

Balfour Infant School



Whole School Food Policy

Date: May 2025

Review Date: May 2026

Policy Statement

At Balfour Infant School we recognise the importance of healthy food and know that good nutrition is central to good physical and mental health both short term and long term. We value the health and wellbeing of our students, and we are committed to giving our students consistent messages about all aspects of health; to enable them to take responsibility for the choices they make and be informed of possible risks and benefits.

The school supports healthy eating through the Universal Infant Free School Meal, the daily fruit for pupils in KS1, free milk for reception and students entitled to free school meals, implementation of the School Food Standards, and through our curriculum teaching. We understand the importance of healthy eating as part of the personal development and welfare of the students and the need to actively counter the poor health outcomes of poor diet.

Aims

- To ensure that all aspects of food and nutrition in school promote the health and wellbeing of students, staff, and visitors to our school.
- To give pupils the information and skills they need to make healthy choices.
- To continue to actively support and model healthy eating and drinking throughout the school day.
- To ensure that food provision in school reflects the requirements of pupils and staff.
- To make the consumption of food an enjoyable experience.
- To promote positive eating behaviours and habits.

Objectives

- To continue to promote healthy eating by giving our students the information about food and diet and by providing them with the skills needed to make informed choices.
- To promote health awareness.
- To review the curriculum annually and ensure that information relating to food and nutrition being delivered is consistent and up to date.
- To promote healthy lunches in school and facilitate healthy food and drink choices.
- To work with parents/carers and children on ensuring that when packed lunches are provided the content of them is as healthy as possible.
- To ensure that a member of staff has a basic food hygiene qualification and informs/monitors staff as appropriate.
- To deliver healthy eating and drinking messages throughout school.
- To provide statutory cooking lessons in all year groups.

Snack: Fruit/vegetables

All students are encouraged to eat 5 portions of fruit/vegetables a day. All students are entitled to the Universal Infant Free School Meal each day. We will encourage healthy lunches through our teaching, our parents evenings and meetings, our publications to parents and via our website. A salad bar and a choice of fresh fruit for pudding are available each day. All students will be offered a piece of fruit/vegetable daily as part of the Fruit in School campaign. Children across the school can also bring in their own piece of fruit or vegetables for morning break time. Children may also bring in raisins but yogurt covered raisins and fruit winders are not suitable snacks for break time.

School Meals

School meals are provided by The Contact Dining Company. School meal menus are planned on a two-week cycle and are updated twice a year. We encourage and promote uptake of salad, fruit and vegetables always to all pupils. Salad is available from our salad bar.

We consult termly with pupils, staff, governors and our catering provider around menu options, choices, portion sizes and quality control. We work with our school caterer to constantly review and improve school food. We are working to improve the lunchtime experience for all pupils, making every effort to reduce queues and making lunchtimes a more enjoyable and stress-free experience for pupils.

Packed Lunches

We understand that not all children opt to have a school meal and prefer to bring a packed lunch from home. However, we ask that packed lunches from home are healthy and adhere to these guidelines. If your child has a medical need or allergy and requires a special diet, please discuss with your child's class teacher.

The recommended contents of a healthy lunch box are:

- **Fruit and Vegetables;** at least two portions of fruit or vegetables every day (a portion is the amount your child can fit into the palm of their hand). This could be fresh, dried or tinned fruit
- **Carbohydrate;** a starchy food every day such as bread, pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes, chapatis/roti, plain crackers, breadsticks, rice cakes
- **Protein;** meat, egg or other source of non-dairy protein such as lentils, kidney beans, chickpeas, hummus, dhal, falafel
- **Oily fish;** tinned or fresh mackerel, sardines, salmon or tuna should be included at least once every three weeks
- **Dairy;** every day such as milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage-frais, custard or calcium fortified soya products
- **Drinks;** (with no added sugar) such as pure fruit juice, semi-skimmed/skimmed milk, milk-based or yoghurt-based drinks, fruit smoothies
- **Dessert/pudding;** such as a small cake, biscuit, cereal bar, fruit loaf/bun OR scotch pancake as part of a balanced meal. Please look carefully at packaging as many items that may look healthy can have high levels of sugar and fat. Look for those with 100 calories or less per portion and only include one-a-day for lunch.

BANNED ITEMS - Packed Lunches should not include:

- Sweets/confectionery/chewing gum
- Chocolate bars / chocolate coated biscuits
- Fizzy or sugary drinks, or energy drinks
- Crisps (A standard sized bag of crisps of around 25g will be allowed as an accompaniment for a couple of times a week)
- No more than one dessert item per day (cake, biscuit, cereal bar)
- Precooked fast food types such as cold burgers and fries

- Sauces including brown sauce or ketchup

Due to food allergies any products containing nuts are prohibited from school packed lunches (including peanut butter and Nutella) because of the life-threatening risk it can cause to children who may have a severe allergy.

A bottle of water

It is recognised that the concentration and behaviour of children improve when children drink water throughout the day. Dehydration can give children headaches and make them tired. Therefore, we encourage children to bring in water bottles daily. This is in addition to their packed lunch drink. Water is provided at lunchtimes for all children.

Specialist dietary requirements

The school does everything possible to accommodate pupils' specialist dietary requirements including allergies, intolerances, religious or cultural practices. Individual care plans are created for pupils with food allergies and relevant staff are aware of these plans.

We are a nut free school.

School Catering

Our school meals are provided by The Contract Dining Company They always ensure that the meals provided are fully compliant with all government health and nutrition legislation. Ingredients are sourced from local producers wherever possible, and these ingredients are as ethically produced as possible. There is a three-weekly rota of menus, and this is changed twice times a year. A food hygiene rating inspection is carried out at least once every 2 years as per the current guidance.

Whole School Celebrations

From a social and cultural perspective, there will be times when it is appropriate for the whole school to celebrate special occasions together by sharing confectionery or class party food. Examples of these times may be Easter or Christmas etc. As part of a balanced diet, children are allowed to hand out sweets to their class to celebrate their birthday. We ask this be wrapped fun size bags of sweets. Children will not be allowed to give out cakes or party bags.

Education and Curriculum

Whilst we fully respect individual food choices and understand that there are many different needs and tastes, we want to work with parents to educate children about healthy diet choices so that our children, through understanding a balanced diet, will develop a greater appreciation of a healthy lifestyle. The formal curriculum develops pupils' knowledge of healthy eating predominantly through PSHE, Science and Design Technology lessons.

Healthy eating is not just about lunchtimes. We will teach children how and why they need to eat a healthy diet and help them to develop positive nutrition attitudes and habits. We will teach cooking in line with the statutory requirement to do so. The PSHE curriculum will support this by teaching children about health issues surrounding diet and the Science curriculum will do so by teaching about the human body and human nutritional needs. We will teach children to be independent

decision makers so that they can make best use of the knowledge they will gain. There will be further support from other areas of the curriculum and extra-curricular activities.

Incentives

Children are praised for healthy eating, trying something new, and showing good manners at the lunch table. When this is identified they will be awarded with a sticker. Adults will be encouraged to eat with the children and eat a healthy school lunch.

Student Voice

As a school, we believe that student voice is at the heart of what we do. We recognise this in relation to nutrition and healthy eating. We will ensure that students have a voice through their classes and through the School Council about issues relating to healthy eating.

Health and Wellbeing is a standing item on the School Council agenda.

Monitoring of this policy may include:

- Meetings with Lunchtime Supervisors, which will include feedback on children's food choices.
- School council conducting packed lunch surveys;
- Headteacher meeting with representatives of the Contract Dining Company

This policy will be reviewed as required and in line with the needs of the school.