



Supplying Ireland's childcare providers with a range of balanced and nutritious quality meals flavoured using only herbs and spices for over 20 years.

PARENTS' INFORMATION BOOKLET



# **A Letter From Susan**



Over the past 20 years as a family owned and operated Guaranteed Irish Business, Little Dinners have been providing children with a wide variety of healthy and nutritious meals.

I owe my love of cooking to my late mother who enjoyed nothing more than feeding everyone who passed through our door. So, when I became aware that a family member was having difficulty finding the time to provide food for the children in her Montessori schools, I jumped at the opportunity to produce and deliver the meals myself. We became increasingly aware that this challenge was faced by many childcare providers so, my husband Bernard and I set to work on a solution. Little Dinners was born.

As a mother of four, I know the importance of supporting children in developing lifelong healthy eating practices and a positive approach towards food. Good early nutrition is vital for a child's physical and cognitive development and makes it easier to keep processed foods high in salt and sugar out of their diets. Each of our little dinners is made with this in mind.

To this day Little Dinners are the country's only HSE/FSAI approved and registered producer and distributor dedicated solely to producing and supplying meals to childcare providers.

As parents we want our children to eat well, especially when they're away from us. This booklet has been designed to give you peace of mind and answer any questions you may have about Little Dinners. If you have any further questions please email them to me at Susan@littledinners.ie.

# **Table of contents**

## A Letter From Susan

Our Process	1-8
Where are Little Dinners made?	2
How are Little Dinners made?	3
Blast chilling	4
Delivery	5
Children with special diets and allergies	6
Food Safety Policy	7
List of suppliers	8
Our ingredients	9-14
Vegetables	10-11
Fruits	12
Meat & Fish	13
Carbohydrate, Pulses & Herbs and Spices	14
Pre-school & baby menu options	15-20
	16
Feeding infants Infant menu	17
Feeding pre-schoolers	18-19
Pre-school menu	20
	1
After-school menu options	21-23
Feeding after-schoolers	22
After-school menu	23

# Our process

0 0 0

00

# Where are Little Dinners made?

What makes us truly unique is that we produce all our meals ourselves from our very own HSE/FSAI approved kitchens in Co. Wicklow.

This allows us to ensure the quality of our product and maintain full control over every aspect of the process including customer relations, product development, ingredient sourcing, as well as production, quality control and delivery.



Our dedicated team of 22 work each day to provide our customers with quality products and exceptional customer service.



# How are Little Dinners made?

We use only healthy cooking methods such as:

- Boiling
- Steaming
- Baking
- Roasting
- Stewing

Our Mashed Potatoes contain nothing but 100% potatoes.



# Why are Little Dinners blast chilled?

# Blast chilling ensures our Little Dinners are of the best quality:

- Blast chilling safely brings the temperature of food down, minimising the chances for bacteria and pathogens to grow, without the need for any additives, flavourings or preservatives.
- Blast chilling minimises damage to the quality, taste, appearance and structure of food so our Little Dinners are as good when they're re-heated as when we prepared them.
- Blast chilling , minimises shrinkage or loss of moisture that occurs during the cooling period.
- Unlike processes such as pasturisation, blast chilling ensures minimal nutrient loss in our Little Dinners.



# How are Little Dinners delivered?

inners

Little Dinner

·05-WW-5634

Meals for 1 the People

Little Dinners

tle

ne Meal. For

Our drivers Eamonn, Tommy, Chris, Tom and Andy deliver our Little Dinners directly to a dedicated fridge supplied by us.

nners

le People

(33)

07-0-60177

ittle Dinne

# Children with special diets & allergies.

We cater for special diets based on parental preference, cultural or religious beliefs and health or allergy issues are.

The standard meal is adapted to suit the individual child's needs and comes individually packed, with a specially flagged label. This ensures the child does not feel different and is more likely to enjoy their meal along with everyone else.



# Little Dinners Food Safety Policy Statement

Little Dinners acknowledge responsibility for food hygiene and the provision of safe and wholesome food and is committed to ensuring compliance with the **European Communities (Hygiene of Foodstuffs) regulations 2000, Irish Food Hygiene Regulations 1950/1989, relevant Irish Standards (including IS.343)** and all relevant legislation or amendments there under.

