

24 April 2018

Dear Colleague

**Provision of sliced or chopped fruit and vegetables to children under five**

Following concerns raised regarding the potential risk of young children choking on grapes, the Public Health Agency is issuing guidance to all primary and nursery schools in relation to the provision of grapes and other small fruits and vegetables to children up to the age of five years.

The Public Health Agency previously issued guidance to childcare providers in this regard. As the guidance is relevant for children up to the age of five, it is now being communicated to schools as well.

In order to prevent a risk of choking, we recommend that all fruits offered to P1 and nursery school children should be sliced or chopped. Examples include apples, bananas, pears, kiwi fruit, grapes, cherry tomatoes and other seasonal fruits. This advice also applies to vegetables.

This advice is already incorporated into the leaflet 'Healthy Breaks for schools – A guide for pupils and parents'.

Current recommendations remain that children should eat five child-sized portions of fruit and vegetables every day as part of a balanced diet.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact the Food in Schools Co-ordinator, Katie Hunter, at [katie.hunter@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:katie.hunter@belfasttrust.hscni.net)

Yours sincerely



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**Caroline Bloomfield**  
Health and Social Wellbeing Improvement Senior Manager

