



Eating and Drinking Policy

APPROVED BY:	Tracey Smith, Headteacher
APPROVED BY SIGNATURE:	
DATE APPROVED:	June 10 th 2024
REVIEW CYCLE:	Annually
DATE OF NEXT REVIEW:	June 2025

Policy Aims:

1. Pupils are given opportunities to try new foods and explore different tastes and textures.
2. Pupils are encouraged to eat and drink regularly throughout the day.
3. Pupils will not go hungry or thirsty by changing strategies and approaches to eating and drinking, such as changing equipment.
4. Pupils will develop healthy habits around food hygiene (washing hands before eating).
5. Parents/Carers will be kept informed around their child's food and drink consumption.

Meal and Snack times:

Breakfast

- Breakfast Club will be offered to all Pupil Premium children upon arrival to school and will be available to any pupil who appears hungry or who staff feel would benefit from having breakfast at the start of the day.

Snack time

- Pupils in Early Years and Key Stage 1 will have a designated snack time set into their timetable whereby they will learn how to drink out of an open cup, be encouraged to make choices of fruit and learn to communicate these choices with symbols, Aided Language Displays (ALDS), Objects of Reference (OoR) or verbal requests. Fruit is provided as part of the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme.
- During snack time, Key Stage 1 pupils will always be offered healthy choices. However, staff will be aware that some pupils may have anxieties around food and may have sensory aversions which will prevent them from wanting to eat fruit. These pupils will be offered an alternative snack from home.
- Pupils, Key Stage 2 upwards, will have snack as part of their morning breaktime, where a snack from home will be brought into school. If a pupil has forgotten their snack, or are hungry, school will provide a piece of fruit or snack from the school kitchen or Pastoral Hub.

Lunch

- Lunch is provided free to pupils up to the end of Year 2 under the Universal Infant Free School Meal scheme. Lunch is also free to pupils who are eligible for Free School Meals.
- Pupils are encouraged to try different foods through the offer of taster plates from the school kitchen, in each classroom. Staff will promote the trying of new foods (texture and tastes) to those pupils who do not have a hot school meal, with communication and agreement with parent carers.
- Pupils who are non-speaking or limited speaking will have individual lunch mat aided language displays (see appendix 1). The pupils can communicate and will have communication actively modelled to them around meal times.
- Pupils will be encouraged to eat foods at designated meal times, however staff will also be aware that for some pupils, they may need smaller meals throughout the day, or more regular snacks. This approach will be communicated with and agreed with Parents/Carers.
- If a pupil refuses to eat a meal choice from the hot dinner menu, staff will liaise with the school kitchen to get the pupil a different meal choice that they may prefer. This will be communicated to Parents/Carers in order for them to track their child's likes and dislikes.

- If a pupil appears hungry after eating a hot meal from the kitchen, staff will request a larger portion and get the pupil more food. Similarly, if a child appears hungry at any point during the day, the pupil will be offered food. This will be communicated to Parents/Carers in order for them to track their child's eating habits and patterns.
- Staff will be aware that hunger can affect a pupil's ability to regulate and therefore, upon noticing a pupil is hungry (whether verbally stated or through changes in behaviour) the pupil will be offered food from the kitchen, EY/KS1 fruit or Pastoral team. This will be communicated to Parents/Carers in order for them to be aware of their child's changing needs and emerging patterns.
- If a pupil has not eaten much in the school day, **this must be reported to Parents/Carers that same day**. It must also go onto MyConcern and detail the attempts to encourage food intake.
- If a pupil has appeared to be more hungry than usual, this must also be reported to Parent carers, as well as logged on MyConcern.
- Food must not and will not, be withheld or used as a punishment.
- If a pupil does not eat the contents of their lunchbox, this needs to go home so that Parents/Carers are able to monitor and changes to lunches made accordingly, it must not be thrown away.
- Dessert must still be offered regardless of whether a pupil has eaten their dinner.
- Lunch plates must be cleared away after pupils have finished eating and lunch trolleys **MUST** be returned to the kitchen/dining hall after lunch sitting in order to ensure that food is not left in classrooms or corridors. Staff must also ensure that cutlery is not left where it may be accessible to pupils.

Drinks

- Water will always be offered as a drink, however if a child will not drink water, Parents/Carers are able to send in bottles of cordial to fill cups/drink bottles throughout the day. They will be informed when the bottles of cordial are running low to ensure there is always a supply of the preferred juice they drink.
- Pupils should be able to access a drink whenever required throughout their day. Parents/Carers will be asked to provide a refillable bottle to school and staff will encourage pupils to drink regularly throughout the day.
- The School will hold a supply of refillable bottles to support those who may forget or who don't have one.
- If a child is reluctant to drink or has restricted fluid intake, staff will be creative in approaches to get pupils to drink with close liaison with Parents/Carers (for example; ice lollies). Staff are also aware of other agencies who are able to support with restricted fluid intake – OT (Occupational Therapist) and school nurse. **If a pupil has not drunk much in the school day, this must be reported to Parents/Carers that same day.**
- Milk is provided free to pupils under the age of 5, those who are Free School Meals (FSM) and those who are Pupil Premium (PP). Parents/Carers are able to request milk each term for those pupils who would like milk as a drink.

Staff must know that children may not be aware of when they are hungry or thirsty and will ensure basic needs of pupils are met through regular offerings of food and drink throughout the day, or as and when particular behaviours are displayed.

