**ELIJAH SOCIAL COGNITIVE SKILLS CENTRE**
**Dr Debora Elijah PhD MA DEA BSc (Hons)**

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| **Food Policy** | |
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| **Responsible Committee:** | CEO of ESCSC<br>Dr Debora Elijah |
| **Policy Co-ordinator:** | Director of ESCSC<br>Nivin Jaber |
| **Date revised:** | September 2024 |
| **Next review date:** | September 2025 |

## General Information

The Elijah Social Cognitive Skills (ESCSC) believes that nutritious food and drink are essential for children's well-being. We teach and encourage children to gain an understanding of the importance of food and water and its benefits for growth and well-being.

## Snack/Lunch Food in ESCSC

Snack time forms an integral part of any child's PROSCIG© intervention programme as the sharing of snacks and refreshments can play an important part in developing the social skills of children in the Elijah Social Cognitive Skills Centre. Participation in a healthy snack time also reinforces children's understanding of the importance of healthy eating.

Any food brought into ESCSC must be **nut-free**. This is to be mindful of intolerances/allergies.

Parents/carers must provide their children with a bottle of drinking water to use while they are at ESCSC. We will provide fresh refills if needed.

### *Guidance for food/snack*

We ask that children's snacks and lunches include:

- At least one portion of fruit (and one portion of vegetables if lunch is also brought) each day
- Starch food such as any type of bread (white or wholegrain rolls, pitta bread or wraps) pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes, or another cereal every day
- Lunches must also include a protein such as meat, fish, or eggs.

We recommend that snacks and lunches **should not** include:

- Salty snacks such as crisps - instead include seeds, vegetables and fruit
- Confectionery such as chocolate bars, chocolate-coated biscuits, sweets.
- Fizzy drinks.

We understand that children have dietary and sensory needs. We therefore recommend the above guidelines, however, please make the ESCSC aware of any needs, allergies, and exceptions for your child.

**Parents/carers must share with us information about their child/ren's medical and personal dietary requirements including any dietary changes so these can be registered,**

As fridge space is not available parents/carers are advised to pack snacks and lunches in insulated bags with freezer blocks where possible.

Should lunches and snacks provided by parents/carers consistently fail to meet the expected standards mentioned above, a meeting will be called with ESCSC and parents/carers, and any challenges and additional necessary provisions discussed.

**Celebrations**

Any birthday cakes or food that is provided by parents/carers for a celebration at the ESCSC must be shop-bought and remain in the packaging to enable the allergen information to be available. Parents/carers who are happy for their child to receive treats such as cakes as part of birthday or other celebrations will need to provide written consent for this, sent during the registration at ESCSC and available from the director, Nivin Jaber. Staff will not serve the cake to any child whose parents/carers have not provided written consent but will wrap the cake and send it home; it will be the parent/carers' choice whether to allow their child to eat this.

At the Elijah Centre, we require written consent via email at pa@elijahsocialskills.co.uk from parents or guardians for their child to participate in birthday celebrations involving food or cake. To ensure the safety and inclusivity of all children, any food provided must be nut-free, gluten-free, and vegan. This policy helps us prevent allergic reactions and cater to dietary needs.

**Breastfeeding/Bottle feeding**

The Elijah Social Cognitive Skills Centre is a feeding-friendly site, and private space will be offered to the parents to enable them to breastfeed their child or express milk on-site.

If a child needs milk feeds whilst at ESCSC, we ask that parents/carers provide for this. They can bring in expressed breast milk in a sterilised bottle, or pre-prepared carton milk in a sterilised bottle. Alternatively, parents/carers are allowed to supply the correct amount of milk powder in a separate labelled container for a staff member to add boiled water to. We ask that parents to bring the correct number of bottles their child will require during each day.

The made bottles, once brought to ESCSC will be stored in the fridge, so parents must label all the bottles they bring with their child's name.

Times of bottle feeds will be recorded on a child's daily record sheet along with the amount of milk they have drunk during each bottle feed. Empty bottles will be rinsed and sent home.

In line with our **Key person and Intimate Care Policy**, we try our utmost to ensure that the key person or secondary key person completes the bottle feeds for the children to promote intimate care for the children.

**Review and Amendments**

This policy will be reviewed yearly to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. Amendments to the policy may be made as necessary and all staff should be made aware of the new changes.