# Physical Activity and Nutrition
# Setting Statement

In our Setting we aim to support the healthy growth and development of the children. We do this by promoting physical activity, healthy eating and generally good healthy habitats. Our PANCO (Physical Activity and Nutrition Co-ordinator) is **Kath Cullen**. She is responsible for promoting positive nutrition and physical activity within the setting and managing change within Pippins that encourages a healthy lifestyle. We also aim for all our Early Years Practitioners to understand the importance of physical activity for young children under 5 years and promote and facilitate play opportunities by providing stimulating and enabling environments for structured and unstructured physical activity and movement experiences.

**How do we promote Physical Activity?**

At Pippins we recognise that physical development is a prime area for children and promote regular physical activity for optimal growth and development in the under 5's, which is valuable in developing motor skills, promoting healthy weight, enhancing bone and muscle development and for the learning of social skills. We aim for all young children at Pippins to be encouraged to be active to a level appropriate for their ability, aiming for the government desired target of at least 180 minutes (3 hours), spread throughout the day, and also minimise their time spent sedentary for extended periods.

To facilitate this within our setting we have a range of toys and equipment that the children have free access to encourage physical activity. Access to the garden is free flow and the children are encouraged to run and move in a variety of ways. The outside resources such as the climbing apparatus, open ended construction resources, areas to balance on, skipping ropes, hoops, bats and balls etc... these allow children to move freely and with pleasure and confidence in a range of ways such as crawling, walking, running, jumping, skipping, sliding, hopping, balancing and climbing. All help to build gross motor skills but also promote large scale movements that help to keep the children healthy. We also run group times based around music and movement, including songs with fun actions. This provides the children whose preference may not be out in the garden ways to explore how their body works and to become physically active. We provide the children with positive role models both with the staffs attitude towards physical activity but also providing inspirational stories and images. We also aim to introduce children to different types of physical activity, including arranging visitors to give the children demonstrations. We also have regular Forest School sessions that encourage physical activity in a natural environment. We will ensure that access to physical activity is inclusive to all the children in our setting and we will make adaptations or source new equipment if it is necessary to achieve this.

**How do we promote Healthy Eating?**

At Pippins we understand how vital good nutrition is for a child's physical and mental development and that developing good eating habits at an early age can affect a person's attitude to their food throughout their life. We recognise the countless benefits to children eating healthily including:

- Providing energy
- Brain development
- Healthy growth
- Effects emotions and behaviours

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- Helps maintain a healthy weight
- Confidence in trying new foods
- Encourages healthy choices during snack and meal times

Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating, an awareness of nutrition and the development of independence skills. At Pippins we provide the children with a nutritious snack that caters for all dietary requirements within our current cohort of children. We have a varied two week menu produced each term for snacks that ensure that children are introduced to new food experiences. Each snack is a combination of food from all the appropriate food groups and is nutritionally a 'mini meal'. We run a rolling snack system in the morning session with one member of staff, enabling children to come as and when (within a given time frame), preventing the disturbance of their play and they are encouraged to socialise with other children. The designated person on snack encourages conversation about the food the children are eating, for example if they like the food, where the food comes from, how it is grown, or describing textures and an introduction to early maths.

Children are encouraged, but not pressured, to try new foods and at lunchtime desserts will not be withheld from a child who has not eaten their main course. We listen to the children's preferences and see how we can incorporate and develop these. Children have easy access to water to drink at all times and are actively encouraged to drink at lunch and snack times and more frequently during hot weather. Milk is provided as an alternative drink at snack times. Children may drink water from a drinks bottle provided from home. Squash and juice from home however can only be drunk at lunch time due to the damage frequent sipping of sugary drinks causes to oral health. Staff act as role models eating their healthy lunches with the children and talking in a positive manner about healthy foods. We aim to create an enjoyable and social dining experience for the children. We ensure that we sit being able to see all children so we can see any choking or anaphylaxis reactions. The preschool is committed to ensuring that food provided reflects the ethical and medical requirements of the children e.g. religious, ethnic, vegetarian, medical, and allergenic needs. We do lots of craft activities which enables us to talk to the children about healthy eating and develop their own understanding of what it means to be healthy, we also use real food in our role play area to allow the children to become familiar with a variety of foods. Good nutrition is further supported by our cooking activities we do with the children which range from flapjacks to fruit kebabs or homemade guacamole. We also plant, grow and harvest food with the children, helping them understand where their food comes from. Pippins aim is to make eating together a time to socialise, learn about healthy eating and develop social skills and provide a family style eating environment. Children are encouraged to: develop pouring and cutting skills, serve food, and develop the confidence to explore new tastes.

