

Food and Nutrition Policy



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1. Aims

- This policy has been developed in partnership with our staff and aims to ensure that our school provides an environment that encourages healthy food and eating, and helps our pupils make healthy food choices
- Food allergies and dietary needs are managed effectively
- Food safety and hygiene practices are followed, including proper food preparation to prevent choking
- All staff and parents/carers are aware of their roles in making sure that our pupils consume healthy, nutritious and safe food and drink

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the following legislation:

- [Natasha's Law](#)
- [Food Information \(Amendment\) \(England\) Regulations 2019](#)

It is also based on the following Department for Education (DfE) guidance:

- [Allergy guidance for schools](#)
- [School food in England](#)

3. Responsibilities of the school

The proprietary board and headteacher will make sure that this food and nutrition policy is properly implemented, and that food preparation, provision and nutrition procedures are followed in accordance with this policy.

All staff are responsible for following the policy and ensuring the health and safety of the children.

4. Responsibilities of parents/carers

We work in partnership with parents/carers to make sure all children receive appropriate and nutritious food while at school.

We ask all parents/carers to:

- Inform the school of any allergies, medical dietary needs, food intolerances and religious or cultural dietary requirements.
- Encourage their child to try a variety of foods and eat a balanced diet at home and in school
- Give their child a healthy breakfast before arriving at school, unless they are having breakfast at school
- Read and respond to food-related communication, including school menus
- Keep the school informed of any changes to their child's dietary needs, progress with eating, and/or any other concerns or information around their eating

5. Communicating with parents/carers

We tell parents/carers by email promptly if our staff notice any issues with their child's food consumption or habits at school, such as:

- Significant changes in eating habits, such as consistently eating very little food or showing a sudden aversion to certain foods or food groups
- Specific food-related problems, such as having trouble chewing or swallowing
- Concerns about wellbeing, such as a child's eating habits appearing to affect their mood, energy level or general wellbeing

We work together with parents/carers to address any problems promptly.

6. Sourcing food and ingredients

We work with apetito to provide healthy and nutritious meals.

- We collaborate with our catering partner by:
- Holding regular meetings with apetito to review menus, discuss feedback, and plan future requirements
- Carrying out regular checks to make sure the food provided is of a high standard, meets all relevant nutritional guidance, and is prepared safely and hygienically
- Participating in the menu planning process to make sure our food is appealing, balanced, varied and caters to the dietary requirements that our pupils have

Where possible, we/our catering company buy seasonal and local food, and fish from verifiably sustainable sources (such as products certified by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)).

7. Providing food and drink at school

We provide healthy, balanced, varied and nutritious meals, snacks and drinks at timetabled mealtimes.

We support all our pupils to develop positive eating habits, helping them to get the right amount of nutrients and energy they need for growth and development.

Our menus are:

- Planned for 2 weeks at a time to make sure all meals, snacks and drinks are balanced, varied and nutritious, and include different foods, tastes and textures, including global cuisines
- Planned to include substitutions and replacement ingredients for pupils with special dietary requirements
- Reviewed at least twice a year, to include seasonal produce
- Shared with parents/carers to:
 - Provide allergen information
 - Help them balance food at home by providing varied meals
 - Reassure them that their child is getting an appropriate, varied, nutritious and balanced diet at school
 - Seek their feedback, particularly regarding cultural preferences

7.1 For all pupils

All meals, snacks and drinks provided are healthy, balanced and nutritious.

Our staff:

- Make tap water available and accessible throughout the day, and provide fresh tap water at mealtimes
- Encourage pupils to eat balanced meals containing a wide variety of foods from the 4 main food groups:
 - Fruit and vegetables
 - Starchy carbohydrates, such as bread, rice and pasta
 - Dairy or dairy alternatives
 - Protein, such as meat, fish and beans

We have a designated eating space with suitable chairs where:

- The children eat together in a social setting to encourage adventurous food choices
- Distractions are minimised, allowing children to focus on their food and social interactions
- Children with special dietary and additional needs are included whenever possible

8. Food safety and hygiene

Our staff use our food preparation area to prepare meals, snacks and drinks.