It is our policy to maintain a Food Safety Management System incorporating HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points), in accordance with the above legislation and this policy is reviewed periodically.

#### We are also committed to the following:

- We have established, implement and maintain the highest standards of personal and operational hygiene.

- We provide a comprehensive on-going training plan for all food handlers.

- We purchase foods from reputable suppliers only.
- We have set up control systems for known hazards, at each stage in the operation from raw materials to finished product.

- We provide adequate facilities, equipment and staff, to ensure that food produced will always be safe for human consumption.

- We implement a documented cleaning schedule for the entire premises.
- We provide resources for the implementation of a pest control programme.
- We ensure the implementation and regular review of this Food Hygiene Policy.

- We ensure strict adherence to this written Food Safety Policy Statement by all management and staff.

- We provide financial support to ensure that all the provisions of this Food Policy Statement are attainable.

# **Our Suppliers**

# We source quality ingredients from HACCP compliant suppliers

- Nugents Prepared Veg, Ballyboughal, North Co. Dublin
- Cullens Fruit & Veg, Gorey, Co. Wexford.
- Des Doyle Butchers, Greystones, Co. Wicklow
- Hogans Farm, Kells, Co. Meath
- Avalanche Food Service, Rathnew, Co. Wicklow
- Henderson Food Service, Newtownabbey, Co. Antrim.
- Le Gourmet Wholefoods Ltd, Dublin 24
- National Organic, Bray Co. Wicklow
- Musgraves Food Service, Sallynoggin, Dublin







































#### Vegetables provide 6 primary nutrients: Fibre, folate, potassium, Vitamin A, Vitamin C and Iron.

# Swede

Swede/ turnip are great source of the vitamins and minerals that growing children need. They're high in Vitamins C, E,K and B6 as well as a good source of manganese, potassium, magnesium, calcium, iron, zinc, carotene and fibre.

# Tomatoes

Tomatoes are a rich source of lycopene (an antioxidant), beta-carotene, folate, potassium, Vitamin C, flavonoids and Vitamin E.

The cooking process increases the antioxidant activity in tomatoes.

# **Butternut Squash**

Butternut Squash is high in Vitamin C, fibre, potassium and magnesium and is an excellent source of lutein.

# Sweetcorn

Sweetcorn is high in beta-carotene, lutein, B vitamins, iron, magnesium, potassium and folic acid.

# **Sweet Potato**

Did you know that just 1 cup of sweet potato contains 4 times the recommended daily adult allowance of beta-carotene? They're also an excellent source of Vitamins A, B6 & iron, fibre and potassium!

# Carrots

Carrots are rich in beta-carotene and vitamin A which help your vision. They're also packed with antioxidants and other nutrients.

In fact, carrots are loaded with beta carotene which is subsequently converted into Vitamin A in the liver.

# Peppers

All varieties of peppers are excellent sources of vitamins A, C & B6, potassium, folic acid and fibre.

We use a mix of red, orange, yellow and green peppers in our dishes. However we use the red ones the most because they have almost 11 times more beta-carotene and 1.5 times more Vit C than the green ones.

# Parsnip

Parsnips are great source of potassium, zinc, magnesium, phosphorous, manganese and iron. They also contain many vitamins and fibre along with certain amounts of protein and folate.



# Cabbage

Cabbage is packed with Vitamin C, folic acid, calcium, potassium & Fibre.

# Cauliflower

As well a being an excellent source of Vitamin C, cauliflower is also a source of Vitamin K, protein, thiamine, riboflavin, niacin, magnesium, phosphorus, fibre, Vitamin B6, folate, pantothenic acid, potassium and manganese.

# Spinach

The benefits of spinach are endless. It has an extremely high nutritional value because it's an excellent source of antioxidants, Vitamin K, Vitamin C, folate, manganese, magnesium, iron & Vitamin B2.

Vitamin K orks alongside calcium to strengthen children's growing bones and spinach is one of the highest sources.

# **Green Beans**

Green beans are packed with vitamin C. folic acid, iron and potassium.

# Leeks

Leeks are great for getting fibre, iron,Vitamins A & C into your body.



# Peas

Peas are bursting with Vitamin K.

