



Little Ilford School Whole School Food Policy

Reviewed by Governors: September 2026

Next review: September 2027

1.- Introduction

Little Ilford School is a healthy school and 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. Research has shown clearly that there is a link between nutrition and academic performance and that the best schools worry about what's going on in children's bodies as well as their minds. In our school we are committed to giving all of our students 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.

2.- Aims and Objectives

- To ensure that aspects of food and nutrition in school promote the health and wellbeing of students, staff and visitors to the school.
- To ensure that we are giving consistent messages about food and health to both students and parents.
- To give our students the information they need to make healthy choices about food.
- To promote health and wellbeing awareness
- To establish cross-curricular links relating to healthy food and nutrition.
- To ensure food safety and hygiene practices are followed, including avoiding cross-contamination
- To ensure all staff and parents/carers are aware of their roles in making sure that our pupils consume healthy, nutritious and safe food and drink
- To ensure that the whole school community is involved in the implementation of this policy.

3.- Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the following legislation:

- Benedict's Law
- Natasha's Law

- The Requirements for School Food Regulations 2014
- Food Information (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2019

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

- School Food Standards practical guidance
- School food in England
- Allergy guidance for schools

This policy also follows guidance provided by our local authority.(Newham).

Based on the current legislation and guidance, and to avoid health risks, we ask students to not share food from the school canteen or from home.

4.- Responsibilities of the school

The governing 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 pupils.

5.- Responsibilities of parents/carers

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

We ask all parents/carers to:

Adapt this section to make it relevant to your school

- Inform the school of any allergies, medical dietary needs, food intolerances and religious or cultural dietary requirements. Include when they should do this
- 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 their child is provided with money to buy breakfast at school or will attend our breakfast club
- Read and respond to food-related communication, including school menus
- Keep the school informed of any changes to their child's dietary needs, and/or any concerns or information around their eating
- Take note of the school's scheduled mealtimes (see section 7) and understand that food will only be provided to pupils who are present at these times
- Read and follow the school rules regarding bringing food from home as outlined in section 5.2 of this policy. This includes never bringing or allowing their child to bring the following foods onto the school premises:
 - Nuts and food containing nuts
 - Large packets of crisps
 - Sweets and chocolates

- Fizzy and sugary drinks

5.1.- Partnership with Parents and Carers

The partnership between home and school is critical in shaping how young people behave, particularly where health is concerned. Each must reinforce the other. Our school is well placed to lead by example. Parents and carers will be regularly updated on our water and food policies through school newsletters, the school's website and FLIS meetings.

We ask parents and carers not to send in fizzy or sugary drinks and we remind them that only water may be drunk during the school day, except at lunch when students may drink fruit juice. We do not allow sweets (including chocolate), fizzy/energy drinks or large packets of crisps in school and they will be confiscated until the end of the day.

5.2.- Food that students must not bring to school

In accordance with our Student Allergy Policy, Little Ilford School operates a strict restriction on high-risk nut and sesame products to protect students with life-threatening allergies. The following items must not be brought onto school premises by staff, students, or visitors: packaged raw nuts/trail mixes, cereal/granola/protein/chocolate bars containing nut segments or sesame oil, spreads containing nuts or sesame (e.g., peanut butter, Nutella, tahini), and nut-based sauces or dressings (e.g., satay). Students should only bring into school food and small packets of crisps for their own consumption and these should not be shared with other students.

6.- Communication with parents

We will inform parents/carers 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
- Concerns about wellbeing, such as a pupil's eating habits appearing to affect their mood, energy level or general wellbeing
- Changes or updates to our policy

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

7.- Provisions

We work with Newham and Juniper Catering Services to provide healthy and nutritious meals.

We collaborate with our catering partner by:

- Holding regular meetings with Juniper and their school cook based at our school 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. Our School Council has an active role in this.

The contract with our catering provider is reviewed and re-tendered at the end of the agreed period to make sure we receive the best possible service and value for money.

In buying food and ingredients, our catering company, Juniper, follows the [government's guidance on sustainable procurement](#). Where possible, our catering company buys seasonal and local food, and fish from verifiably sustainable sources (such as products certified by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)).