Our staff use colour-coded equipment and utensils.

Staff with responsibility for food preparation and handling are competent and receive food hygiene training.

All staff wash their hands regularly, particularly after helping unwell children or handling their belongings.

8.1 Procedures for managing food poisoning

If any child shows symptoms of food poisoning, we will:

- Contact parents/carers immediately to collect their child as soon as possible
- Prevent the spread of infection by isolating the child in a quiet area with easy access to a sick bowl and toilet
- Monitor the child for signs of dehydration, including a dry mouth or crying without tears

- Encourage the child to take small, frequent sips of water

Parents/carers are advised not to return their children to school until they have been symptom free for at least 48 hours.

9. Safer eating

While eating, pupils are always supervised and within sight and sound of a suitably qualified staff member.

9.1 Food preparation to prevent choking

Food is prepared in a suitable way for each child's developmental needs, avoiding round shapes and cutting food appropriately (e.g. cutting carrots into narrow batons).

9.2 Eating environment

When eating, all children are always:

- Seated safely (e.g. in an appropriately sized chair)
- Within sight and hearing of staff

Where possible, staff sit facing children to monitor eating and prevent food sharing.

We record any incidents of choking needing intervention and inform parents/carers.

Our records are reviewed annually to identify trends.

9.3 One-to-one supervision

We offer children with physical, developmental, or sensory issues affecting their eating one-to-one supervision in consultation with parents/carers and health professionals.

10. Managing allergies and food intolerances

We take allergy and food intolerance management seriously and follow strict procedures to ensure that all children can eat safely.

- Before a child joins our school, we gather detailed information about any known food allergies or intolerances
- All staff are trained to be aware of and understand information about food allergies by:
 - Knowing the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis
 - Understanding the difference between allergies and intolerances

We share information about food allergies with all staff, and make them aware of which children have allergies or intolerances so they can ensure that the child is given an alternative where the food served contains an allergen.

All staff follow strict measures to avoid cross-contamination, including washing hands, using colour-coded equipment and sharing clear rules around visitors bringing food into school.

10.1 Procedures to manage allergies and intolerances

We plan menus to include food substitutions, where necessary, for children with allergies or intolerances in mind.

We make sure that our food is safe for pupils with an allergy or intolerance by:

- Showing allergen ingredients information for the meals served, as outlined in this policy

- Checking any product changes with our food suppliers
- Ensuring our staff read labels and product information before using a product

Through ongoing discussions with parents/carers and health professionals, if appropriate, we create an allergy action plan for each child to help manage their allergy or intolerance.

- This information is kept up-to-date and shared with all staff

10.2 Procedures for managing allergic reactions and intolerances

Staff members suspecting a food intolerance will work alongside parents/carers to keep a diary of foods eaten in school and at home, including any symptoms experienced.

If a staff member suspects a food intolerance, or is the first to identify an allergic reaction in a child, they will:

- Administer the child's prescribed medication immediately in line with our supporting pupils with medical needs policy
- Contact emergency services immediately after administering the medication
- Monitor the child and administer a second dose of medication, if required
- Safely move the child to a location away from the allergen and stay with them at all times

If a staff member suspects that a child has reacted to a food for the first time, they will:

- Immediately tell the senior member of staff on duty, who will contact the child's parents/carers
- Safely move the child away from the allergen and stay with them at all time
- Comfort and reassure the child to keep them calm

Staff members suspecting a food intolerance will work alongside parents/carers to keep a diary of foods eaten in school and at home, including any symptoms experienced.

11. Allergen food labelling

The 14 allergens that we track and highlight are:

- Celery
- Cereals containing gluten, such as wheat, barley, oats and some flours
- Crustaceans, such as prawns, crabs and lobsters
- Eggs
- Fish
- Lupin, such as bread made with lupin seeds
- ilk
- Molluscs, such as mussels and oysters
- Mustard
- Peanuts
- Sesame
- Soybeans
- Sulphur dioxide and sulphites, if they're concentrated at more than 10 parts per million
- Tree nuts, such as almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, brazil nuts, cashews, pecans, pistachios and macadamia nuts

We include information about the presence of any of these allergens in our dishes on our menus, which can be accessed on the school website.

