

Ravensbury Community School

Food and Drinks Policy



Introduction

At Ravensbury Community School we are aware of the current situation regarding rising obesity levels in children and concerns about the effect of junk food and drink on the health and behaviour of children and young people. We also understand the need to improve the diets of children to help with educational attainment and the role schools can play in this but we also recognise that eating in school should be a pleasurable experience. In our school we are committed to giving all our pupils consistent messages about all aspects of health to help them understand the impact of particular behaviours, and encourage them to take responsibility for the choices they make. We seek to be a healthy school. It is important that we consider all elements of our work to ensure that we promote health awareness in all members of the school community. We can provide a valuable role model to pupils and their families with regard to food and healthy eating patterns. This policy should read alongside the school's PSHE, Drug and RSE policies.

Definition

It is important that healthy eating messages are consistent throughout the school day and therefore a whole school approach has been adopted. The school supports the '5-A-DAY' campaign to encourage children to eat five portions of fruit and vegetables a day. The children, parents/carers and their families are aware of the healthy eating ethos of the school as it is consistently reflected through the following:

- Formal curriculum e.g. design and technology, science, PSHE and PE/PA
- Extra-curricular activities and participation in local and national events and initiatives, e.g. parents cookery club, parent workshops, Grow-it gardening clubs and harvest festival
- Provision of food and drink at school, e.g. breakfast club, fruit at playtimes, school lunches and drinking water/milk
- Consumption of food and drink at school e.g. dining room environment, style of service, timings, pupils bringing food to school, i.e. lunch boxes
- Promotion of food and drink and free school meals uptake including advertising and sponsorship.
- Inclusivity – special diets, cultural and age (portion size).

Legal/National Requirements

- Schools are required by law to meet the School Food Regulations (2014). The standards as set out in these are as follows:
- The food-based standards for school food other than lunch were updated in February 2023.

- The nutrient-based standards and final food-based standards for school lunches came into force for primary in February 2005.

A child's healthy, balanced diet should consist of:

- plenty of fruit and vegetables
- plenty of unrefined starchy foods
- some meat, fish, eggs, beans and other non-dairy sources of protein
- some milk and dairy foods; Lower fat milk is available for all children at lunchtime.
- a small amount of food and drink high in fat, sugar and salt

Governing bodies have a responsibility to provide the following meals services within schools:

- Free School Meals – to those pupils who are entitled to a free school meal (FSM).
- Paid School Meals – to any other pupil within the school whose parents have requested that a meal is provided.
- Facilities to Eat Packed Lunches – to enable pupils who have brought food from home to eat it. Pupils cannot be charged for the use of facilities.

Ethos and Values

We believe that children and young people are entitled to receive both good quality healthy eating education and food provision. It is important that healthy eating messages are consistent throughout the school day and therefore a whole school approach has been adopted. The children, parents/carers and their families are aware of the healthy eating ethos of the school as it is reflected in before and after school provision, snack and lunchtimes, treats and rewards and role models.

Aims

We aim to encourage our children and young people to develop healthy eating and drinking behaviours. We will promote clear and consistent messages about food, drink and nutrition through the classroom setting, through the provision of food and drink, and in all other aspects of school life and in conjunction with parents/carers.

Objectives

a) National Curriculum

We aim, through food and nutrition education, to enable children and young people to make healthy informed choices by increasing knowledge, changing attitudes and enhancing skills. Food and nutrition education is a progressive and developmental curriculum which is threaded through different subjects in our bespoke curriculum. From nursery up to Year 6, children learn safety skills associated with cooking and also develop a deep understanding of what constitutes healthy eating and living. Where possible, children learn to cook with the ingredients we grow in our school gardens and parents and the community are invited to be a part of this learning journey. We will regularly review the curriculum to ensure that information is up to date and consistent and that a cross-curricular approach is utilised as a vehicle for delivering messages about healthy eating. Teachers are confident in having the knowledge, skills and resources to deliver the food and nutrition curriculum. The resources used to teach this will be the Happy, Healthy Me unit within the JIGSAW PSHE curriculum

b) School Meals

We aim to provide our children and young people with the opportunity to eat a healthy, balanced meal, that is culturally acceptable and meets the School Food Standards. Halal food is available for

Muslim children. (www.schoolfoodtrust.org.uk). All of our school meals are provided by Mellor's catering.

c) Marketing

We have strategies in place to promote healthy school lunch options such as; taster sessions, staff who are willing to discuss the healthy choices with the children and highlighting the healthy options on attractive menus or displays.

