



Little VIPs at Lowther Endowed School Weaning Policy

At Little VIPs Day Care we follow NHS advice on safe practice for weaning and will work with parents when the time is right to introduce solids alongside babies' milk feeds.

We will plan and communicate with parents before the baby starts at the setting, in how we can support their baby's weaning process as we understand that this can be an anxious time for parents.

The staff at Little VIPs will be here to support all Parents/Carers and babies on their weaning journey.

When is the right time?

Weaning, also known as introducing a baby to solid foods, starts when a baby is around 6 months old. It is very common for babies to experience a growth spurt at around 4 months old which can make them temporarily appear hungrier, but although a baby might seem ready, alongside NHS guidance, we do not advise giving a baby any solids before 6 months.

Whilst introducing babies to solid foods, we will continue to offer breast milk or first infant formula as this is their main source of energy and nutrition. Each baby is different and we will work with parents to establish a mealtime and feeding routine which suits their needs.

We support weaning from 6 months old (but not before) as at this point a baby's digestive system will be sufficiently developed to be able to cope with solid foods and a baby may be more willing to explore the foods and feed themselves.

At this age babies will also be more able to move the food around their mouths, chewing and swallowing. If a baby is not able to do this then there is an increased risk of choking.

We recognise three clear signs which, together, show that a baby is ready for solid foods alongside breast milk or formula.

- They can stay in a sitting position and hold their head steady
- They can coordinate their eyes, hands and mouth so that they can look at the food, pick it up and put it in their mouth, all by themselves
- They can swallow food rather than spitting it out

Little VIPs understands and encourages parents to follow their desired method of weaning whether that is 'Baby Led Weaning' which involves no pureed foods and letting them explore all foods at their pace, or choosing to begin with pureed food and progressing to whole foods at baby's pace.

Allergies and Intolerances

Sometimes whilst a baby is weaning, an allergy or intolerance to certain food(s) may arise. If we suspect a baby is allergic to a certain food, we will advise parents immediately, make a note of any symptoms and keep a daily food diary for parents to be able to liaise with their local GP. The food suspected of triggering an allergic reaction or an intolerance will not be offered to the baby again until medical advice has been sought and provided.

Food at Little VIPs for under 1's

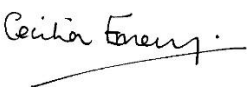
Little VIPs provides fresh food prepared and cooked in our school kitchen for babies and children from age 1 upwards. The preparation of the food will be appropriate to the development stage of the baby or child. Parents should order and pay for meals in advance using the school system. For babies under the age of 1 year, staff will heat and serve food provided by parents.

Advice and Guidance

NHS Start for Life guidance on weaning can be found at:

<https://www.nhs.uk/start-for-life/baby/weaning/>

National Day Nursery Association has provided a guidance leaflet for parents which can be found with this policy on our website.

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
1 st August 2024		1 st August 2025