12. Managing other special dietary requirements

We are committed to supporting children with special dietary requirements and food intolerances, ensuring that every child can eat safely and in accordance with their cultural needs and preferences.

Before a child joins our school, we gather detailed information about any special dietary or health requirements, food preferences and intolerances. We share this information with all staff involved in preparing and handing food.

We plan menus to include food substitutions, where necessary, for children with special dietary requirements in mind.

We also:

- Check any product changes with our food suppliers
- Ensure caterers read labels and product information before using a product
- Supervise children at mealtimes to avoid food sharing

12.1 Provision for cultural and dietary preferences

We understand that food preferences can be linked to cultural backgrounds, religious beliefs, or personal choices, such as vegetarianism.

- An inclusive eating environment that caters to the cultural and dietary needs of all children is created by:
- Communicating openly with parents/carers to understand specific food preferences or needs, such as halal or kosher
- Being sensitive to certain customs, and how these affect meal and snack times
- Adapting menus to include foods from different cultures
- Always having a vegetarian option available

12.2 Children with additional support needs

For children with physical, developmental, or sensory issues affecting their eating, we work with parents/carers and health professionals to:

- Offer one-to-one support if needed
- Adjust the eating environment (e.g. limiting noise)

For medically required special diets not covered in this policy, we need written confirmation from a health professional to ensure we meet the child's specific nutritional needs.

13. Food brought in from home

We share our food and nutrition policy with parents/carers before children join the school, with annual reminders to help them understand our requirements and encourage healthy choices for packed lunches, and any other food brought from home.

The following foods must not be brought into school on any occasion:

- Nuts or nut-based products (in line with school allergy policy)

13.1 Packed lunches

We allow parents/carers to provide packed lunches for their child.

Each packed lunch must be handed to staff when the child arrives at school. It should include:

- A main item (e.g. sandwich, wrap, pasta, rice or similar)
- At least one fruit or vegetable
- A dairy item or alternative (e.g. cheese, yogurt)
- A carbohydrate snack (e.g. crackers, breadsticks)
- A drink (water is recommended)
- Food that is easy to open and eat independently
- Food that is cut appropriately to reduce choking risk (e.g. grapes cut lengthwise)

Packed lunches must not include:

- Nuts or nut-based products (in line with school allergy policy)
- Shellfish
- Whole grapes, cherry tomatoes, or other choking hazards unless prepared safely
- Fizzy drinks or energy drinks
- Excessive sweets, chocolate, or high-sugar items

We inform parents/carers about best practices for packing lunches, and ask them to:

- Use insulated, sealed bags for perishable foods
- Label lunch bags and their contents with the child's name
- Make sure that the food is suitable for the child's developmental needs and is prepared in a way to prevent choking

13.2 Safety and hygiene

Staff check all food brought from home for potential allergens to reduce the risk of cross-contamination.

For children with allergies, staff will store packed lunches separately to reduce the risk of cross-contamination.

Due to food safety reasons, we do not provide refrigeration for packed lunches or reheat food from home.

13.2 Celebrations

If parents/carers, visitors, volunteers or school staff wish to bring in food for special occasions, we ask that they only do this on 1 of the following:

- For their own child's birthday
- When asked to by the school
- When it has been agreed in advance

Food brought into school must not contain:

- Nuts or nut-based products (in line with school allergy policy)
- Shellfish

We ask that they follow the following guidelines:

- Provide healthy birthday celebration options (e.g. fruit platters) or non-edible items (e.g. stickers) to share with the children, to promote consistent healthy eating messages
- Consider sharing healthy dishes during wider school celebrations, such as cultural diversity week

14. Learning about food

Our curriculum includes engaging food-related activities, including:

- Preparing simple meals, such as sandwiches and fruit salads
- Planting easy-to-grow seeds, such as cress and lettuce

We involve parents/carers by:

- Suggesting recipes and activities they can do at home with their child

15. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the headteacher annually. At every review, the policy will be shared with and approved by the proprietary board.