

Weaning Policy

We will begin to introduce solids into baby's diet when the child is between the ages of 4 and 6 months, working closely with parents paying close attention to and regarding their wishes, supporting and advising parents in 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. We work 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 and add 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 baby is not satisfied with just milk and encourage introducing a varied diet, following government health guidelines – health education authority, taking advice from what the baby's health visitor has suggested and ideas from weaning leaflets.

Starting Weaning Food is normally bland to start with, usually baby rice mixed with breast or formula milk – introduced in very small 'taster' amounts, using sterilised utensils. Milk is still their main source of nutrition. We will then start and offer pureed vegetables/fruit, introducing different food every couple of weeks in the beginning.

Cooked vegetables/fruits include : Carrots, Sprouts, Avocados, Pumpkins, potatoes, Sweet Potatoes, Bananas, Swede, Green Beans, Cooked Apples, Cauliflower, Broccoli, Pears, Butternut Squash, Parsnips Peaches etc

Cooked vegetables include:		Fruits include:
Carrots	Sprouts	Avocado
Pumpkin	Sweet Potato	Bananas
Swede	Green Beans	Cooked Apples
Cauliflower	Broccoli	Pears
Butternut Squash	Parsnips	Peaches

Once fruit and vegetable have been established in the diet, full fat cow's milk products can be introduced e.g yoghurt, custard, cheese sauce. Alongside fruit we will offer rice pudding and semolina.

All food is prepared on the premises and is low in sugar and salt.

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 lunchtime, with children relaxed on a knee, or in a cradle chair eventually moving into a chair which is around the table with their peers. Cooled boiled water is given in sterilised beaker cup/bottle.

The sterilization of all equipment used to feed babies less than one year is vital to their health. Little Miracles manages and implements this practice.

We aim to work with parents offering similar foods, portions and time of day to establish weaning. Gradually offering a variety of food and introducing a pattern/routine of three meals a day (two with us here – if full day) with a drink at each mealtime then eventually having additional snacks, offering a wide variety of foods. As baby eats more solid food, his or her milk intake will start to decrease.

6 – 9 Months - We will introduce the majority of new food such as pasta, bread, fish etc. Our aim is by the time the child is 6 months the baby will be eating food from the general nursery menu and can experience even more tastes. We will then make the food a little more textured/lumpier which helps learning to chew. Initially using a handheld blender to puree food, then slightly blending, mashing by hand. Finger foods will be offered, to promote chewing, such as toast, bread, breadsticks, pitta bread, pieces of banana etc. 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 tea time.

9 – 12 Months - Babies 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 that 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' wishes and children will move on to the complete nursery menu as and when they are ready. Children have a savoury meal and pudding with a drink at lunchtime. They will then have milk in the afternoon. For tea they will have finger food/a savoury meal, followed by fresh fruit. A healthy snack in the evening is provided, so the children can have their main meal/tea or supper with their family. We follow the weaning guidance from the Department of Health.

This policy was adopted on:	This policy was adopted by:	Policy Review Date:
01.02.2023	Shyamalie Ranasinghe	01.02.2024