



Food in Schools Policy

Our staff and Governing Body recognise the important connection between a healthy diet and a student's ability to learn effectively and achieve high standards in school. We also recognise that a whole school approach to healthy messages in our curriculum and in the food we provide ensures consistency in the messages given to the school community about the value of a healthy diet. Our staff and Governing Body recognise that sharing food is a fundamental experience for all people. Food is an effective way to nurture and celebrate our cultural diversity, and an excellent way of encouraging social interaction.

Schools are increasingly offering 'extended' services and activities to their communities. This means that pupils, other children and young people, staff, parents/carers and the wider community will be able to access activities co-ordinated by schools which could occur before and after the school day, and during holidays and weekends. Often refreshments and food will be provided during these activities, and we will encourage all providers of services and activities to adhere to the advice contained in this guidance. There will be significant emphasis on being healthy in the type of extended services and activities co-ordinated by our school for our community.

Aim

We at **Sitwell Infant School** aim to improve educational achievement in this school and benefit the entire community by teaching students and their families' ways to establish and maintain life-long healthy and sustainable eating habits. This shall be accomplished via food education and skills development through the academic content in the classroom and food provision within the school.

Objectives

- Nutrition, food sustainability and food safety are taught at an appropriate level throughout each key stage by including it in relevant topics.
- Food is never be used as a reward or as a present within the school setting; or for other school-based activities.
- All staff have access to training about healthy eating.
- All staff and pupils have access to safe, tasty and nutritious food before and during the school day, as appropriate to their age and the time spent on the site.
- All staff and pupils have access to a safe drinking water supply throughout the school day.
- Food and drink is provided in a hygienic, safe and pleasant environment.
- Food provision reflects the diverse needs of pupils and staff; this relates to religious, cultural and medical requirements.
- The uptake of free school meals is encouraged in a way which eliminates stigma, and contributes to reducing health inequalities.

There is a lot of evidence to support the view that eating habits are generally formed at an early age and that the diet young people choose, or are offered, can have a direct impact on learning and health – well nourished children are likely to be more receptive to teaching, and learn better. We, at Sitwell Infant School, are committed to encouraging and facilitating young people to make informed choices and involve them in discussions about developing good eating habits, and about what provision is available to them in the school setting.

We have developed all of our work in the area of Food in Schools through involvement in our local Healthy Schools Scheme. Each of the sections that follow has formed part of our Healthy Schools annual action plan, and has involved consultation with our whole school community. This policy is a working document and will expand as different pieces of work are undertaken and added to the policy document.

Our work in this area will help move the school forward to continue to maintain our Healthy Schools status which we originally achieved in 2007.

Section 1

Working with the Whole School Community

Aims

- To work with parents/carers to optimise the education, achievement, health and well being of pupils.
- To work with all staff to optimise the opportunities to reinforce key messages and to offer positive role models whenever possible.
- To give children and young people a voice in issues relating to food in schools.

Objectives

- The school will work with and consult parents/carers about the food in school.
- The school will work with parents/carers to encourage them to provide healthy lunch boxes and snacks.
- Where possible, lunchtime supervisors and catering staff will receive information and training on healthy eating which is consistent with the healthy eating messages that pupils receive through the curriculum.
- Staff are encouraged to teach by example so that healthy eating attitudes and values are modelled to pupils in and out of the classroom.
- Where staff eat a school meal, they should act as a positive role model.
- To actively involve children and young people, by engaging them in:
 - Utilising the school council process to gather a consensus view on current and developing provision in school.
 - Testing out new initiatives.
 - Auditing existing and developing services.
 - Decision making on issues relating to food.
 - Understanding the issues relating to healthy eating.

Expected outcomes

- Parents/carers and school work more closely together.
- An increased potential for a consistent approach to healthy eating at school and at home.
- All staff feel confident to give healthy eating messages to pupils
- Staff are seen as positive role models in and out of the classroom.
- An increased potential for a consistent approach to healthy eating across the school day.

Section 2

The Provision of fruit and vegetables

Aim

To promote the consumption of fruit and vegetables.

Objectives

- To incorporate the healthy eating message into parts of the school curriculum, especially science, numeracy, literacy and PSHE.
- To encourage pupils to try a range of different fruit and vegetables.
- To encourage pupils to eat fruit/vegetable without chopping or, in the case of apples or pears, without prior peeling.
- Where possible, to try to recycle the peel and waste from any fruit and vegetables consumed at school.
- To encourage pupils to wash non peel fruit prior to consumption.
- To lay the foundation for the provision and take up of fruit and vegetables at other times of the day.

Expected outcomes

- Pupils develop the good dietary habit of eating fruit or vegetables as a snack at break times.
- Pupils understand the importance of fruit and vegetables in the diet.
- Pupils may have the opportunity to try fruit and vegetables they may not have previously experienced.
- Eating a portion of fruit and vegetables will contribute to the five portions of fruit and vegetables that are recommended by the national 5 A DAY programme.