8.- School meals (breakfast and lunches) and packed lunches

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We follow the [School Food Standards](#), except in relation to food provided in the following circumstances, to which the standards don't apply:

- At parties or celebrations to mark religious or cultural occasions
- At fundraising events (e.g. cakes sale)
- When teaching food preparation and cookery skills, including when the food prepared is served to pupils as part of a school lunch

We provide balanced and nutritious meals, snacks and drinks, from the school canteen and tuck shops before school and at lunch time at the following times: e.g. breakfast, school lunch

Pupils have access to water fountains located around the school throughout the school day.

Pupils are encouraged to eat balanced meals containing a wide variety of foods from the 4 main food groups.

Our menus are:

- Planned to make sure all meals, snacks and drinks are balanced, varied and nutritious and include different foods, 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 regularly with students and parents/carers to:
 - Provide allergen information
 - Help them balance food at home by providing varied meals
 - Reassure them that their child is getting a nutritious and balanced diet at school
 - Seek their feedback, particularly regarding cultural preferences

8.1- Breakfast Club

We feel that breakfast is important as it allows students to start the day with the nutritional requirements and energy that they need for a successful day of learning. Breakfast is available for all students from 7:30 every day, in the dining hall. Students on free-school-meals are invited to have breakfast for free, but all students are welcome to join and purchase food.

8.2.- Water

Pupils have access to water for filling up water bottles outside of lesson times. Students are encouraged and reminded to bring water bottles with them so they can re-fill them as needed to avoid single-use plastics.

8.3- Managing food poisoning

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

- Contact parents/carers immediately to collect the pupil as soon as possible
- Prevent the spread of infection by isolating the pupil in a quiet area with easy access to a sick bowl and toilet
- Monitor the pupil for signs of dehydration, including a dry mouth or confusion
- Encourage the pupil to take small, frequent sips of water

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

8.4- Managing allergies and food intolerances

Individual care plans are created for students with food allergies and who carry **Adrenaline Auto-Injectors (AAIs)**. These can be found in their student files and are regularly updated and circulated by the **Inclusion and School Nurse**. These files are drawn up by health care professionals and document actions to be taken in an emergency and emergency contact details.

8.4.1.- Allergens and food labelling

The 14 allergens that we track and highlight are:

- Celery
- Cereals containing gluten, such wheat, barley, oats and some flours
- Crustaceans, such as prawns, crabs and lobsters
- Eggs
- Fish
- Lupin, such as bread made with lupin seeds
- Milk

- 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

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

- Before a pupil 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 around food allergies by:
 - Knowing the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis
 - Understanding the difference between allergies and intolerances
 - Being aware that pupils can develop allergies at any time

We share information about food allergies with all staff and make them aware of which pupils have allergies or intolerances so they can ensure that the pupil 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.

9.1 Procedures to manage allergies and intolerances

Our caterers plan menus to include food substitutions, where necessary, for pupils with allergies or intolerances.

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/caterers 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 pupil to help manage their allergy or intolerance.

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

We refer to the British Society for Allergy and Clinical Immunology (BSACI) allergy action plans and NHS advice.

9.2 Procedures for managing allergic reactions and intolerances

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

- Administer the pupil's prescribed medication immediately in line with our Students with Medical Conditions Policy
- Contact emergency services immediately after administering the medication
- Monitor the pupil and administer a second dose of medication, if required
- Safely move the pupil to a location away from the allergen and stay with them at all times
- If a staff member suspects that a pupil has reacted to a food for the first time, they will:
 - Immediately tell the senior member of staff on duty, who will contact the pupil's parents/carers
 - Safely move the pupil away from the allergen and stay with them at all times
 - Comfort and reassure the pupil 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.

9.3 Procedures for managing other special dietary requirements

Little Ilford School is committed to supporting pupils with special dietary requirements and food intolerances, ensuring that every pupil can eat safely and in accordance with their cultural needs and preferences.

Before a pupil 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 handling food.

Our caterers plan menus to include food substitutions, where necessary, for pupils with special dietary requirements.

We also:

- Check any product changes with our food suppliers
- Require our caterers / staff preparing food to read labels and product information before using a product
- Avoid activities with food, other than Food Technology and supervise mealtimes to avoid food sharing

9.4 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.

We create an inclusive eating environment that caters to the cultural and dietary needs of all pupils 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
- Encouraging students via the School Council to share traditional/ preferred recipes and give feedback on our menus

9.5 Pupils with additional support needs

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

- Adapt food preparation methods
- Offer one-to-one support if needed
- Adjust the eating environment (e.g. limiting noise, having dedicated lunch times – e.g. before the rest of school)

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

10.- Food brought from home and buying food from outside the school premises

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

The foods mentioned previously in section 5 and 5.2 must **not** be brought into school on any occasion.

