

Dacre Braithwaite C of E Primary School



School Food Policy March

2026

School Food Policy

Introduction

In the Department for Education document 'School food in England: Departmental advice for governing bodies' (March 2019) "Governing bodies are strongly encouraged to work with the senior leadership team to develop a whole school food policy; setting out the school's approach to its provision of food, food education (including practical cooking), the role of the catering team as part of the wider school team and the school's strategy to increase the take-up of school lunches."

This policy has been written to take into account and comply with the mandatory national School Food Standards (March 2019). These standards:

- Outline what can and cannot be provided during the extended school day (between the hours of 8am and 6pm)
- Ensure a wide variety of foods are served across the school week for a good balance of nutrients.

The work the school does in relation to school food will contribute to the Ofsted framework. In particular:

- are pupils supported to make healthy and informed lifestyle choices?
- does the school provide a positive lunchtime dining environment?

Context

Research proves that good food is vital to children's health, development, concentration, behaviour and academic achievement.

We know that obesity doubles between Reception and Year 6 and that one third of children are leaving primary school overweight or obese. We know that one third of children have tooth decay. Good eating habits established in childhood are more likely to be maintained in adulthood. This will influence health:

- In the short term to ensure healthy weight and good dental health
- In the long term to protect against type 2 diabetes, heart disease and cancer.

Plus if we can influence how food is grown and produced it can also have a positive impact on sustaining our local economy, the environment, climate change and health.

Rationale

At Dacre Braithwaite C of E Primary School we recognise the importance of a healthy diet and the significant connection between a healthy diet and a pupil's ability to learn effectively in school. It is important we consider all elements of our work to ensure that awareness of healthy eating is promoted to all members of the school and wider community.

Healthy lifestyles can be promoted through effective leadership, school ethos and a broad and balanced curriculum.

Aims

- To ensure that all food and drink served is **in line with the Government's mandatory standards**, is varied, is served in appropriate portion sizes, looks good and tastes good.
- To ensure that all aspects of food and nutrition in school promote the health and wellbeing of the whole school community.
- To ensure that all members of the school community are able to make informed food choices and are aware of the importance of healthy food, where our food comes from and the need to support sustainable food and farming practices.
- To make every reasonable effort to ensure that food provision in the school reflects the ethical and medical requirements of staff and pupils e.g. religious, ethnic, vegetarian and medical needs and that all relevant staff members (including non-teaching staff e.g. midday assistants) are aware of these.
- To ensure that the EU Food Information for Consumers Regulation No.1169/2011 requirement for food providers to make information available about allergenic ingredients used in any food and drink served is being met.
- To involve the school community in all aspects of food in schools.
- To make healthier choices quicker, easier and better value for money.
- To ensure that all food and drinks consumed as snacks are healthy for teeth.
- To ensure all staff and volunteers involved in food preparation, other than school lunches, e.g. fund raising events and cooking in the classroom, demonstrate good food safety practices and ideally have a food hygiene certificate.
- To take a whole school approach to healthy eating to ensure that messages taught in the curriculum are reflected throughout the school day.
- To raise awareness and promote the eligibility criteria in relation to free school meals for parents and carers, as well as increasing the uptake of school meals.

Food provision in our school

Food Safety

The Headteacher has a responsibility to ensure that all food produced, prepared or served on the premises is safe. (The activity of food preparation, handling and serving of food in the classroom is distinct from the provision of school lunch by caterers).

Break Time

Background

Break time snacks include both those brought from home or provided by school. Children in Key Stage One benefit from the National School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme which entitles them to one free piece of fruit or vegetable a day.

As many children & young people consume large quantities of snacks every day, providing an environment to making healthier choices, easier choices could have a huge impact on health. Working with parents will help to reinforce healthy eating messages, support the whole school approach to food and ensure food meets the standards.

Lunchtime Provision

Promoting a positive lunchtime experience

Background

Dining environments should be a pleasant, social and cultural experience. Happy dining environments help to promote a positive lunchtime experience.

Aims::

- To provide a dining environment that is a desirable place to eat
- To ensure there is enough space to sit and eat a meal feeling refreshed and relaxed ready for learning in the afternoon.

School meals

Background

Aims We will provide our pupils with the opportunity to eat a healthy, balanced meal and will ensure a range of meals which take into account health needs and religious and ethnic preferences. We will ensure the service is consistent with our teaching of healthy eating including the 'at least 5 a day' message and the 'Eatwell Plate' and compliant with the School Food Standards.

