

# SOS Feeding Groups



# What is it?

The Sequential – Oral – Sensory or SOS approach to feeding has two parts

1. Children's groups run by the Occupational Therapist and Speech and Language therapist. These are fun weekly groups aimed at extending the range of foods children will eat. It focusses on exploring food and drinks through different senses, building oral motor skills and lowering anxiety around food. It is aimed at children with restricted diets, many of whom will have this eating and drinking skills on their personalised plan.
2. Parent's groups run by the Occupational Therapist and Behaviour Advisor. These groups focus on how parents can support their children's eating, trying new strategies at home, and talking about worries regarding diet.



# Why do we do it?

- We run SOS feeding groups at Drumbeat because lots of children with ASD have sensory and behavioural difficulties around food.
- This can have big impact on their inclusion in home and school life as well their health and nutrition.
- Through the group we can create links between home, school and outside health professionals e.g. dietician.
- Parents of children with restricted diets can often feel isolated with this problem, and can be helpful to meet other parents with similar experiences.



# How do we do it?

The SOS feeding groups for children follow a well-established routine

1. Sensory preparation – singing action rhymes to get our bodies ready, blowing bubbles to get our mouths moving, washing hands in preparation for handling foods, washing face with a wipe to get our faces ready.
2. Foods are tried one by one, and skills are built up slowly from tolerating having disliked foods on the table, to touching, smelling, licking and eventually tasting.
3. Finishing – to end we all take a food we didn't want to touch and hold it before putting it in the bin. Some children will take this opportunity to taste a food, as they know they can throw it away if they don't like it.

# What is the impact of the SOS groups?



- Several students who have completed the group have now changed from packed lunch to school dinners.
- Some students who have packed lunches are eating a more varied diet.
- Parents who have completed the groups say they feel more relaxed about their children's eating now, and have better strategies for mealtimes.

# Evidence and Impact of SOS groups



M trying out some orange segments



J trying out some cheese.

## Enjoying Christmas Dinner