10.1- Safety and hygiene

For pupils with allergies, if requested by a pupil or their parents/carers, staff will store food brought from home/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 unless this is specifically agreed on with parents/carers, in writing and it is a medical requirement.

If it is a medical requirement and in the pupil's IHCP, we store packed lunches in designated refrigerators, ensuring we follow the food safety, hygiene and allergy procedures outlined in this policy.

If no refrigeration is available, we only store food outside of chilled conditions for up to a **maximum of 4 hours**, and never more than once.

We ask parents/carers to remind their child to:

- Use insulated sealed bags for perishable foods
- Label their lunch bags and their contents with their name

10.2 Celebrations

- If parents/carers/pupils, 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:
- When asked to by the school
- When it has been agreed in advance with their line manager and approved by the Headteacher.
- Food brought into school **must not contain** any banned food indicated in this policy, such as nuts, sesame seeds, etc.

We ask that they follow the following guidelines:

- Provide healthy celebration options (e.g. fruit platters) or non-edible items (e.g. books) to share with the pupils, to promote consistent healthy eating messages
- Consider sharing healthy dishes during wider school celebrations, such as cake sales and International Day celebrations, etc.

11.- Managing allergens, special diets and understanding cultural food preferences

Our pupils are taught how to:

- Identify the 14 major allergens listed in this policy
- Understand the risks associated with cross contamination
- Adapt recipes and ingredients to accommodate food allergies, intolerances, and cultural or dietary preferences (e.g. vegetarian or halal)

Through our curriculum, our pupils are given the opportunity to:

- Explore the role of food in different cultures and religious beliefs (e.g. the requirements for halal and kosher foods)
- Analyse how preparation methods, ingredient choices (e.g. avoiding pork), and specific eating customs differ across communities and religions
- Develop inclusive menus and recipes that respect and cater to different dietary needs by choosing appropriate substitutions and certified ingredients

12.- Payment of Food

We are a cashless school so all payment for school lunches can be made on ~~iPayimpact/~~ ParentPay. This enables parents to top up accounts at a convenient time with amounts of their choice. If a child is in receipt of free school meals/pupil premium their account will be automatically credited each day. Parents who are not eligible for free school meals but are experiencing financial difficulties are encouraged to discuss this with the relevant Pastoral Achievement Leader.

13.- Food across the Curriculum

- In Key Stages 3 & 4 there are a number of opportunities for students to develop knowledge and understanding of health, including healthy eating patterns and practical skills that are needed to understand where food comes from, such as shopping, preparing and cooking food.

- Science provides an opportunity to learn about the types of food available, their nutritional composition, the balance of good health and digestion and the function of different nutrients in contributing to health and how the body responds to exercise. Students learn how plants grow and provide food.
- Food Technology, a component of Design and Technology, provides the opportunity to learn about where food comes from and gives healthy eating messages through practical work with food, including preparation and cooking.
- PSHE/RSHE encourages young people to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing. It teaches them how to develop a healthy lifestyle and addresses issues such as body image and healthy eating/healthy lifestyle. Students are able to discuss issues of interest to young people, e.g. advertising and sustainable development.
- In MFL, the 'food and wellbeing' topics covers healthy eating and healthy living. Students learn about food and other activities needed to have a healthy lifestyle.
- Other qualifications like ASDAN also cover the topics of healthy eating and healthy living.
- Books on nutritious eating are available in the library. Students also have access to a wealth of free-to-access online resources regarding cooking, nutrition and health.
- Assemblies themes also focus on healthy aspects and how to lead a healthy lifestyle and make healthier choices.

14.- School Council

'Healthy eating' as an agenda item is discussed each year by the School Council and they are consulted on healthy eating options. The School Council meets regularly with the Healthy Schools Coordinator and the Catering Manager to discuss school lunch menu options.

15.- Monitoring and Review

The Headteacher, SLT and the Healthy School Coordinator are responsible for supporting colleagues in the delivery of the Food Policy. The Catering Manager is responsible for the cooked food offered at breakfast and lunch times.

This policy will be reviewed annually and parents kept informed about any significant updates.

Links to Other Policies

- **This policy functions directly alongside and strengthens the Student Allergy Policy (June 2026).**
-