



Whole School Food Policy

January 2024

North Primary School and Nursery

Helping to educate our children in improving their health and well-being for the future

Introduction

As a Healthy School it is important for us to educate our children to enable them to make positive and informed choices concerning food improving their chances of staying healthy. We support the Government's aim to provide healthy school meals and promote healthier foods in schools. The school endeavours to ensure that the standards set by the government are met. The standards cover all foods offered by the school throughout the school day.

We aim to ensure that healthier food and drink is provided at all times of day, taking account of individual needs (e.g. cultural, ethical, medical), reflecting nutrition and healthy eating messages in the curriculum, and with the support of the whole school. The governing body recognises its responsibility for setting a strategic framework for the school's food policy and for monitoring its implementation.

It would be helpful to consider when reading this policy that the school meal or packed lunch is only one third of a child's daily intake of food and that the food-based and nutritional standards are Government led.

The aim of the policy is to:

- Educate our pupils about food types and the affect they have on their health; good and not so good.
- Encourage pupils to take part in the at least 'five-a-day' campaign.
- Limit known unhealthy food types in school to support aim 1.
- Help parents to feel confident that food offered in school meets with their expectations of healthy food.

Action

We will meet our objectives through:

- Discussions with school council.
- A range of curriculum subjects.
- Roots to Food (An annual cooking session from TCS for Years 3 and 4)

Snack Time

Children in Foundation Stage have a daily snack time. Nursery children help prepare their own snack, this introduces children to skills such as spreading, cutting, sharing and clearing away. Cooking is used to convey part of the Foundation Stage skills to the children, Nursery children cook on a weekly basis, Reception children cook regularly.

The school participates in the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme and both Key Stage 1 and Foundation Stage classes are given washed fruit or vegetables daily.

Children in Foundation Stage are offered milk daily as part of the National School Milk Subsidy Scheme, providing free milk to children under 5.

Children in Key Stage 2 are encouraged to bring healthy snacks for break times.

A community food basket has been introduced for children in KS2 who may be in need of a snack.

School Meals

Menu

Our school meals, where possible, are prepared using fresh fruit and vegetables each day. Ingredients where possible are sourced locally. The use of frozen food is kept to a minimum.

The school meal service is overseen by TCS. All menus comply fully with the Government's Nutrition and Food Standards.

The menu plan is revised twice a year to offer Summer and Winter meal options. We reserve the right to amend the menu from time to time, notice will be given to families in advance of any change. The menu is available to view on the school website.

Universal Infant Free School Meals for Children in Key Stage 1

All children in Reception and Years 1 and 2 are entitled to receive a free school meal.

School Meals Entitlement for Children in Key Stage 2

Free School Meals are administered by the Local Authority and the qualifying rules are decided by Central Government. As the qualifying rules change from time to time it is important to check for the most up to date information which can be found on Essex County Council's website. Applications should be made online via this website

www.essex.gov.uk/Education-Schools/Schools/Pupil-Parent-Support

Should a child(ren) be entitled to receive free school meals it does not exclude them from bringing a packed lunch at any time. Due to our dinner monies administration method children that are entitled to free meals are not easily identified and the families' entitlement remains confidential to office staff.

Currently part of the funding formula for the school budget is based upon the number of children entitled to Free School Meals. It is helpful to the school that the Free School Meal entitlement is applied for, should you meet the qualifying rules.

Lunchboxes

Many children bring packed lunches. We encourage parents and carers to consider the Food Policy when providing packed lunches for their children.

Health, Allergy or Other Dietary requirements.

It is important for parents to advise the school, in writing, as soon as possible if their child is diagnosed as suffering from a health condition or allergy related to food consumption. They should also advise of any other specific dietary needs such as vegetarian, vegan or for religious reasons. As a measure of good practice, if possible, confirmation by a health professional of any medical condition should be given to the school to ensure that the school may also support the child correctly.

Children are encouraged to take responsibility for their dietary requirement with their parents' support and they should be aware of their choices concerning foods. The school also has a card system to support children with dietary requirements.

The school lunch menus are distributed to families as soon as they are changed. It is important for parents of children with food related conditions to ensure, should their child wish to have a school meal, that the menu for that day is suitable.

To reduce risk to children with severe nut allergies, the school does not allow nuts or products containing nuts. This applies to packed lunches and snacks brought in from home.

Water Provision

Water is freely available throughout the school day to all members of the school community. All cold water taps are suitable for drinking. Children are encouraged to bring a bottle of water to school daily. Squash, fruit juices and fizzy drinks are not permitted. Children may drink their water at any time except during assemblies. Regular water and brain breaks are encouraged by the class teacher.

Food across the Curriculum

Children at North have many opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of food and healthy eating.

We believe that wherever possible cross curricular links should be made to enable children to make logical connections between curricular areas. For example:

The **Science** curriculum has statutory guidelines for teaching about food. Children learn about food groups, their nutritional composition, digestion, and the function of different nutrients in contributing to health and how the body responds to exercise.

In **DT** food preparation and cookery may take place, this will include peeling, chopping, and preparing food. Children have the opportunity to taste different foods, and to eat the things they have prepared.

In **Geography** children are given the opportunity to learn about how food differs from one culture to another and how the economic and climatic situation of a country affects the availability of food.

In **History** the children learn how food and diet has changed over time.

In **RE**, children learn about different religions, their beliefs, traditions, and customs. Where possible children are given opportunities to make and taste food from other religions.

Gardening Club teaches children about ingredients used in cookery, how some of them grow, what is needed to nurture their growth, and how they are prepared to produce healthy meals.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

The governors promote a whole school community approach to every aspect of school life. The partnership of home and school, and each reinforcing the other, is critical to the success of this approach.

Developing our children's potential is the aim of North School and it has been found that foods high in sugar and carbohydrate can lead to poor concentration and for some children have an impact on their behaviour. Returning to the aims of the policy; it is not the school's intention to eradicate certain foods from our children's diets but to reinforce that whilst in school there is an emphasis on educating our pupils to stay healthy now and in the future

A healthy diet is vital for growth and development. While it can sometimes seem that children don't like anything 'good for them', healthy habits do start young - and, reassuringly, will be remembered in later years." Lyndel Costain

Role of Governors

In all schools Governing Bodies have a duty to ensure that a healthy eating culture is fostered throughout the school and forms part of its ethos.

The governing body are responsible for monitoring and reviewing the policy development and the relevant committees will require regular feedback. This may include:

- Formal curriculum: teachers being able to identify food-based topics through schemes of work.
- Implementation of best practice by caterers
- Take-up of school lunches
- Pupil and parent satisfaction surveys

Governors monitor and check that the school policies are upheld as well as ensuring that they meet internal and external standards (e.g. Ofsted, DfE, Healthy Schools) set for schools to achieve.

Useful website addresses:

www.myschoollunch.co.uk

www.rhs.org.uk/schoolgardening

www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk

<http://www.schoolfoodplan.com>

This policy was discussed by the Curriculum Committee

11/01/2024

This policy was adopted by the Governing Body on

15/02/2024

It will be reviewed in the Spring Term 2026