

GREENWOOD HOUSE ASSESSMENT CENTRE SCHOOL FOOD POLICY

Mission Statement

At Greenwood House, we provide a safe, nurturing and stimulating educational environment, where each child will establish a secure foundation in terms of learning and wellbeing, thus developing the skills and capabilities to reach his/her full potential.

Introduction

Greenwood House is committed to encouraging and developing positive attitudes towards food and a healthy diet. The school actively supports healthy eating and drinking throughout the school day.

As a school we know that food is fundamental to the quality of a child's life, not just in terms of essential nutrition but in providing opportunities to share positive values, attitudes and social experiences with others.

We believe that adults should be good role models and should support the children in understanding how balanced nutrition contributes to a person's health, happiness and general well-being.

Aim

To ensure that all aspects of food and drink in school promote the health and wellbeing of pupils, staff and visitors to our school.

Objectives

- To increase knowledge and awareness of food issues including what constitutes a healthy diet.
- To ensure pupils are well nourished at school and that every pupil has access to safe, tasty and nutritious food and a safe, easily available water supply during the school day.
- To ensure that food provision in the school acknowledges the ethical and medical requirements of staff and pupils e.g. religious, vegetarian, medical and allergenic needs.

This policy was produced in consultation with the entire school community, including pupils, parents, school staff and governors.

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Food in the Curriculum

Opportunities to teach about the importance of healthy eating and living a healthy lifestyle occur throughout the curriculum. The importance of balanced nutrition and healthy food choices is taught through a number of areas, including The World Around Us and Personal Development and Mutual Understanding.

Curriculum Leaders should ensure that opportunities to promote healthy eating and a healthy lifestyle are incorporated into planning for each subject area, in line with the School Food Policy.

All pupils have the opportunity to learn about safe food preparation and to learn about where food has come from. Children will be introduced to growing and tending vegetables and herbs in the school's garden.

Snacks

The school operates a 'Healthy Snack' system, where pupils are given toast and fruit at break time, funded by parental contributions. Under the Department of Education's Milk and Meals Arrangements free school milk is provided to all pupils at special schools. This is subsidised by the European Union under the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development European school milk scheme.

Healthier Lunchboxes

Pupils' lunch boxes should offer balanced nutrition. Across a week parents are encouraged to offer a variety of healthy foods. The Healthier Packed Lunches for Children Leaflet recommends a balanced selection of foods which should be available to the children in their lunch box (Appendix 1).

We recognise that many of our pupils have a limited range of foods which they will eat and information/support is provided for parents about healthier lunchbox choices, for example through leaflets, Parents' Mornings and information on the school's website. We will work alongside parents to encourage pupils to try new foods and expand their diet.

Biscuits, crisps, and cakes are actively discouraged as everyday snacks in school or as part of lunch boxes. Sweets, nuts and fizzy drinks are not permitted. The contents of pupils' lunchboxes will be monitored by the teacher in each class.

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Food in School

Sweets will not be used as a reward in school. However, we aim to teach the children to enjoy 'treats' in moderation. For example, on a Friday, pupils and staff may share a snack other than fruit. The "treat" should still be relatively healthy and not excessive e.g. a biscuit, pancake or small piece of chocolate.

Birthdays, and special events such as Christmas parties in class are also times where food contributes to a sense of celebration and sharing. On these occasions foods other than fruit or vegetables may be offered, but the staff will remind the children that this is an "occasional" treat and not "every day food".

Special Diets

The school community is aware of the possibility of food allergies within the school population, particularly nut allergies. Parents or carers of children who are on special diets for medical or religious reasons, or who have allergies, will be asked to provide as much information as possible about which foods are suitable or foods which must be avoided. This information will be displayed in classrooms and in the school kitchen.

School Meals

School Meals adhere to the DE Nutritional Standards for School Lunches (For further information go to: www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/nutritional-standards-school-lunchesguide-implementation). There are strict guide lines determining the meals that are available through the course of the week and a menu is provided to all parents. The school works closely with the school catering staff to ensure that school meals meet the varying needs of our children. For example, textures and combinations of food are considered for pupils with specific sensory issues. The quality of the food is monitored by school staff. Pupils' comments or reactions to food are considered when reporting back to catering staff. Issues or concerns are passed on to the Principal.

Only pupils who are in receipt of paid or free school meals may receive school dinners, unless in exceptional circumstances.

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Dining Hall

We recognise that eating together in the dining hall provides an excellent opportunity to develop the children's social and language skills. It enables our pupils to develop healthy and positive eating habits in a calm and secure environment. This is achieved by:

- Giving the children time and space to eat in a calm, safe and attractive environment;
- Providing effective role models through teachers and classroom assistants eating at the tables with the children;
- Helping the children to see that enjoying healthy food and eating meals with others contributes to a happy lifestyle;
- Encouraging the children to try new foods and flavours in a supportive environment;
- Developing good eating skills, table manners and respect for other diners;
- Promoting school food to children and parents;
- Listening to and accepting constructive feedback and responding accordingly.

No child is made to finish all the food that they are offered because we know that appetites vary from person to person. However, we do actively encourage the children to "try a little bit more" if they can to ensure that they are not hungry later on in the day.

Parents

The school is aware that the primary role model in children's healthy eating education lies with parents. We wish to build a positive and supportive relationship with the parents of children at our school through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation. In promoting this objective we will:

- Inform parents about the school healthy eating education policy and practice;
- Encourage parents to be involved in reviewing school policy and making modifications to it as necessary;
- Inform parents about the best practice known with regard to healthy eating so that the parents can support the key messages being given to children at school.

