

# How to help children become adventurous eaters

At Little Pioneers nurseries, we believe that children should try as many diverse foods as possible in order to grow big and strong. So we encourage them to become adventurous eaters by actively engaging with food throughout its entire lifecycle.

Whether it's growing their own fruit and veg in our nursery garden, getting them to help out with food prep at meal times or seeing the excitement on their faces as they try a new food (that they grew from seed!) for the first time, we find that getting children involved in their meal times as much as possible helps make eating a wide range of fruit and veg fun and exciting.

## What you can do at home to help

Our chef at Rose Hill Nursery (and new chef trainer) Calli Eggleton explains what parents and carers can do at home to help encourage their child to try lots of different foods: "Let the child get involved with the shopping, preparation of dinner and the cooking. When you go shopping ask your child what they would like, for example, a banana or orange, carrots or broccoli. Getting them involved helps to encourage them to eat well and try new food groups."

Modelling healthy eating in front of your children can help too:

"Also be a good role model, have healthier snacks and try not to let your child hear you say things like 'I don't like that' as children tend to follow suit."

## A veg-filled, nursery approved recipe

As the Chef of the Year winner for her area in 2015 and across all the nurseries in 2016, Calli also knows how to create meals that make good use of those home grown fruit and veg – and make sure children get all good for you, yummy nutrients they need. Like with this homemade vegetable soup recipe. It's just one of her go-to meals that's nutritious – and a child favourite!

## Homemade Vegetable Soup

Makes 3-4 scrumptious bowlfuls

### Ingredients:

6 tomatoes  
1 tbsp tomato puree  
A handful of spaghetti  
1 small tin sweetcorn  
2 leeks  
2 sticks of celery  
3 carrots  
1 onion  
1 tbsp vegetable/olive oil  
1 clove of garlic  
600ml vegetable stock  
Mixed herbs, to taste

- Firstly, chop up all of your veggies into whatever size and shape you fancy. Making sure that they're similarly sized will mean that they'll cook at the same time and not be too mushy.
- Crush your garlic and chop up your onion.
- Heat up the oil in a saucepan and add in your onion and garlic.
- Fry for about 5 minutes, until the onion starts to go glossy.
- Add in your leeks, celery, carrots and whatever other veg you fancy – maybe a courgette or two?
- Fry these for around 5 minutes, then add in your tomatoes, tomato paste and herbs or seasoning.
- Pour in vegetable stock and bring it all to a boil.
- Break the spaghetti in half, add it to the pan along with the sweetcorn (lentils can be added now too if wanted). Cover the soup over. Boil until the spaghetti is cooked.
- Spoon up with some crusty bread or crackers.

[Click here to download your own recipe card and children's shopping list.](#)