

# Learning

# Links

A Nutritionally Packed  
Summer Menu



*Find out how our new menu keeps our  
kids healthy, happy and ready to learn!*



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## *A Note From Claire Turnbull...*

Well done!

Learning Links has really gone above and beyond to choose a selection of foods that are not only nutritionally well balanced, but that are also absolutely delicious!

As a qualified nutritionist with over 16-years' experience, my goal is to help make healthy happen wherever I can...

And that's why I was stoked to work alongside Learning Links and their head chef Karen to put together their awesome 2-week menu cycle.

I'm very proud of what Learning Links has done alongside our team at MissionNutrition to sort these new healthier menus.

They've even gone the extra mile of making sure the children and staff will enjoy the food before making changes... just wonderful.

For more about Claire and Mission Nutrition, check out:

[www.claireturnbull.co.nz](http://www.claireturnbull.co.nz)

[www.missionnutrition.co.nz](http://www.missionnutrition.co.nz)

# CLAIRE TURNBULL

## LEARNING LINKS SUMMER MENU

***"I'm very proud of what Learning Links has done alongside Mission Nutrition."***



# ***A Welcoming Note From Our Head Chef***

Hi everyone, I'm Karen —Head Chef at Learning Links Childcare.

It's been a busy few weeks at the childcare as we've prepared what we believe is a fantastic summer menu.

Now, you're probably wondering:

Why make the move to 're-design' our menu?

Simply put, everyone deserves safe, healthy and nutritious food and I consider it our responsibility to make sure this happens.

While our previous menu was excellent, this was an opportunity to make our selections even more delicious and to meet the nutrition gold standard for our children and staff.

And as I take you through the journey of our new menu, you'll soon see that we worked HARD to achieve three important goals:

- Our menu had to have the very best nutrition standards for Learning Links kids.
- We needed a variety of food with no repeats —while keeping swift preparation times.
- And finally, our menu needed approval from our taste testers.

The result: *a menu so great we want to share the magic with you.*

So buckle in, enjoy the read and we hope our new menu brings your taste-buds to life.

## LEARNING LINKS

### SUMMER MENU

***"Everyone deserves safe, healthy and nutritious food and I consider it my responsibility to do my bit..."***







# The Story Behind Our Nutritionally Packed Summer Menu

If children form a healthy relationship with food while they're young, they're able to carry these positive attitudes as they grow.

That's why it's important that a menu is balanced and packed with variety. Variety gives kids the chance to learn about different cultures, while understanding what they do or don't like.

And so the challenge for our staff, was to put together a menu with 30+ meal options.

Meals that would give children an exciting food experience.

With a range of flavours and cultural tastes.

And these meals had to provide the nutritional balance children need!

While avoiding processed meats, nuts, confectionery, sweet biscuits, high-fat savoury or high-sugar items.

In fact, we removed white sugar and processed carbohydrates where possible too.

Basically, our task was to come up with a remarkable menu filled with natural whole fresh ingredients from garden to table and beyond.

A menu that our children could help prepare and that everyone found enjoyment in.

With help from Mission Nutrition and our expert little-chefs, we have made our menu possible.





# Why Healthy Habits Are Essential for Our Kids... (And How We Succeeded)

Healthy eating habits are more likely to stay with you if you learn them as a child.

And as all food contains different nutrients, vitamins and minerals, it's important that children learn to eat a varied diet.

The golden standard is to have three balanced meals a day along with two healthy snacks. Each meal should also have different sources of proteins, carbohydrates and fats as well as a variety of vege.

But food doesn't just serve a nutritional purpose.

Food is also an important part of many cultures and relationships.

Which is why, the simple act of eating breakfast, lunch and dinner can become exciting learning experiences for our children.

By ensuring our children have a healthy relationship with a variety of food they get the added benefit of positive habits that will stay with them for life.

These positive habits cross over into relationships, how we take care ourselves and our understanding of the world around us.

Plus, kids experience the great immediate benefits like staying content, feeling energized and keeping a consistent level of energy throughout the day.

**Positive eating habits could be the difference between a child being ready to learn at 2:00 PM versus losing an hour due to being exhausted.**

And so part of the thinking behind our menu, is to ensure that kids are getting their essential foods every single day, without sacrificing great taste and while adding the benefit of learning more about the world around them!

So, what exactly does balanced nutrition look like in our menu?

First, the menu is a 2 week summer cycle with no repeats.

Over the 2 week period there are 3 red meat meals, 2 poultry meals, 2 fish meals and 3 vegetarian meals.

The meals are all prepared from scratch in our kitchens. (Using whole fresh ingredients.)

We felt it was important to touch on different cultural flavours to expand the food experience but to also show kids that the same ingredients can be used in a variety of ways.