d) Quality of the environment

We aim to provide a dining area which is a desirable place to eat, where children feel comfortable to enjoy their food. We will do this by: allowing children to choose where they sit, staff interacting with children and encouraging positive behaviours towards food, children having enough time to eat their dinner, cutting queuing times, children getting their first choice option and monitoring noise levels and behaviour. Round tables have been introduced to allow children to sit and speak with their friends at lunchtime. A new lunchtime protocol was introduced in September 2023 which sets out what is expected when in the dining room.

e) Breakfast

We will encourage young people to eat breakfast before attending school and we will promote the school's breakfast club. Food served at the breakfast club is in keeping with meeting the National Food Based Nutritional Standards. Breakfast Club operates on a daily basis, the food offered is healthy and is consistent with a healthy diet. Any child who has not had breakfast at home will be offered toast.

f) Packed Lunches

We encourage parents/carers to provide pupils with a healthy, varied packed lunch each day for example through: healthy eating newsletters, the school web-site, packed lunch advice sheets and hosting parental food workshops, advice from the school nurse (Packed Lunch Policy template attached in appendix 1). Children can bring in unsweetened drinks and milk (water is also freely available to all pupils in the dinner hall). We also advise that for health and safety reasons, if grapes are sent in as a healthy snack, parents cut them lengthways to avoid choking. Children will not be served whole grapes in school. We are a nut free school so we advise that children do not bring in nuts or any products containing nuts which may cause an allergic reaction or anaphylaxis.

g) Break-time snacking, rewards and treats

We take part in the Government initiative to provide all EYFS and Key stage 1 children with free fruit. We also purchase fruit for all pupils in Key Stage 2. No other snack is allowed. We actively discourage children and young people from consuming high fat, high sugar snacks. Unhealthy foods used as rewards and as birthday treats is not encouraged, however we do allow children to bring in a small amount of treats to share with the class for Birthdays. We politely request that cakes are not brought in to school, due to the disruption caused and health and safety issues when cutting and distributing.

h) Water for all

Easily accessible fresh drinking water is made available to all pupils throughout the day. Water coolers are available in each shared area across the school and in each classroom in the EYFS, children have access to these. Pupils are provided with water bottles which they are encouraged to fill throughout the day. They are encouraged to keep hydrated throughout the day, in lessons, during playtimes and lunchtime.

i) Parents

The partnership of home and school is critical in shaping how children behave, particularly where health is concerned. Each must reinforce the other. We will ensure that education about healthy eating is available for parents and signpost them to other agencies/organisations who provide

opportunities for adult education and skill development around cooking and nutrition. We will also encourage them to continue to promote healthy eating in the home through: interactive cooking sessions in school, homework around healthy eating to be completed with a parent, after school cooking clubs for children and parents, delivering parental healthy eating packed lunch sessions in school and parent coffee mornings

j) Food Allergy

The school considers the needs of pupils with food allergies and developed appropriate procedures. We will ensure that affected children are not unknowingly exposed to food allergens like nuts, shellfish and dairy products during school hours. When teaching the food and nutrition curriculum, we will consider the needs of food allergic pupils. The school also provides food in accordance with pupil's beliefs, practices and medical requirements as required, this information is shared with the catering team. New dietary requirements should be communicated to the school office immediately for them to notify the relevant staff members. When teaching the food and nutrition curriculum, we will consider the needs of pupils with food allergies and special diets. To minimise risk to children with allergies, no home cooked food is to be brought into class to share.

k) Referrals

Where appropriate, a school nurse referral system is in place for underweight and overweight children which follow the appropriate pathways for children.

l) Staff Training

We will provide opportunities for relevant members of staff to receive training to improve their skills and knowledge around encouraging healthier eating in school, e.g. staff members to attend the core Healthy Schools healthy eating training – 'Promoting Healthy Lifestyles as a Whole School Approach', the Healthy Schools training – 'Food and Parents' and the Lunchtime Organiser training (see www.manchesterhealthyschools.nhs.uk).

Policy, Leadership and Management

The key person to lead in the area of food and policy is the Headteacher and PSHE Coordinator/Healthy Schools Lead; Anna Ratcliffe and the Catering Staff. All teachers are committed in supporting the implementation of this policy.

Dissemination

The governing body recognises its responsibility for getting a strategic framework for the schools' food policy and for monitoring and implementing the policy.

Monitoring, Assessment and Review

We will monitor the food policy by: looking at the take up of school lunches, free school meals, the quality of packed lunches, up take of fruit at playtimes, satisfaction surveys etc. The Head teacher will monitor the quality of the meals on a regular basis. Monitoring and reviewing will lead to ongoing policy development with changes if applicable. This section of the policy could be linked to the PSHE policy.

