



## Healthy Tooth-Friendly Snack Policy Explained

The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (Department for education, 2021), which we have a legal responsibility to follow, states that: 'The provider must promote the **good health, including the oral health**, of children attending the setting.'

The safeguarding and welfare requirements state that we must ensure that the children's snacks and drinks are healthy, balanced and nutritious.

This means having a healthy eating policy (which can be viewed on our website or on the parent/carer's table in nursery).

Part of being healthy is ensuring the good health of our teeth. Tooth decay can cause **pain, infection and even affect children's growth**. Severe decay in baby teeth can have serious consequences for your child's speech and jaw development. A survey of five-year-old children in the UK (2012) found that more than one in four had some degree of tooth decay.

We can help to avoid tooth decay by choosing tooth friendly snacks and drinks:

-Typical snacks such as cereal bars, biscuits and sweets are high in the added sugars, which are bad for teeth. Teeth are naturally prepared to deal with the sugars in food three times a day, but extra pressure from sugary foods in-between meals can be too much and cavities are often the result.

-Although they are often touted as a healthy snack, dried fruits are best **avoided between meals** as these stick to the teeth and the concentrated sugars can encourage decay. When fruits are dried it changes the cells and makes the sugar more available, which is bad news for our teeth!

At Little Oaks we therefore ask that you only provide a **morning or afternoon snack containing fresh fruit or vegetables**. Please see our separate **Lunch Time Guidance for suggested healthy choices for lunch time**.

We hope that this helps to explain the reasons for our snack time requirements. If you have any questions at all regarding our healthy eating policy and/or list of snack time foods, please don't hesitate to chat to us about it.

If you are interested in reading more about healthy eating there are leaflets available on the snack table and books to borrow from the parent/carers library. Thank you for your understanding.



It is also important to help young children to brush their teeth with a fluoride toothpaste twice a day, spending at least two minutes each time.

More information about looking after your child's teeth can be found at:

<http://www.nhs.uk/livewell/dentalhealth/pages/careofkidsteeth.aspx>