To top it all off, our summer menu is easily adaptable for allergies and to be gluten/dairy free as needed.



# Introducing Our Summer Menu!

Great news! A quick glance to your left and you'll see our summer menu.

And when we say there are no repeats, we really mean it. In fact, you won't even find the same ingredient repeated on the same day.

Each menu item is completely unique.

We've made sure that there are no processed meals, nuts, confectionery, sweet biscuits, high-fat savoury or high-sugar items.

And refined white sugar has been minimised and replaced with raw sugar where possible.

Not only that, we've also replaced processed carbohydrates with wholegrains to keep our children and staff fuller longer.

And where we can access the centre garden, we've included freshly picked herbs and vege, and fruit for our baby mash and purees.

But that's not all.

In this menu, we've gone the extra mile and made sure meals and snacks are all prepared on site - that means we've avoided pre-made products where possible.

And the menu has been designed so that it can be easily adapted to dietary needs.

Not to mention that each item has passed a rigorous tasting test and made it onto the menu.

With much work and help (*thank you Mission Nutrition*), we've managed to create a brand new spring and summer menu that:

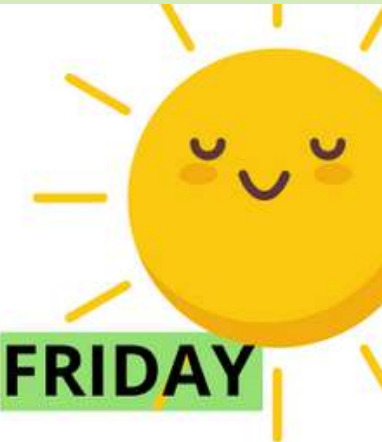
- Meets the golden standard for nutrition.
- Offers a variety of food choices (no repeats).
- And finally... leaves our children and staff with a smile on their face after serving.

Week One - Summer Menu					
	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
MORNING TEA	Fruit bread toast with cream cheese Banana Water/Milk	Blueberry Baked Pikelets Fresh Fruit Water/Milk	Oatmeal Banana 'Buns' Fresh Fruit Water/Milk	Wheatmeal Toast and Spreads Fresh Fruit Water/Milk	Mouse Traps Fresh Fruit Water/Milk
LUNCH	Macaroni & Cauliflower cheese Water	Beef Bolognese Pasta with Slaw Water	Sandwich Selection: egg, lettuce, carrot, cheese, marmite, jam, cucumber, tomato. (Wheatmeal bread) Water	Fish Cakes with chopped tomato and lettuce salad Water	Chicken & Kumara Pie Water
AFTERNOON TEA	Carrot Apple Muffins Fresh Fruit Water/Milk	Cheese & Crackers Fresh Fruit Water/Milk	Hummus platter with roasted vege sticks and pita bread triangles Fresh Fruit Water/Milk	Fruit Salad & Yoghurt Fresh Fruit Water/Milk	Pumpkin Bread Fresh Fruit Water/Milk

Week Two - Summer Menu					
	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
MORNING TEA	Banana Sushi Fresh Fruit Water/Milk	Apple Banana Muffins Fresh Fruit Water/Milk	Bircher Muesli Yoghurt Dip with fruit toast fingers Fresh Fruit Water/Milk	Wheatmeal Toast and Spreads Fresh Fruit Water/Milk	Mouse Traps Fresh Fruit Water/Milk
LUNCH	Chickpea Curry and Brown Rice Water	Lamb (or Beef) Goulash with Israeli Couscous Water	Baked Chicken and Vegetable 'Risotto' Water	Tuna Pasta with Slaw Water	Beef and Lentil Burger with Wholemeal Flatbreads & Salad Water
AFTERNOON TEA	Corn and cheese Puffs Fresh Fruit Water/Milk	Sandwich Platter Fresh Fruit Water/Milk	Pumpkin Scones Fresh Fruit Water/Milk	Cheese and Crackers Fresh Fruit Water/Milk	Honey Oat Slice Fresh Fruit Water/Milk



# Week One - Summer Menu



	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
<b>MORNING TEA</b>	Fruit bread toast with cream cheese Banana Water/Milk	Blueberry Baked Pikelets Fresh Fruit Water/Milk	Oatmeal Banana 'Buns' Fresh Fruit Water/Milk	Wheatmeal Toast and Spreads Fresh Fruit Water/Milk	Mouse Traps Fresh Fruit Water/Milk
<b>LUNCH</b>	Macaroni & Cauliflower cheese Water	Beef Bolognese Pasta with Slaw Water	Sandwich Selection: egg, lettuce, carrot, cheese, marmite, jam, cucumber, tomato. (Wheatmeal bread) Water	Fish Cakes with chopped tomato and lettuce salad Water	Chicken & Kumara Pie Water
<b>AFTERNOON TEA</b>	Carrot Apple Muffins Fresh Fruit Water/Milk	Cheese & Crackers Fresh Fruit Water/Milk	Hummus platter with roasted vege sticks and pita bread triangles Fresh Fruit Water/Milk	Fruit Salad & Yoghurt Fresh Fruit Water/Milk	Pumpkin Bread Fresh Fruit Water/Milk



