



WEANING POLICY

As a nursery, we aim to make the weaning transition as smooth as possible for both the parents and the children by ensuring that we work together to discuss dietary requirements, how parents would like to wean their baby/ies and in what style.

The introduction to food is a gradual process from weaning from breast milk or formula to smooth foods and then gradually building this up. As a setting, we will follow parents in where they are at with weaning. We will support and advise parents with the introduction to solid foods whilst following guidelines from the government and NHS. We will help babies become familiar with a variety of different textures and tastes and ensure that the foods are at a consistency for each individual baby when they start to wean.

We visibly display the lunch and snack menus throughout the nursery and accommodate parents in regard to the progression of weaning or ensuring that there are alternatives to foods that cannot be consumed by any child due to dietary requirements or level of weaning.

When should babies start weaning?

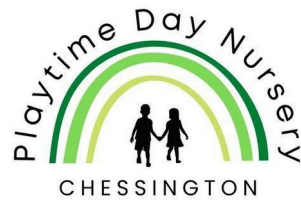
The initial process of weaning can start from around 6 months old and can take up to several months before the baby is fully weaned – waiting till 6 months allows the baby to develop to be able to cope with solid foods. Signs that a baby is ready to start weaning. They'll be able to:

- stay in a sitting position and hold their head steady
- co-ordinate their eyes, hands and mouth so they can look at the food, pick it up and put it in their mouth by themselves
- swallow food (rather than spit it back out)

The following behaviours can be mistaken by parents as signs that their baby's ready for solid foods:

- chewing their fists
- waking up in the night (more than usual)
- wanting extra milk feeds

How should you start to wean onto solid foods?



When first starting to wean your baby, you do not need to worry about the amount of food that they are eating. When the child is first weaned it is about introducing them to different flavours and textures. When you decide that it is time to start weaning, you should introduce smooth foods for them to try and gradually, after a couple weeks/months build up to lumpier foods. As you do this the texture changes from smooth purees to mashed, then to lumpy and last of all solids. As you start weaning, the milk feeds may decrease, and they may have less milk at their milk feed times.

Ages and Stages of weaning

STAGE 1 – Weaning at 6 months (First foods) – This should start with a teaspoon or 2 to ease them in and then gradually building it up to more.

- Start off with fruits and vegetables (Use a variety in order for the baby to get used to a range of flavours and baby rice)
- Can start offering food containing allergens such as: Peanuts, eggs, gluten and fish.
- Cow's milk can be used in cooking or mixed into foods such as porridge but babies should not drink it until they are 1 year old.
- Full fat dairy products can now be used from the age of 6 months

STAGE 2 – Baby is 7-9 months

- Increase food quantity according to child's appetite (Baby should be having ½ a cup of soft food 2 to 3 times a day)
- As solids increase, milk will decrease (On average a baby will still need approximately 600ml of formula)
- Offer water at meal times
- Encourage finger foods/self-feeding

STAGE 3 – Baby is 10-12 months

- Baby should be having 3 meals a day now (Breakfast, lunch and tea – ½ a cup each meal time with a snack in between)
- Change bottles to beakers
- Reduce milk to one feed per day (Approximately 400ml per day)

STAGE 4 – Baby is 12 months +

- A minimum of 4 servings a day of starchy foods such as bread, rice and potatoes
- A minimum of 4 servings a day of fruit and vegetables
- A minimum of 1 serving a day of protein from animal sources such as meat, fish and eggs.
- A minimum of 350ml milk or 2 servings of dairy products (or alternatives)



- Maybe 2 snacks in between meals such as vegetables, fruits, toast/pitta, yogurt, cheese etc.
- Once Child is 12 months' formula is not needed and child can drink cow's milk.

BABY-LED WEANING

Baby-led weaning means only giving your baby finger foods and letting them feed themselves from the start. This allows the baby to be introduced to a wide variety of textures and foods from the very beginning of weaning.

Sometimes a mixed weaning approach is a gentler transition into food, by offering foods from a spoon as well as baby-led.

What babies are not allowed to eat when weaning?

Babies under 1 are not allowed to have:

- Honey
- Pate
- Shellfish
- Raw/undercooked eggs
- Nuts/seeds
- Soft cheeses

Information from:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/solid-foods-weaning/>

<https://www.cgbabyclub.co.uk/baby/feeding/weaning/my-babys-weaning-stage-3-10-plus-months.html>

<https://www.nhs.uk/start4life/weaning/safe-weaning/>