature of Manager: _____

Date: _____