Section 3

Lunchtime Food Service

Aim

To provide a good quality food service that promotes healthy eating and eating together sociably.

Objectives

- To work with the caterer to ensure that the National Nutritional Standards for School Lunches are adhered to as a minimum.
- To promote healthier choices which are freshly prepared using a minimum of processed food, where possible utilising locally procured produce.
- To offer extra portions of fruit and vegetables through a well stocked salad bar, which children access independently.
- To display weekly menus in the school dining area and on the school notice boards.
- The cook, kitchen staff and lunch time support staff will, subject to availability, receive information and training on healthy eating which is consistent with the healthy eating messages that pupils receive through the curriculum.
- Lunchtime staff will encourage pupils to choose healthy balances of food.
- Water will always be available free of charge as a lunch time drink for all pupils.
- To ensure appropriate time tabling and time allocation for the lunch break to allow for good experiences of eating and talking with friends.
- To explore ways to enhance the environment for school meals by improving furniture, fittings and equipment in the dining area so that there is a pleasant environment for pupils and staff to eat their lunch.
- To work with the provider to ensure well-planned, customer-friendly management, administration of rota/queuing systems and innovative ways of displaying and serving the food.
- To provide supervision of pupils at lunchtime, with a sensitive manner by teaching and/or non-teaching staff.

- Adults will eat dinner within the dinner hall, when available, to help pupils gain social skills and appropriate behaviour when eating food.
- To remove identification of a pupil who has free school meals and work to eliminate any bullying/teasing that may occur to pupils receiving free school meals, including those eligible for the Pupil Premium Grant (PPG).
- To work with parents/carers, pupils, staff and caterers to design menus to meet the religious, ethnic and vegetarian needs of pupils and staff.
- Where a medical condition determines that a child eats a specialised diet e.g. allergies, diabetes, coeliac disease, cystic fibrosis, the catering service will, where possible, try to accommodate the varying needs. The school will encourage parents/carers to discuss the individual requirements following consultation with their GP and a paediatric dietician. No diet will be implemented by the caterers without consent from the Headteacher.
- To ensure that pupils are reminded to wash their hands before they eat food.

Expected outcomes

- Pupils understand appropriate social behaviour at mealtimes.
- Pupils and staff should have enough time to enjoy eating their lunch together.
- There is less conflict about food.
- Children are well fed and ready to learn.
- Reduction in the number of children off the premises at midday, with all the potential disruption to the community and the school that this can entail. In addition it will help to reduce opportunistic truancy.
- An enhanced environment in the dining area will increase social development of pupils, learning to eat together and enjoy food.

Section 4

Healthier Lunch Boxes

In order to ensure that all children remaining on the premises at lunchtime have a healthy, balanced meal, it is important to work with parents to improve the quality of food provided in lunch boxes brought from home. As these meals are eaten on school premises it is important that the content of lunch boxes is in line with the school's policy on food provision.

Aim

- To ensure that all children who eat their lunch on school premises enjoy a healthy, balanced meal.

Objectives

- To ensure that lunch boxes are stored safely and hygienically.
- To work with parents/carers and children to raise awareness about eating a healthy packed lunch.
- To support parents/carers by sending food and drink suggestions for inclusion in a lunch box to them.
- To ensure lunchtime arrangements for children eating a packed lunch are given the same consideration as children eating a school lunch.

Expected outcomes

- All pupils are eating a healthy lunch
- Pupils understand appropriate social behaviour at mealtimes.
- Pupils and staff enjoy eating their lunch together.

- There is less conflict about food.
- Children are well fed and ready to learn.
- Reduction in the number of children off the premises at midday, with all the potential disruption to the community and the school that this can entail. In addition, it will help to reduce opportunistic truancy.
- An enhanced environment in the dining area will increase social development of pupils, learning to eat together and enjoy food.

Section 5

Provision of Drinking Water

Aims

- To ensure that children and teaching staff have access to drinking water at all times during the school day.
- To encourage children to drink more water at school so that they remain properly hydrated.

Objectives

- To give pupils access to water during the lunch and break times, as well as during lessons.
- To encourage and enable water and milk consumption and limit sweetened drinks to meal times.
- The water supply will not be located in toilets, and children will be discouraged from drinking water from the taps in the toilets.
- Each pupil will be able to have a plastic bottle filled with water. This will be kept in a drinks tray accessible to the child throughout the day.
- Water bottles will be cleaned daily at school.
- Canned and glass bottled drinks will not be allowed due to health and safety considerations.
- Pupils will be allowed to refill the water bottles at a designated area during the break times, if needed.
- Care will be taken to ensure bottles used are designed to be re-filled.