# Week Two - Summer Menu



## MORNING TEA

## LUNCH

## AFTERNOON TEA

### MONDAY

Banana Sushi

Fresh Fruit  
Water/Milk

Chickpea Curry and  
Brown Rice

Water

Corn and cheese  
Puffs

Fresh Fruit  
Water/Milk

### TUESDAY

Apple Banana Muffins

Fresh Fruit  
Water/Milk

Lamb (or Beef) Goulash  
with Israeli Couscous

Water

Sandwich Platter

Fresh Fruit  
Water/Milk

### WEDNESDAY

Bircher Muesli Yoghurt  
Dip with fruit toast fingers

Fresh Fruit  
Water/Milk

Baked Chicken and  
Vegetable 'Risotto'

Water

Pumpkin Scones

Fresh Fruit  
Water/Milk

### THURSDAY

Wheatmeal Toast and  
Spreads

Fresh Fruit  
Water/Milk

Tuna Pasta with Slaw

Water

Cheese and Crackers

Fresh Fruit  
Water/Milk

### FRIDAY

Mouse Traps

Fresh Fruit  
Water/Milk

Beef and Lentil  
Burger with  
Wholemeal  
Flatbreads & Salad

Water

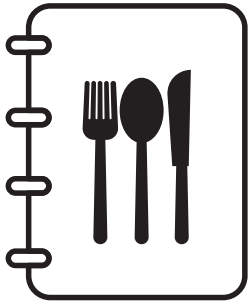
Honey Oat  
Slice

Fresh Fruit  
Water/Milk





# Take A Look At The Remarkable Meal Line Up For Week 1 of Our Summer Menu



Here are some of the delicious treats you'll find hidden in week one of our menu:

- Blueberry pikelets - these delicious treats are the perfect mouth-watering burst of sweet and tangy with a freshly picked blueberry mix.
- Chicken & Kumara pie is a favourite choice packed with natural goodness while avoiding the stereotypical high-fat savoury. We've kept a New Zealand staple and turned it into a great meal.
- Mouse Traps are an ideal snack for the kids. Cooked on wholegrain bread with melting cheese, these will keep kids satisfied and full of energy.

There are many delicious menu options like Macaroni cauliflower cheese, Fish cakes, our Hummus platter, Pumpkin bread and more.

We've compiled all of our nutritious menu options into a Learning Links recipe book.

*Find out how to get this book on the next page.*



# If You're Looking For Tasty Food That is Natural, Fresh And Filled With Nutritional Abundance...

## Check Out Week 2 of Our Summer menu



Week two of our menu is filled with delicious options, like:

- Banana sushi - this fun and healthy snack is delicious on its own or with a range of toppings. (Quick to prepare and kids love the bite sized pieces.)
- Bircher muesli yoghurt with fruit toast fingers turns a dry breakfast option into a fun fruity mix that provides nutrition for the day ahead.
- Beef and Lentil burgers that provide the excitement a burger brings, while being completely natural and healthy. (Our flatbread buns are prepared right here in our on-site kitchen.)

Week two includes favourites like chickpea curry, baked chicken or vegetable risotto, Honey oat slice and much much more.

And, if you want to make these breakfast and lunch options at home, grab a full copy of our Learning Links recipe book right [here](#).

You can also send an email to [admin@learninglinkschildcare.co.nz](mailto:admin@learninglinkschildcare.co.nz) and we'll send a copy directly to your inbox.







# Feel Fuller, Healthier and Happier With Easy lunch Box Ideas & Evening Meals You Can Cook In Minutes!



While all of our centres have gardens... not all of our centres have kitchens.

This is due to local laws and food guidelines.

This is tough because we'd love to share our great menu at every centre!

But don't worry... we've got you covered.

Karen and Claire have worked day and night to provide recipes for our nutritionally sound, easy to make menu options that are perfect lunchbox and dinner ideas.

You can put together a delicious Beef Goulash, Tuna Pasta or Chick Pea Curry and more in no-time.

And we've put these recipes into a complete booklet with step by step guides for each meal.

This booklet will help you to make great lunchbox treats, or to cook a great dinner that's well balanced.

You can see the booklet right [here](#).

Or email [admin@learninglinkschildcare.co.nz](mailto:admin@learninglinkschildcare.co.nz) for a copy.