

General Welfare Requirement: Safeguarding and Promoting Children's Welfare

The provider must promote the good health of the children, take necessary steps to prevent the spread of infection, and take appropriate action when they are ill.

Promoting health and hygiene

1.21.1 Physical Active and Nutrition Coordinator (PANCo)

Policy statement for St Joseph's Pre-school

Whilst individuals across the Early Years sector always strive to do what is best for the children in their care, the scale of the health crisis being witnessed on a daily basis has become overwhelming. There is a need for a coordinated programme that offers a holistic approach to instilling life-long healthy behaviours in children and their families.

Sustainable change relies on a clear vision and strong leadership. St Joseph's Pre-school acknowledges that through the role of the PANCo it is possible for the setting to develop target driven initiatives that support the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework.

"Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food."

It also sends a clear signal of St Joseph's Pre-school's commitment to lifelong wellbeing. The role being based on combining together practical training, pedagogical theory and evidence-based innovation, meaning that it can make a significant contribution to Ofsted's standards. This means that the Pre-school is not just offering childcare, but also helping to build sustainable behaviours and initiatives that encourage active participation (pre-schoolers and adults). Through their efforts, PANCos play a vital part in shaping a healthier future for children and families.

Physical Activity and Nutrition Coordinator (PANCo)

The (PANCo) is responsible for health and wellbeing, and championing the importance of healthy eating and physical activity. They promote and lead positive change to create an environment that prevents obesity and supports the healthy development of children.

Within St Joseph's Pre-school we have two members of staff who will work together to undertake the PANCo role within the setting.

- Natalie Finn-Powers, Lead Practitioner: Natalie has a Nutrition Qualification¹; and:
- Marie Knight, Practitioner: Marie has a Wellbeing Qualification².

Both members of staff have completed the NDNA's Free [Get up to Speed](#) course.

By integrating physical activity, good nutrition, and positive health habits into daily routines, the PANCo helps to lay the foundation for lifelong healthy behaviours. This not only supports children's physical, cognitive, and emotional development but also encourages family and community involvement, creating a lasting impact on both individual and collective health outcomes.

¹ TQUK Level 2 Certificate in Understanding Nutrition and Health

² Mental Health Awareness for Leaders

Food and exercise

According to the [National Day Nurseries Association website](#) (NDNA), “Only 20% of five year olds are meeting the 180 minutes of physical activity guidelines and just 1 in 5 children eat five portions of fruit and vegetables a day”. In order for children to grow and develop in all areas, a healthy and balance diet as well as a good level of physical activity, is essential.

Full time jobs and busy family lives can make finding the time and energy to cook nutritionally positive meals impossible. Through the work of the setting’s PANCo we will endeavour to foster collaboration, share skills and educate staff both directly and indirectly about the value of healthy eating and regular exercise. They will also encourage children to make choices which will set up life-long healthy habits and have a lasting impact on their attitudes and behaviour. Positive habits formed in childhood can prevent future health issues such as obesity, heart disease, and diabetes

Healthy and balanced diet

A healthy diet contributes to children’s overall wellbeing, and without this, children may have decreased energy and poor sleep quality. Poor nutrition may cause dental and oral problems, and a diet high in sugar can cause tooth decay. Moreover, a healthy diet contributes to better concentration and memory.

To assist parents/carers in this respect please refer to the Pre-school’s Food and Drink – Healthy Eating policy³. This policy assists parents/carers in providing advice on suitable on snacks and packed lunches for their child.

In addition, St Joseph’s Pre-school has established an on-site vegetable garden, where we encourage children to plant seeds, nurture them and then eat the produce, eg. herbs (to use within our potions kitchen).

Physical activity

Physical development impacts all areas of a child’s life. Physical activity is essential for children’s growth, helping to develop their motor skills, coordination, strength, and overall physical health. It also supports cognitive development, boosts brain function, and helps regulate emotions, which can improve mental well-being. Regular physical activity has been shown to enhance children’s focus, attention, and cognitive abilities as well as building their core strength and encouraging them to continue engaging in exercise. These benefits can translate into better outcomes in learning and social interactions in the early years. It also supports their social development by allowing them to play with friends.

On wet weather days the children participate in a daily inside physical activity. This can be: Mini Disco (dance routines); Cosmic Kids (yoga); circle games. When the weather becomes better or on dry days we access the school field where we may do the ‘Daily Mile’, log trail or games. During each daily session the children have the opportunity to be active within the garden environment. We have a range of physical opportunities including the balance beam, climbing frame and ball games.

Further guidance

- [National Day Nurseries Association](#) (NDNA)
- [Early Years Foundation Stage](#) (EYFS) statutory framework (latest version)
- www.panco.org.uk Cambridge Childhood Partnership

³ See 1.21 Food and Drink – Health Eating Policy (available via www.st-josephs-nympsfield.com website)

Associated policies and procedures

- 1.21 Food and Drink – Healthy Eating

Version Number	Author	Purpose of Change	Date
1.0	K Coupe and N Finn-Powers	New policy as recommended by Lead Practitioner to comply with EYFS requirements and to reflect current practice at the setting	05 May 2025 Committee Member (B Wheeler)