LITTLE CRICKETS AT PARK SCHOOL –WEANING POLICY

The nursery staff will follow the parents lead when weaning the child, however will offer their expertise. Babies at Little Crickets at Park School will not be able to try solid foods until around the age of 6 months, unless advice is given to do so from a professional. Children must be showing signs of readiness for staff to facilitate this. The NHS guidelines suggest these signs of readiness are as follows:

- They will be able to stay in a sitting position and hold their head steady;
- They will be able to coordinate their eyes, hands and mouth so they can look at the food, pick it up and put it in their mouth by themselves; and
- They will be able to swallow food, rather than spit it back out.

1. WEANING PROCESS

1.1 Staff will work in partnership with the parent's approach to weaning e.g. baby led/purees.

1.2 Parents **must** keep the nursery up to date on any changes to their child's weaning journey and any changes to dietary needs or known allergies.

1.3 Staff will work with parents to establish a feeding routine and portion sizes.

1.4 Main meals (lunch/tea) will be prepared by our onsite chef in accordance to the weaning approach. They will be low in sugar/salt.

1.5 Meals outside of these times will be prepared by nursery staff, they will use parent provided breast/formula milk where necessary.

1.6 Milk is still a baby's main source of nutrition up until the age of one.

1.7 When eating, the children will be sat in highchairs for our smaller babies, and at a small table and chairs for the older babies. Appropriate safety straps will be correctly fastened.

1.8 All equipment used to feed babies younger than one years old will be sterilised and cooled boiled water will be offered to babies for drinking with meals and throughout the day.

1.9 Staff will be sat with the children at all times when eating and are paediatric first aid trained should a choking incident arise.

2. PUREE APPROACH

2.1 Food such as baby rice and porridge will be one of the first foods given. This will be made using the child's usual milk (breast/formula).

2.2 The staff will then offer the child pureed fruits and vegetables to establish first tastes.

2.3 When fruits and vegetables have been established staff will gradually introduce other products such as yoghurts, custard and rice pudding.

2.4 Children will then be offered a wider variety of pureed foods, following the nursery weekly menu.

2.5 The texture of foods offered will gradually increase to help the babies learn to chew e.g. pureed, blended, mashed, small lumps, chopped.

2.6 Babies are given baby safe cutlery to encourage independence with feeding as they develop.

3. BABY LED WEANING

3.1 Children that are weaned using the baby led weaning approach will be encouraged to feed themselves.

3.2 Staff will ensure all food is prepared and cut to finger-sized pieces.

3.3 First tastes such as fruits and vegetables will be established first before gradually adding in other

products to the baby's diet.

3.4 The children will be given whole meals (cut in accordance to baby led weaning) when the staff and parents agree too. They will be given baby safe cutlery to feed themselves.