Breaches of Policy

The whole school community is aware of and understands the process/protocols in place for breach of policy.

Relationship with other policies

The Physical Activity/Education, Drugs and PSHE policies should all complement each other and share the same ethos of our Healthy School.

Date and Review of Policy

The governors agreed this policy on 30th April 2024 and it will be reviewed in partnership with staff, parents / carers and pupils again in 2027 unless there are changes to National or Local Guidance.

Packed Lunch Policy

Overall aim of the policy:

To ensure that all packed lunches brought from home and consumed in school (or on school trips) provide the pupil with healthy and nutritious food.

Food and drink in packed lunches: what the policy states

- *The school will provide facilities for pupils bringing in packed lunches and ensure that free, fresh drinking water is readily available at all times.*
- *The school will work with the pupils to provide attractive and appropriate dining room arrangements*
- *The school will work with parents to ensure that packed lunches abide by the standards listed below.*
- *As fridge space is not available in school, pupils are advised to bring packed lunches in insulated bags with freezer blocks where possible to stop the food going off.*
- *Wherever possible the school will ensure that packed lunch pupils and school dinner pupils will be able to sit and eat together.*

Packed lunches should include:

- *At least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetables every day.*
- *Meat, fish or other source of non-dairy protein (e.g. lentils, kidney beans, chickpeas, hummus and falafel) every day*
- *Oily fish, such as salmon, at least once every three weeks.*
- *A starchy food such as any type of bread, pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes or other type of cereals every day.*
- *Dairy food such as milk, cheese, yoghurt, or fromage frais everyday*
- *Still water or skimmed or semi-skimmed milk to drink.*

Packed lunches should avoid:

- *Snacks such as crisps. Instead, include, seeds, vegetables and fruit (with no added salt, sugar or fat). Savoury crackers (unsalted) or breadsticks served with fruit, vegetables or dairy foods are also a good choice.*
- *Confectionery such as chocolate bars, chocolate-coated biscuits, cereal bars and sweets are **not** healthy choices. One small cake or plain biscuit is allowed but encourage your child to eat these only as part of a balanced meal.*
- *Meat products such as sausage rolls, pies, peperami sticks etc are high in fat and salt and should **not** be included.*

Special diets and allergies

We are aware of nut allergies. The school also recognises that some pupils may require special diets that do not allow for the standards to be met exactly. In this case parents are urged to be responsible in ensuring that packed lunches are as healthy as possible. For these reasons pupils are also not permitted to swap food items.

Assessment, evaluation and reviewing:

Packed lunches will be regularly reviewed by teaching staff / catering staff / midday meal supervisors and pre-identified pupil packed lunch helpers.

Parents and pupils who do not adhere to the Packed Lunch Policy will receive a leaflet in the packed lunch informing them of the Policy. If a child regularly brings a packed lunch that does not conform to the policy then the school will contact the parents to discuss this.

Please note: pupils with special diets will be given due consideration.

Involvement of parents/carers:

Pupils are normally expected to eat the lunch provided by the school. However, parents of pupils wishing to have packed lunches for a particular reason are expected to provide their children with packed lunches which conform to the packed lunch policy.

Dissemination of the policy:

The school will write to all new and existing parents/carers to inform them of the policy via the school newsletter.

The policy will be available on the school's website and will be incorporated into the school prospectus.

The school will use opportunities such as: parents' evenings, parents' workshops and Healthy Living weeks to promote this policy as part of a whole school approach to healthier eating.

All school staff, including teaching and catering staff and the school nurse, will be informed of this policy and will support its implementation.

Signed:

Dated:

Appendix 2 Useful Policy and Food related web site links.

Healthy Schools Manchester www.healthyschoolsmanchester.nhs.uk.

The Childrens Food Trust www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk.

The British Nutrition Foundation <http://www.nutrition.org.uk/home.asp?siteId=43§ionId=s>

The Food Standards Agency <http://www.food.gov.uk>.

Food allergy in Schools and Nurseries Fact Sheet <http://www.uhs.nhs.uk>.

The School Food Plan <http://www.schoolfoodplan.com/>

The School Food Plan – Standards <http://www.schoolfoodplan.com/standards/>

The School Food Plan – Creating a Culture and Ethos of Healthy Eating

<http://www.schoolfoodplan.com/wpcontent/uploads/2015/09/Creating-a-culture-ethos-of-healthy-eating-Practical-Guidance-Final.pdf>

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The School Food Plan – School Food: Guidance for Governors

<http://whatworkswell.schoolfoodplan.com/site/article-files/254ddd1d-091b-44e1-a19a-212d61caa205.pdf>