Peas are also a source of antioxidant Vitamin A & C as well as folic acid and B Vitamins. They are also fibre rich and contain manganese, potassium and lutein.

# Broccoli

Broccoli is a true superfood.

It's a great source of vitamins K & C and a good source of folate (folic acid) and also provides potassium, fibr, vit C.

It is considered a super food as it is loaded with fibre & antioxidants to fight cancer and vitamin C to aid iron absorption.

# Courgette

Courgettes contain high levels of Vitamin C and potassium. The soluble fibre in the skin slows down digestion and so stabilises blood sugar and insulin levels.

# Garlic

Garlic contains a little bit of everything we need - Vitamin C & B6, manganese, selenium and other antioxidants, calcium, copper, potassium, phosphorus, iron & Vitamin B1.

# Onion

Onions are a are nutrient powerhouses and contain Vitamin C, flavonoids, antioxidants and sulfur compounds.

**Fruits** - packed with the vitamins and nutrient growing children need.

## Pear

Pears are one of the best sources of dietary fibre of all fruits and provide high amounts of Vitamin C & K and boron. Pear nutrition can also help reverse copper deficiency and low potassium.

# Raisins & sultanas

Packed with energy and are rich in fibre, vitamins and minerals. When eaten in moderation raisins can aid digestion, boost iron levels and keep bones strong. Raisins are a good source of any vitamins and minerals that children need as part of a healthy diet.

# Mango

High in fibre and antioxidants, mangos have an impressive amount of Vitamin's C & A, and flavonoids They are rich in potassium, magnesium, selenium, calcium, iron and phosphorous.

# Apple

You know what they say about an apple a day... The nutrients apples provide actually help your kids stay strong and healthy!

Apples are naturally rich in vitamin C and a dietary fibre called pectin which is good for both our immune system and gut. Apples also contain a mineral called boron will helps teeth and bones stay strong and healthy.

# Pineapple

Rich in Vitamin C & manganese and a natural source of the emzyme bromelain, pineapples are both delicious and nutritious!

# Coconut Milk

Coconut milk is a good source or manganese, magnesium, potassium and iron. It also provides electrolytes can which help prevent fatigue.

#### **Carbohydrates & Pulses**

# Potatoes

A good source of carbohydrate and fibre as well as Vitamin C, B6, manganese, niacin and pantotheric acid.

# Rice

When we eat rice it can instantly be a source of energy. It is also helps regulate blood sugar levels, aids digestion and provides vitmain B1 to the body. Our rice comes in both white and wholemeal options

# **Cannelini Beans**

Also known as white kidney beans, they are abundant in protein and contain large amounts of antioxidants, dietary fibre and iron. They are also an excellent source of phosphorus, copper, calcium potassium, molybdenum and manganese.

# Pasta

All our pasta is egg-free. Pasta is a great way of getting fibre into children's diets. We offer both white and wholemeal options.

# **Kidney Beans**

Low in fat and high in complex carbohydrates, kidney beans are an excellent plant-based source of protein. They're also rich in minerals, vitamins, fibres and antioxidants and have a high fibre content.

# **Red Lentils**

Lentils add essential vitamins, minerals and fibre to the diet, and provide protein and sustenance that can replace meat in meals. They are a source of molybdenum, folate, copper, phosphorous manganese, iron, protein, Vitamin B6, pantotheric acid, zinc and potassium

#### Herbs and Spices:



Our baby menu and all meals in our standard range are flavoured using an abundance of natural ingredients like herbs and spices. They contain absolutely no added salt, bouillon, sugar, artificial colours, flavourings or preservatives. Our herbs and spices introduce children to a wide range of tastes and also contain a wide range of vitamins and minerals essential for growing boys and girls.

- Parsley
- Chives
- Oregano
- Dill
- Basil

- Chilli
- Cumin
- Corriander
- Mustard Seed
- Black Pepper

- Fenugrek
- Cardamon
- Tumeric
- Ginger
- Garlic (chopped & purée)

#### Meat

## Red Meat Irish Pork, Beef & Lamb

Easily absorbed by the body. Iron helps red blood cells carry oxygen to cells throughout the body and it is important for brain development.

