

i. Feeding & Baby Led Weaning Policy**Our Aims:**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure consistency amongst all Nursery Village staff and specifically the baby room team. All Nursery Village staff should work to ensure that this policy is implemented within setting and in their everyday practice.

Nursery Village is committed to providing a high standard of care to babies in our settings, including:

- Working collaboratively with parents, midwives, health visitors and any other organisations providing support for parents and young babies.
- Ensuring babies individual needs are met regarding feeding and best practice.

Policy

- All Nursery Village staff are familiarised with this policy on commencement of employment.
- All staff receive training on how to implement standards as appropriate to their role.
- All materials and resources used in feeding reflect our procedures and standards.
- Parental engagement in both planning and evaluation around feeding is encouraged to ensure the child's needs are fully met.

Procedures

Nursery Village will endeavour to make meal times a fun and social event between the baby room staff and the babies as a peer group.

Our policies and procedures are designed to ensure babies have a pleasant experience with feeding or weaning and staff can use this time as a social bonding experience, led by each child's key worker.

An All About Me Form and child baseline should be completed by the parent during their settling in period and saved to Family under the child's notes, which the key worker and room staff must all have read thoroughly.

- Children will sit together around the tables in the baby room with our special baby high-low chairs.
- While waiting for food to be served, staff will create a circle time event which can include reading a story or signing rhymes and songs together.
- If a child is asleep during communal feeding, their meal will be put aside and they will then be offered food, accompanied by staff for company on waking.
- Every effort to support the child with feeding will be made, to make meal times a positive experience such as finger food or blending if required
- Should a child become upset or refuse attempts at offering food, staff will follow the child's wishes and no further attempts will be made. Alternatives will be offered such as a bottle or porridge.
- Parents will be informed via Family of a child's meals, food or milk intake that day.

- With the exception of expressed breast milk or formula, in line with our [Health & Safety Policy](#) we cannot allow food not provided by Nursery Village to be brought in by parents, unless under special circumstances, pre-planned and arranged with a member of our team.
- Catchy bibs will be worn by all children to support independent feeding and individual face cloths are used after eating for hands and face.
- All sippy cup lids, locking rings, teats and bottles are cleaned and sterilised overnight before use.
- Each child has their own sippy cup for the duration of their session, clearly labelled with their picture and name attached. Bottles will also be labelled and any bottles brought from home are required to be labelled when brought in for use in session.

Baby Led Weaning

Working in partnership with parents and depending on the child's individual needs and abilities, we can begin to introduce solids into a baby's diet when the child is between the ages of 4 and 6 months, supporting and advising parents on the introduction of solid foods and following government guidelines.

We embrace parents wishes when using the "child led weaning" approach and continue this while their child is with us, working alongside parents who must keep us up to date and informed of any changes. Most babies, by the age of 6 months are ready to start with solid food to add bulk to their diet, as they need more iron and nutrients than milk alone can provide.

We may suggest to parents if we feel their child is not satisfied with just milk and encourage introducing a varied diet, following government health guidelines and taking advice from the baby's health visitor. We will then start and offer pureed fruit or vegetables, introducing different food to try along with our nursery menu so every child gets to try something new.

All food is prepared on a 3 week rolling menu and then served by us on the premises. The menu is low in sugar and salt, following the governments healthy eating guidelines. A copy of the menu is always available on request.

We recognise that all children are individuals, some start introducing solid food earlier, others later, some are choosy, others like everything and anything. Solid food is offered at snack time, lunchtime and tea.

Babies will take part in these meal times in a social environment surrounded by their peers at the table in high-low chairs and will also be offered milk or water from a beaker, cup or bottle depending on their ability.

6 – 9 Months

During this age, we will begin to introduce the majority of new food such as pasta, bread, fish etc.

Our aim is that by the time the child is 6 months they will be eating food from the general nursery menu and can experience a wider variety of tastes and textures. Initially using a hand held blender to puree food, then slightly blending, mashing by hand.

Finger foods will be introduced, to promote chewing, such as cucumber sticks, bread, carrot sticks, pitta bread and pieces of fruit.

It is vitally important to develop this action, as chewing helps develop jaw muscles. These are then used to help pronunciation and the formation of sounds and words. Once children can manage finger foods, we will reduce the type of pureed food offered at meal times.

9 – 12 Months

Babies from 9 to 12 months are given one or two spoons to help assist in self-help skills as they try to feed themselves.

The baby is now usually ready to sit at the table, so it becomes more of a social occasion for everyone. By 12 months we are trying to discourage bottles and start to solely use a beaker cup. We find by that time many children are ready to begin or have already weaned themselves off the bottle.

We also encourage children to have full fat cow's milk (or an alternative if the child cannot have cow's milk) as their main drink, after their first birthday. We work very closely with parents and children will move on to the complete nursery menu as and when they are ready.

Children will have a fruit based snack in the morning for example melon or banana pieces with yogurt, a savoury meal with a drink of water at lunchtime, then offered milk or water in the afternoon with tea which will have a number of finger foods to try, usually a small sandwich, quiche or veggie roll for example, usually provided with veggie sticks or cheese.

Responsive Feeding

The term responsive feeding is used to describe a feeding relationship which is sensitive, attentive and about more than simply providing food for a baby. Staff should ensure that mothers with children attending our setting have an opportunity to discuss feeding and behaviour cues.

If we are bottle feeding our babies, we will ensure we are careful not to over-feed the baby by being responsive and interactive during this time and recognising feeding cues, holding the baby close and pacing the feed so that the baby does not take more milk than they need.

Breastfeeding

Mothers are welcome to breastfeed in all areas of the nursery setting and staff will endeavour to make sure this can be a comfortable experience for mum and baby.

The nursery can help Breastfeeding mothers find local services provided to support continued breastfeeding such as services, groups or peer support.

Breastfeeding is valued by staff within the setting, and mothers are of course encouraged to provide breastmilk for their child's session.