Hutchisons Caterers are the school meal provider for Dacre Braithwaite. They are fully compliant with the School Food Standards.

Dietary requirements:

There is always a suitable vegetarian option available. The vegetarian option ensures that a pupil will not be nutritionally disadvantaged. Children with specific food allergies have health plans which are shared with all staff and displayed in the kitchen and staff room.

Packed lunches

Background

It is a common misconception that a packed lunch brought from home is healthier than a school meal. The new standards for school food do not cover a packed lunch however studies have shown that packed lunches often contain high levels of salt, fat and sugar.

Aim

- To set guidelines (in consultation with parents) regarding the content of packed lunches in line with the whole school approach to food in schools.
- To ensure that packed lunches are stored safely to avoid food safety risks.

Drinks

Background

Health benefits of drinking water are widely acknowledged. In line with the School Food Standards, the whole school community should have access to free fresh drinking water throughout the school day. Any other drinks provided at lunchtime or throughout the school day should be in line with the School Food Standards.

Aim

- To encourage pupils to drink water frequently.
- To ensure that drinks consumed in school consist only water or milk

Food in the Curriculum

Background

The head teacher has a responsibility for preparing the curriculum policy. The governing body's strategic role is to consider, agree, monitor and review the policy and its implementation.

Aims:

- To enable pupils to make healthy and informed choices by increasing knowledge, changing attitudes and enhancing skills.
- To educate pupils to understand the importance of a balanced diet, appropriate portion sizes, where food comes from and the relationship between food, physical activity and health benefits.
- To ensure schemes of work for all key stages will reflect the whole-school approach to healthy eating.
- To ensure opportunities within the whole school curriculum promote and raise awareness of the following topics- healthy weight, healthy diet, oral health.

Food Supplied at School Events and Celebrations

Background

The national School Food Standards do not apply at parties, celebrations to mark religious or cultural occasions, or at fund-raising events. However consideration should be given as to how the food and prizes supplied at school events is consistent with the school ethos with regard to food.

Aim

- To ensure that healthy food and drink options are available at all school events, including parties, celebrations and fund-raising events.

Role of Governors

Governing bodies have a key role to play in food in school. They have a duty to ensure that healthy eating is promoted, encouraged and embedded within the school ethos.

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the national school food standards are met.

- All food and drink provided in applicable schools must meet the national school food standards. Where food is provided by the local authority or a private caterer, compliance with the school food standards should be specified within the catering contract or service level agreement and the caterer should provide the governing body with evidence of compliance with the standards. If the school provides food it should evaluate the food and drink provision against the standards, and produce evidence of compliance.
- There should be a process in place to ensure that catering services are coordinated across all school food and drink outlets to ensure that compliance with the school food standards is maintained.
- The governing body should ensure that it receives regular reports on compliance with the school food standards as well as take-up of school lunches and financial aspects of school food provision.

Links to other policies

Other existing school policies may link to various aspects of the food policy.

School Medical Policy
Health & Safety Policy

Monitoring and review

The policy will be reviewed regularly and take into account any local or national guidance. It is the responsibility of the governing body to ensure that the policy is monitored and reviewed

Policy	Date of Approval	Date of renewal
School Food Policy	March 2026	March 2029

Resources to support policy development

Key National Documents

The School Food Plan and School Food Standards

<http://www.schoolfoodplan.com/standards/>

School food in England: Departmental advice for governing bodies

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/393122/School_food_in_England_2015.pdf

Information on food allergens

www.food.gov.uk/allergy

and food allergen poster

<http://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/fsa-dfe-eu-fic-schools-posterv2.pdf>

Government Buying Standards for food and catering services

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/food-buying-standards-for-the-public-sector-the-plan-toolkit>

School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme factfile

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/5ADAY/Documents/SFVS%20Factfile%20for%20Schools.pdf>

Safer Food Better Business Pack

<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/sfbb>

Supporting Information

Change 4 Life School Zone

<https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/schools>

Children's Food Trust

Understand your responsibilities and get expert help. Includes 'Let's Get Cooking', online learning, accreditation programme. <http://www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk/childrens-food-trust/schools/>

Food Standards Agency

<http://www.food.gov.uk/>

Food - a fact of life

Provides a wealth of free resources about healthy eating, cooking, food and farming for children and young people aged 3 to 18 years.

<http://www.foodafactoflife.org.uk/>

British seasonal food chart

<http://www.whats-in-season.com/>

School Food Matters

Examples of best practice and fun ideas to get children cooking, growing and out onto a farm

<http://www.schoolfoodmatters.com/>