Unfortunately, iron deficiency, which overtime can cause learning and behaviour problems is one of the most common nutrient deficiencies in children. That's why it's important to make sure your child gets iron from sources such as red meat and dark green vegetables.

All red meat provides good quality protein and is also rich in nutrients such as Iron, Zinc & Vitamin B12.

(We only use lean Irish beef, Lamb and Pork in our meals).







Packed with protein and is a source of Vitamin B6, which is used to help the body extract energy from food. It's important that babies start regularly eating foods containing adequate amounts of protein to support their rapid growth. We use Irish chicken fillets in our meals.

# Turkey

Contains the amino acid tryptophan which produces serotonin and plays an important role in strengthening the immune system. The protein content alone could make it a superfood. It is also full of nutrients such as Niacin, Selenium, Vitamin B6 & B12 and Zinc.

#### Fish

# Cod

An excellent source of lean protein and Vitamin B12. It is also a good source of omega 3 fatty acids.

## Tuna

Canned tuna (we use tuna in water) is a good source of omega 3 fatty acids and protein.

# Pre-school & baby menu options

Menu -Chicken KormakRice - Wholemeal pasta Bolognaise - Cottage Pie

INER

# **Feeding infants**

Babies and younger children are provided with specially adapted dairy and gluten free versions of standard meals in pureé and chopped form.

Our baby menu is designed to introduce babies to a wide variety of tastes and textures. Exposing babies to different textures helps with their speech development and makes them more likely to eat a wide variety of foods when they move onto our pre-school lunch menu.



Pictured: Little Dinners Purée Veg Casserole



Pictured: Little Dinners Chopped Beef Casserole



# Sample of our baby menu



# Feeding pre-schoolers

For pre-schoolers we have designed a special menu filled with a variety of textures and tastes.

Under the age of 5, a child's taste buds are only developing so our standard pre-school, tea time and infant menus are flavoured using only herbs and spices and contain no salt, bouillon, sugar, artificial colours, flavourings additives or preservatives

#### Variety:

Young children often have a very limited range of preferred foods that they will eat. Our range of monthly menus have been designed to introduce children to a variety of textures, flavours and tastes from around the world in the hopes of gradually expanding their food repetoire.

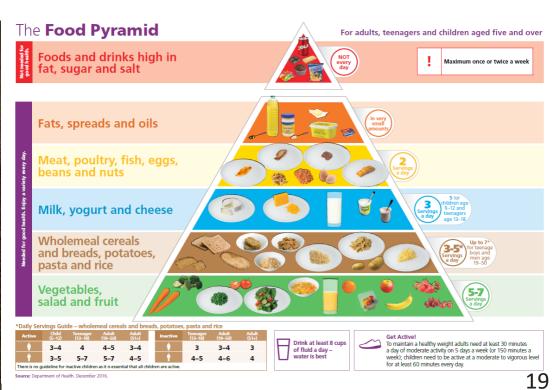
Having a wide variety on our monthly menu also ensures children are eating a wide range of foods and getting a balance of different nutrients. Growing children require high nutrients and energy from their food.



Our Nutritional policy is designed to follow the Department of Health's 'Food Nutritional Guidelines for Pre-School Services'

#### **Each meal contains:**

- Protein
- Carbohydrate
- Combinations of vegetables/ fruits



# Sample of our pre-school menu

DINNERS

HSE/ ESAI

Approval no

IF 4018

EC

1st

Fri

2nd

Tue

6th

Wed

7th

8th

Fri

9th



Ingredients: Potatoes 52%, pork and apricot 48% ( pork 26%, carrots, water, swedes, peas, onions, apricots 2%, potato starch, olive oil, oregano, coriander, cumin, mustard, pepper, fenugrek, cardamon, turmeric, chilli powder, ginger, garlic.

#### Ingredients in bold script contain allergens; mustard TUNA PASTA BAKE

Ingredients: Durum wheat pasta 43%, Tuna sauce 57% (tomatoes, tomato puree, tuna, carrots, water, maize corn, onions, spinach, cream (milk), potato starch, olive oil, garlic, basil.)