Staff Support and Training

All staff and governors will be informed and kept up to date with any changes in policy, any new information, initiatives or procedures involved in food hygiene, health and safety and nutrition as the need arises throughout the year. This will be done by the Principal and the Curriculum Leader for Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU).

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Assessment, Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

Assessment of the curriculum will take place by class teachers and curriculum leaders. Monitoring, evaluation and review of this policy and its contents, and its workability will be the responsibility of the Principal and the Curriculum Leader for PDMU.

Principal:

Chair, Board of Governors:

Date:

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Appendix 1

Practical Tips for a Healthy Lunchbox

- ☺ Try to vary the contents of the lunchbox daily. That way you can ensure your child is getting the variety of nutrients their bodies need to function and grow.
- ☺ Wash your hands before handling food. Wash fruit and vegetables before use and put food in clean containers.
- ☺ To keep food fresh, make sure it is stored properly: lunches packed the night before need to be stored in the fridge. If using rice, make sure it is cooled quickly and stored in the fridge overnight. To keep your lunch fresh during the day, use a cool bag and put in a frozen drink or reusable ice pack.
- ☺ Keep different breads in the freezer so you can just take out and defrost what you need for one day's lunchbox. Using different breads will make the lunchbox more interesting and enjoyable.
- ☺ If your child refuses to eat brown bread, try a lighter variety or make sandwiches using a slice of white and a slice of wholemeal bread.
- ☺ You can use leftovers; for example, rice and curry, vegetable pizza or pasta and sauce.

For more information and advice go to:

www.eatwell.gov.uk/
www.schoolfoodtrust.org.uk/packedlunches/

Contact Information

Mrs Calvert



Greenwood House Assessment Centre

Healthier Packed Lunches for Children

What you need to know

Eating well is important. Children need to eat well as it will give them energy and nutrients to grow and develop, be healthy and active.

A healthy, enjoyable lunch gives children the energy they need to learn and play at school.



This leaflet provides information on how to pack a healthier lunch. Please support the school's food policy by following these guidelines.



healthier lunches
for children
<http://www.healthylunch.org.uk>

English

What is a healthy packed lunch?

Starchy Foods

Base each meal on a starchy food, such as bread, potato, rice, pasta, yam. Starchy foods give energy, fibre, vitamins and minerals.

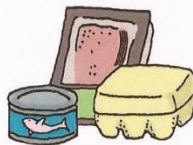
- ☺ Bread, try different types, such as sliced bread, bread rolls, bagels, baguette or crackers.
- ☺ Other starchy foods, such as pasta or rice.
- ✓ Whole grain varieties are best for fibre, which is vital for a healthy digestive system.



Meat and Alternatives

Add some protein, for example meat, fish, eggs, beans or pulses. Protein foods build muscles and provide minerals.

- ☺ Lean meats, such as chicken, turkey or ham.
- ☺ Cheese, such as cottage cheese, cheddar or soft cheese.
- ☺ Egg, such as quiche or omelette.
- ☺ Meat alternatives, such as quorn or tofu.
- ☺ Dishes containing pulses, beans or meat, for example dahl, stew or bean salad.
- † Use butter, margarine, mayonnaise or salad dressings sparingly, because these can be high in fat, or use lower fat alternatives.
- ✗ The school has a no nuts policy as some children are allergic to these.



A healthy packed lunch is a balanced meal providing a variety of nutrients, to be found in four food groups:

Milk and Dairy Foods

Include a dairy product or dairy alternative, such as yoghurt, fromage frais or custard. These foods provide calcium necessary for strong bones and teeth, as well as providing protein and vitamins.

- ✓ Lower fat varieties are healthier.



Fruit and Vegetables

Don't forget to include fruit and vegetables. You can use fresh, frozen, tinned or dried. Fruit and vegetables are full of vitamins, minerals and fibre necessary for the body to function properly and to keep you strong and healthy.

- ☺ Add tomato, lettuce or cucumber to a sandwich.
- ☺ A vegetable dish, such as salad or roast vegetables.
- ☺ Fresh fruit, such as apple, banana or pear.
- ☺ Dried fruit, such as raisins or apricots.
- ☺ Fruit salad (fresh or tinned in juice) or vegetable salad.
- ☺ Finger foods, such as cherry tomatoes, grapes or cucumber sticks. Good with a dip, such as houmous.
- ✓ Use fresh fruit and vegetables, which are in season to help the environment and enjoy variety!
- ✓ Aim to include at least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetable or salad.



Drinks

Drinks, especially water, help children to concentrate and feel well. Water is freely available in school.

- ✓ Only water or pure fruit juice should be included in the lunchbox.



Snacks and Confectionery

Snack foods may be included occasionally but aim to make healthier choices. Snack foods tend to be high in fat, sugar and salt. Foods high in fat can cause excessive weight and may lead to heart disease. High sugar foods are high in calories and bad for teeth. High salt foods may increase blood pressure, which can lead to heart disease and some cancers.

For a healthier snack:

- ☺ Replace sweets and chocolate with dried fruit, a small bunch of grapes or fruit salad.
- ☺ Replace cakes and pastries with fruit bread or crumpets.
- ☺ Replace salted savoury snacks with rice cakes, breadsticks or cheese and crackers.
- ✗ Please do not put sweets or fizzy drinks in packed lunches.