Expected outcomes

- Pupils remain alert and there is a reduction in the incidence of tiredness, headaches and general irritability.
- Health problems including urinary tract infections, bed wetting and constipation are reduced.
- Pupil behaviour and concentration is improved
- Pupils' mental and physical performances are improved.

Section 6

Special Considerations

Rewards

Sitwell Infant School believes in the importance of rewarding and celebrating good behaviour and good work, but the practice of giving sweets is not consistent with the taught health message of reducing sugary foods in the diet. Sugary foods contribute to damaging dental health. Dieticians are unequivocal in their view that food should not be used as a reward. Childhood obesity is a major and increasing problem in the UK. The school therefore does not use confectionery or any other food as a reward. Good work and good behaviour is rewarded in different ways e.g. verbal praise, stickers, movement up the ladder/rocket and praise certificates. Further examples of reward systems used are documented in our Behaviour Policy.

Birthday/return from holiday treats

To maintain a consistent message about healthy eating in school, parents/carers are asked not to send in sweets and confectionery to celebrate birthdays, or on return from a holiday. Birthdays are celebrated in other ways e.g. singing “Happy Birthday”, clapping, wearing a birthday badge etc. Children are asked to talk about their experiences on holiday, share photos etc rather than sharing sweets and cakes in school.

Celebrations in school

From a social and cultural perspective, there will be times when it is both appropriate and acceptable for the whole school to celebrate special occasions together by sharing food and confectionery. The children should be reminded by the teaching staff that this is a treat and is acceptable in moderation, as a treat and as part of a healthy balanced diet. Examples of these times may be: Easter, Advent, Christmas, Eid, Ramadan, Diwali, Vaisakhi and Hanukkah. If any sweets or chocolates are given out to the children, they will be asked to take them home.

Food Technology in school

Children will often bake during lessons or take part in food tasting as part of their science and technology education. If food is to be eaten in school, letters and information will be shared with parents so that they are fully aware of what is going on. Generally, if a baking activity has taken place, the food is sent home at the end of the school day with the child so that parents can make appropriate choices.

Competitions

The school ensures that neither confectionery nor any other food is given as a prize for competitions that are organised by the school. (Other than during celebrations in school, see above.)

Breakfast Club/After school clubs

Any food or drinks provided by Breakfast Club or after school clubs are healthy and nutritious e.g. milk, water, fruit, toast, cereals, bread products. Foods high in fat and sugar are avoided. Our Lets Get Cooking club aims to teach children how to prepare and cook healthy food.

Social catering/formal meetings

The school ensures that where food is available at any event held at the school e.g. open evenings, plays, concerts etc., healthy options are provided. Where food is provided at staff meetings, governors’ meetings and other formal meetings healthy options are available, promoting the ethos of the healthy school to parents/carers and the wider community.

Sporting events

Pupils taking part in swimming or after school sporting activities are encouraged to bring a healthy snack to eat before or after the activity e.g. fruit or a sandwich. Drinking water is also available.

Sponsorship and fund raising

The school does not participate in the collection of confectionery/snack wrappers/tokens to raise funds for the school. These products are high in sugar, salt and fat. This practice is not consistent with the messages being taught about healthy eating.

Environmental considerations

- Pupils are discouraged from consuming water from taps in the toilets and signs around school state whether or not the water supply is fit for consumption.
- Pupils have access to hand washing facilities before and after eating food.

- We aim for pupils to feel comfortable when eating or drinking in and around school.
- The school provides sufficient, suitable provision for waste disposal. We are developing the children's understanding of recycling by helping them to sort their waste at lunchtime so that food waste can be recycled and used as an energy source.

Growing

Young people often have a limited understanding of where food comes from other than the supermarket or delivery van. For this reason, pupils are given the opportunity to grow their own fruit and vegetables at different times of the year.

Section 7

The Curriculum

Aims

- To raise awareness of the basic principles of a healthy diet.
- To enable children to develop an interest in healthy eating.
- To empower pupils to make healthy eating choices.

Objectives

- The basic messages about healthy eating and oral health will be taught in the curriculum, particularly through Science, PSHE and Design and Technology. The content will be at a level relevant to the age and ability of the pupils.
- The school will ensure that the taught curriculum and food/drink provision throughout the day present a consistent message.
- Training updates on oral health and healthy eating messages will be sought for teaching staff to ensure they are confident to deliver accurate and relevant information.
- There will be opportunities for pupils to learn about food handling, food preparation and food safety in the curriculum, as well as issues such as sustainability, recycling, fair trade and food production.

Expected outcomes

- Pupils understand the importance of a balanced diet for good health and in helping to prevent obesity, tooth decay and chronic diseases in later life.
- Pupils can apply the concept of a balanced diet to planning their own meals.
- Pupils and staff are empowered to make improved choices about food in and outside school.

Policy reviewed Spring 2016

Next review Spring 2018