We provide parents with a healthy lunch box information sheet in the information pack to help support families with providing healthy lunches for their child with more fruit and vegetables and less sugar, salt and fat. We can also refer parents onto the local Children's Centre (Shefford) where they can give out advice on healthy eating. Additional healthy lunch box ideas and portion size guidance is available in the setting to ensure children are well nourished. Any food not eaten from a child's lunch is returned to their lunchbox so that parents are aware of what their child has eaten.

**How do we promote good oral health habitats?**

We provide parents with a 'Pippins Oral Health Tips' information sheet in the new starter pack to help support families with this topic. This is also available for them to access any time on Baby's Days. We also have a display on the parent information board letting parents know how to keep their children's, and their own, teeth healthy. We help the children learn about good oral health through our continuous provision by having age appropriate books on the subject available at all times and making tooth brushing part of our home role play area.

We also have dental role play resources and make oral health part of our planning in events like National Smile Month and Healthy Me Fortnight.

The snacks we provide at Pippins are 'tooth friendly' foods, and milk and water are the only drinks offered as these are the only tooth friendly drinks.

Regarding celebrations we recognise that a birthday is a very special time for young children and we want to ensure it is celebrated in an enjoyable, healthy and tooth friendly way. Parents

do not have to bring in anything to share with the setting as we ensure that children are made to feel special on their birthday.

We do this by:

- singing ‘Happy Birthday’ to the birthday child (whilst they hold the toy birthday cake)
- Giving them a birthday card
- Displaying a photo of them on the birthday wall

We ask parents/carers not to bring in any cake or unhealthy treats to celebrate birthdays. Healthy, tooth friendly treats are welcome, such as fresh fruit that the children do not often have, for example strawberries, blueberries or kiwi fruit. Non-food items are also permitted, for example temporary tattoos, stickers or small stationery items. Any cake or unhealthy treats that are brought in will be sent home where parents can choose to give this to their child. We would encourage this to be as part of a meal.

For any celebrations where we provide food or food based activities in between meals, such as when celebrating Christmas, Pancake Day, Easter, Eid, Chinese New Year etc. we will ensure that the food and drink will be tooth friendly i.e. fresh fruit/vegetables and savoury items, with milk or water to drink. At occasional events such as picnics, fun days, fundraisers and fairs we will offer a range of food, drink, activities and prizes that support healthy, tooth friendly choices.

**How do we promote good healthy habitats?**

At Pre-School we have a daily routine which helps the children understand when they need to eat in order to maintain high energy levels. Water is also on offer throughout the session to help keep the children hydrated which they can access themselves. We also provide milk at snack time to promote healthy bones. Healthy practices such as hand washing, blowing noses, and covering mouths when coughing are discussed and monitored on a daily basis.

We provide parents with information on healthy lifestyles such as additional help with fussy eaters when needed, oral health information and support with healthy sleep routines. This support is continually adapted and reviewed depending on individual families' circumstances.

We do various activities that cross over to the children’s home, these have included a Pippins 'take home teddy bear' called 'Healthy Ted' who goes home with the children to their family home and encourages them to tell the group about what healthy activities they have been doing together. This could be cooking, eating with their family, or playing at the park and trying different sports. We have also set ‘Healthy Challenge’ to encourage families to share their experiences of a healthy lifestyle at home with the setting, these change themes regularly to keep the children interested, for example they sometimes have a Superhero theme. They are a great way to encourage families to be fit and healthy and have fun! Parents are encouraged to take a picture of their child completing a healthy activity and then upload it to Baby Days and we'll print it off and put it on display in the setting to celebrate the children's achievements.

We hold annual events that focus on a healthy theme, including Healthy Me Fortnight (where there is daily planning on a variety of topics for example; optician and dentist role play, vegetable planting, trips to the park and sports sessions), bike and scooter week and walk to school week.

Within our planning we have a doctor’s box which allows the children to role play about being healthy and develop their understanding. This is further complemented by resources such as 'Going to the Dentist' planning, board games and other activities and resources that inform the children on how to keep their body healthy. We also aim to arrange visits from professionals who can tell the children about staying healthy.

**National Initiatives & Guidelines**

To promote healthy eating, nutrition and physical activity, we use guidance from national and local initiatives including Change4Life, Start 4Life, HENRY and The Oral Health Foundation. Click on the links below for more information:

NHS Change for Life - tips and advice on healthy eating and staying active

NHS Start for Life - Advice on pregnancy, birth and early childhood

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HENRY - Advice on healthy eating
The Oral Health Foundation
National Smile Month - Oral Health Advice
Community Dental Services
National Physical Activity Guidelines
FamilyLine - A free support line for families.

**This policy was adopted on:.....**

**Signed on behalf of the setting……..**

**Date of next review:.....**