Eating and drinking environment:

- Pupils in Early Years, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 will have their meal times in the classrooms as this supports their sensory and social needs better.
- Pupils in Key Stages 3 to 5 have the choice to eat together in the hall or in their classrooms. This will be based upon pupil voice and with liaison of phase leads.
- Our Pastoral team offer lunch club for those pupils who struggle with eating in the classroom or dinner hall. They offer a quieter environment in the Pastoral Hub to support those who need it over this time.
- Classroom environments will be encouraged to be relaxing during meal times. Screens can be used, however **only** to display relaxing music to support a calm atmosphere. The use of programmes/songs is not permitted.
- Mealtime environments must be rich with visual support to promote engagement in communication.

Staffing and Supervision:

- Eating times will always be staffed with safety considerations in mind.
- Staff lunches will be on a rota basis to ensure effective staffing is in place in classrooms over meal times. There will always be at least two staff in a classroom to supervise and support meal times at any given time. Where there are four staff in a classroom, the class is staffed with a higher need in mind for the pupils, therefore there must always be three members of staff present to support meal times in these particular classes. Staff lunches will begin from 11.30am to ensure all staff get their lunch break and pupils are staffed appropriately whilst eating.
- Pupils will be supervised appropriately, with staff paying attention to eating needs and support required. Where a choking risk or other need has been identified in the pupil's EHCP, staff will complete an eating plan (see appendix 2). This will outline consistent approaches for individual pupils which all staff will follow at meal times.

Learning opportunities around meal times:

- **Hygiene** – pupils will always wash hands with soap and water before eating (breakfast, snack and lunch). Staff will promote independence in washing hands through modelling and visual support (now and next board, task board). Staff will have the expectation of pupils that they will wash hands before eating and will ensure this has taken place before consumption of food.
- **Use of cutlery** – pupils will be encouraged to use cutlery. Staff will support pupils with physical guidance to use cutlery, offering a back chaining method to scaffold pupil skills with eating. If a child struggles with the use of cutlery, staff will liaise with the OT to ensure the pupil has appropriate cutlery/plate/mat to support independence.
- **Social skill development** – snack and meal times are great opportunities for social skill development. Staff will encourage social skill development by sitting pupils in seating plans to develop conversation and communications with each other, supported by staff facilitating social skills.

- **New tastes and textures** – staff will encourage pupils to try new foods at meal times. This could be through touch, smell or taste in a way appropriate to their needs.
- **All pupils will have a lunch time target** (which is visually represented) to help support a particular area over meal times, e.g. using cutlery, sitting and waiting, clearing plate, holding a conversation, making requests, etc.).

Learning opportunities around food:








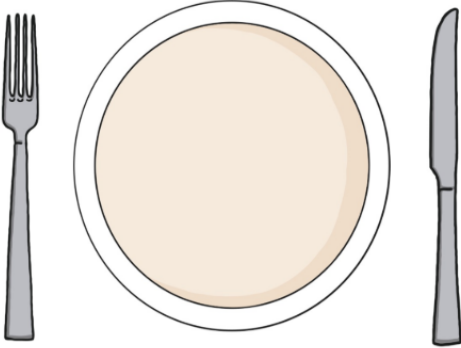






- Pupils will have cooking lessons as part of their curriculum offer.
- Pupils will learn about healthy eating, where food comes from and the different food types.
- Pupils in Early Years and Key Stage 1 have weekly cooking lessons.
- Pupils in Key Stage 2 and 3, have cooking lessons as part of their Design and Technology curriculum.
- Pupils in Key Stage 4 and 5 have vocational opportunities to develop further their cooking and food hygiene knowledge and skills.
- Pupils who follow the Early Years Curriculum or those who are on the orange or purple pathway will have messy play opportunities as part of their sensory curriculum. Through this, pupils will have the opportunity to explore a range of food textures (both wet and dry). This supports desensitisation around food textures and tastes.





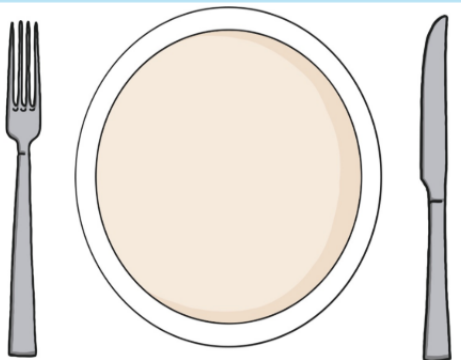


Parents/Carers as partners:

- Staff will ensure information around meal times - i.e what has been eaten/not eaten, skills managed/not managed - is communicated effectively to Parents/Carers each day, or as frequent as is necessary.
- Pupils who are non-speaking or limited with their speaking, will have their food/drink intake reported on daily.
- If a pupil has eaten or drank more/less than usual, this must be communicated to Parents/Carers in the pupil's home school diary or through phone call. This will also be followed up through an entry on MyConcern in order for us to track this.

APPENDIX 1

*lunch box personal choices to edit

 I, me, mine	 want	 drink	 name	 help		
 like	 don't like					
 more	 stop					
 different	 choose				 finished	 hungry

 I, me, mine	 want	 sitting	 name	 help	 dinner	 sandwich
 like	 don't like				 pudding	 yoghurt
 more	 stop				 fruit	 spoon
 different	 choose				 finished	 hungry

APPENDIX 2

Eating Plan

Name of pupil:	Date of birth:
Date of Eating Plan:	Compiled by:

Needs	Practices

Training needs:		
Training provided:		
Signature of tutor	Date	Date eating plan shared with Parents/Carers