

# Heathlands Whole School Food Policy

An active lifestyle and well balanced diet can enhance the health of all members of the school community. The school supports policies and initiatives aimed at helping improve the diet of children e.g. Every Child Matters, '5-A-DAY', School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme, and the Healthy Schools Programme. Through our work on healthy eating we aim to contribute to the reduction of life-threatening conditions, as well as being helpful in tackling and preventing childhood obesity.

We are committed to giving all our pupils consistent messages about all aspects of health to help them understand the impact of the choices they make. This policy should be read alongside the school's PSHCE, drug and sex and relationship policies.

## Aims

To ensure that all aspects of food and nutrition in school promote the health and wellbeing of every member of the school community.

## Objectives

- To ensure that we are giving consistent messages about food and health;
- To give our pupils the information they need to make healthy choices;
- To promote health awareness;
- To contribute to the healthy physical development of all members of our school community;
- To ensure that as far as possible school meals meet the food based standards.

## Food preparation

School meals are prepared in the main kitchen which has been recently re-fitted to meet all necessary standards of hygiene and catering efficiency. Catering staff have all undertaken food hygiene training and are briefed on the school food standards by the School Business Manager.

Food preparation, as part of the curriculum, might also be undertaken by classroom staff working with pupils in the designated food technology area.

Residential pupils are provided with a domestic style kitchen. This allows some older pupils to make their own breakfasts as part of the independent living programme and for all pupils to develop culinary skills. Members of the residential child care team all undertake food hygiene training.

Risk assessments are undertaken to cover all food preparation activities.

## Dining Environment

An attractive and welcoming dining environment has been created so that pupils enjoy meal times and benefit from the social and communication experiences this affords. Round tables of varying heights are used to suit different sized diners and aid signed communication. In the summer months there is the option of dining "al fresco" in the courtyard or patio areas.

Staff members eat with pupils thus encouraging healthy food choices. This also allows staff to monitor eating habits and facilitates the development of communication and social skills.

## Provision of school meals

All our school meals are prepared and cooked on site by our own catering team using fresh ingredients. They provide a nutritionally balanced main meal and vegetarian option for lunch each day. Evening meals for boarders also include a salad option. A choice of fresh cooked vegetables, salad vegetables and fresh fruit is always available. The school works within the guidance of the school nutritional standards.

## Packed Lunches

Many children bring packed lunch to school. We regularly include newsletter items about the contents of these and strongly encourage healthy choices. Fizzy drinks and sweets are not allowed.

Where packed lunches are provided by school e.g. for children participating in a school outing they will be compliant with the standards set for school meals.

## **Snacks**

All under-5s are entitled to free milk.

All Foundation Stage and KS1 classes have a morning break-time snack of cut and washed fruit. This is shared as a group thus developing social skills alongside communication skills and messages about healthy eating.

KS 2 children are allowed to bring fruit or another healthy snack which they eat at playtime. Crisps and sweets are not allowed.

Residential pupils are provided with the foodstuffs to make evening snacks either independently or with staff supervision depending on age and ability e.g. bread, eggs, baked beans. Fresh fruit is always available to boarders in the evening.

## **Water for all**

Drinking water is freely available throughout the school day to all members of the school community and is served on every dining table at meal times. No water fountains are located inside toilet blocks. Children may bring water bottles into school and are encouraged to drink their water at any time. Named plastic beakers are provided for those without water bottles.

## **Individual Pupils**

It is recognised that for some pupils diets will be need to be planned on an individual basis. This may include those with food allergies, eating disorders and physical conditions which affect eating. In such circumstances our main priority is to meet the specific individual needs of each child.

## **Food across the Curriculum**

Throughout the school there are a number of opportunities for pupils to develop knowledge and understanding of healthy-eating patterns and practical skills that are needed to understand where food comes from such as shopping, preparing and cooking food. Further details are contained in the attached curriculum outline.

## **Staff Skills and Knowledge**

All staff are encouraged to act as good role models for pupils through their demonstration of healthy lifestyles including a healthy diet.

Primary teaching staff all have an understanding of healthy food choices and what a nutritionally balanced meal means.

In the secondary department children are taught by subject specialists for Food Technology and Science

## **Partnership with parents and carers**

The partnership of home and school is critical in shaping how children and young people behave, particularly where health is concerned. Each must reinforce the other. This is not always easy but our school is well placed to lead by example.

Parents and carers are regularly updated on our water and packed-lunch policies through school newsletters, home school books and website updates. We ask parents not to send in fizzy drinks and we remind them that only water may be drunk during the school day, except at lunch when children may drink juice or milk.

## **Role of the Governors**

Governors monitor and check that the school policy is upheld and can also offer guidance where a member of the body has particular expertise in this area.

## **Monitoring and review**

The School Business manager is responsible for the monitoring of school food standards. Menus are checked weekly and any issues arising discussed with the school cook. A detailed audit of nutritional standards was undertaken with a representative of the NUS trust to set a baseline (March 2010) and a similar analysis will be undertaken by the school annually.

At present the standards require the school to analyse their recipes and calculate micronutrients to prove compliance with food standards. This would involve the services of a trained nutritionist and costs that could be in the region of several thousand pounds. Because our audit considers we comply at the macro level, governors have decided not to pay for further nutrient analysis.

Children are encouraged to contribute to menu choices. Food is discussed at Primary School and Heath House Councils at least termly and more regularly if the children raise it as an agenda item.