Ingredients in bold script contain allergens; gluten, fish and milk (lactose)

#### MONDAY 5th EASTER MONDAY

#### **BROCCOLI & CORN PASTA** BAKE

Ingredients: Durum wheat pasta 43%. Broccoli and corn sauce 57% (tomatoes, broccoli, water, carrots, tomato puree, maize corn, lentils, spinach, olive oil, onions, potato starch, garlic, hasil)

Ingredients in bold script contain allergens; gluten

#### CHICKEN CURRY & RICE

Ingredients: Rice 43%, chicken curry 57% ( chicken (Irish) 26%, carrots, water, peas, swedes, onions, olive oil, potato starch, tomato puree, coconut milk, coriander, cumin, mustard seed, black pepper, fenugrek, cardamon, turmeric, chilli powder, ginger, garlic puree.)

#### **GREEK HOTPOT** & POTATO CROQUETTES

Ingredients: Potato croquettes 35%( potatoes, sunflower oil, Thurs whey powder (milk), dextrose, salt, onion powder, emulsifier (E471), spices, Greek hotpot 65% (beef (Irish) 26%, tomatoes, water, carrot, tomato puree, courgette, mixed peppers, diced potatoes, onions, potato starch, olive oil, garlic puree, parsley.)

Ingredients in bold script contain allergens; milk (lactose)

#### **COD PROVENCAL & RICE**

Ingredients: Rice 43%, cod provencal 57% (cod 28% tomatoes, water, carrots, tomato puree, peppers, onions, spinach, olive oil, potato starch, basil, garlic.)

Ingredients in bold script contain allergens; fish

Nutritional Information		
Energy KCal Fat of which saturated Carbohydrates of which sugar Fibre Protein Salt	Per 100g 80 KCal 377 Kj 1.54g 0.39g 11.12g 1.87g 1.33g 6.02g < 0.01g	

Nutritional Information		
Energy KCal Fat of which saturated Carbohydrates of which sugar Fibre Protein Salt	115KCal 487 Kj 2.27g 0.85g 35.45g 3.59g 2.06g 78.37g < 0.01g	

Nutritional Information	
	Per 100g 115KCal 488 Kj 2.15g 0.88g 38.42g 3.57g 2.13g 6.87g < 0.01g

Nutritional Information	
Nutritional Info Energy KCal of which saturated Carbohydrates of which sugar Fibre Protein	Per 100g 108KCal 453Kj 1.58g 0.74g 11.29g 1.01g 1.30g 7.332g
Salt	0.01g

#### Nutritional Information

Energy         Fet           KCal         831           KCal         350           Fat         1.72           of which saturated         0.65           Carbohydrates         11.0           of which saturated         1.12           Fibre         1.13           Protein         4.18           Salt         < 0	2g 5g 09g 5g
---	-----------------------

Nutritional Information	
Energy	Per 100g
Energy KCal	89 KCal
	376 Kj
Fat	1.29g
of which saturated	0.61g
Carbohydrates	16.0Žg
of which sugar	1.67g
Fibre	1.27ğ
Protein	4.24g
Salt	< 0.Ŭ1g

# After-school menu options

CT STATE

Pictured: Ready for lunch in Horizons Homework Club, Terenure

# Feeding after-schoolers

Due to changing work practices more and more children need after-school care and should therefore also be offered a healthy hot meal.

Our low-salt After School menu is specially designed to feed older children who may not have grown up eating our Little Dinners. We hope it will allow them to experience foods from different cultures while at the same time offering them a variety of meats, fish, vegetables, pulses, pasta and rice dishes presented in ways they enjoy.



# Sample of our after-school menu



#### POTATO CROQUETES & BEEF PROVENCAL

Fri By Ingredients: Potato croquetes ( potatoes, sunflower oil, whey powder (milk), dextrose, salt, onion powder, emulsifier (E471),spices, beef (100% Irish), tomatoes, water, carrots, tomato puree, peppers, onions, spinach, olive oil, potato starch, basil, garlic. Ingredients in bold script contain allergens; milk

## Nutritional Information Energy KCal B9 KCal

	376 Kj
Fat	1.29g
	0.61g
Carbohydrates	16.02g
of which sugar	1.67g
Fibre	1.27g
Protein	4.24g
Salt	< 0.01g





# **CONTACT US**

- info@littledinners.ie
- @ littledinners.ie
- J Susan 087 6230060
- **f** Little Dinners