

The Heights Primary School Policy for **HEALTHY EATING & PACKED LUNCHES**

Version 1.4

Responsible officer: Headteacher

Date of last review: September 2023

Date of next review: September 2025



**** PLEASE NOTE, WE ARE A NUT-FREE SCHOOL ****

INTRODUCTION

At The Heights we are committed to encouraging and developing positive attitudes towards food and a healthy diet. Promoting a healthy lifestyle is integral to our curriculum and we recognise the importance of offering children the opportunity to make informed choices about what, when, where and why they eat.

We know that food is fundamental to the quality of a child's life, not just in providing essential nutrition but in communicating and sharing positive values, attitudes and experiences with each other. We believe that adults (staff, parents and carers) 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. We recognize the important connection between a healthy, balanced diet and a child's ability to learn effectively.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- To improve the health of pupils, staff and the whole school community by helping to influence eating habits through increasing knowledge and awareness of food issues including what constitutes a healthy diet.
- To encourage healthy eating habits from an early age.
- 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.
- To ensure that packed lunches brought into school from home reflect the school food standards for school meals and are of a high nutritional quality.
- To introduce and promote practices within the school to reinforce these aims and to remove or discourage practices that negate them.

CURRICULUM

We regard healthy eating education as a whole-school issue, and we believe that opportunities to teach about the importance of living a healthy lifestyle occur throughout the curriculum. Healthy eating education forms an important part of our school's curriculum. The importance of balanced nutrition and healthy food choices is explicitly taught through the Science and PSHE curriculum. All pupils have the opportunity to learn about safe food preparation and to learn about where food has come from. Pupils learn about the requirements for plant growth, the food chain and the components of a healthy diet through the Science curriculum.

MANAGEMENT OF EATING

We have agreed the following statements:

- Pupils in Early Years and KS1 will benefit from the free Fruit and Vegetables Scheme. These pupils will be encouraged to eat their piece of fruit as part of their daily break time.
- All children to age 5 can receive free milk every day via the CoolMilk scheme and parents can pay for milk beyond age 5. From September 2020 we will only be ordering milk from the scheme for Reception children. This is in line with our waste reduction aims and forms part of our developing eco policy/statement.
- The staff encourage children to drink milk and will learn about where milk comes from and about foods that contain milk.
- To ensure consistency across the school KS2 children will also be encouraged to eat only their healthy snacks at break time.
- All children are encouraged to bring in a water bottle so they can have access to water throughout the day.
- Chocolate, sweets, cakes, chewing gum, fizzy drinks and **nuts** are not permitted as break time snacks or part of a packed lunch. Crisps are also not permitted as break time snacks and we ask that packets of lower salt crisps are only occasionally included in packed lunches
- Because we recognise that there is no such thing as 'bad food', we teach the children to enjoy treats in moderation.
- 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'.
- In our school community we have staff and pupils who have food allergies, particularly nut allergies which could be life threatening. As a result, we strive to be a 'nut free' school. 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 the school lunch hall, classrooms and the staff room.
- Portion – 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.

Packed Lunches

It is recommended that packed lunches contain items from the 5 main food groups.

- **Bread, Rice, Potatoes, Pasta**
These starchy foods are a healthy source of energy. Examples could be pasta salad or a sandwich.
- **Fruit and Vegetables**
These foods provide vitamins, minerals and fibre. Examples for packed lunches could include carrot or cucumber sticks, cherry tomatoes, a piece of fruit.
- **Milk and Dairy Foods**
These foods provide calcium for healthy bones and teeth. Examples include yoghurt, fromage frais, cheese, milk.
- **Meat, Fish, Eggs, Beans**
These foods provide protein for growth. It is recommended that packed lunches include 1 portion of these foods e.g. boiled egg as filling in sandwich, mixed bean salad.
- **Drinks**

Ideally drinks provided in lunch boxes **should** include either plain water, milk (semi-skimmed), unsweetened fresh fruit juice, diluted fresh fruit juice, fruit or dairy based smoothies.

Waste and Disposal

The school will, within reason, send any uneaten packed lunch food items back home. The rationale for this is that parents can also monitor what their child has consumed during the day and then raise any concerns over their child's food intake with the school.

Promotion of Healthy Packed Lunches

There will be on-going promotion of the need to provide healthy packed lunches through:

- Pupil, parent / carers newsletters
- School prospectus
- Whole School / Packed Lunch Policy
- Health weeks / healthy eating activities
- Curriculum content
- School Council Meetings
- Parents evenings / parent consultations
- School website
- School involvement in National Healthy Schools Programme

Storage of Packed Lunches

The school will provide storage area / facilities for packed lunch bags, in the most convenient and appropriate place possible. However, the school cannot provide cooled storage areas and therefore cannot take legal responsibility for foods prepared at home and then brought into school. It is recommended that ice-packs are put into lunch bags to keep food chilled, especially during warmer weather.

Dining Facilities for Pupils Bringing Packed Lunch

Pupils who choose to bring packed lunches eat with their peers under supervision in the Main Hall.

School Meals

- The hot meals service is offered through Caterlink. We work closely with them to ensure that school dinners are healthy and reflect the children's taste where possible.
- Each day a choice of salads and fresh fruit are offered as possible choices. There are strict guidelines determining the meals that are available through the course of the week and these are in accordance with the new Healthy Food Standards in Schools which came into force in 2006.
- The 3 - weekly school lunch menu is displayed in the front entrance for parents and in the lunchroom. The 3 - weekly lunch menu is sent home on a termly basis for parents and children to discuss meal choices. It is also available on the school website.
- A member of the Senior Leadership Team monitors the quality of the meals with the Admin Assistant on a regular basis.

School Dinners – Lunchtime Manifesto

- We respect the children as valued customers.
- Give the children time and space to eat in a calm and attractive environment which promotes the idea that lunch times are a happy, social occasion.
- Help the children to see that enjoying food and eating meals with others contributes to a happy lifestyle.

- Encourage the children to find out more about achieving a healthy balance.
- Encourage the children to try new foods and flavours in a supportive environment
- Promote school food to children and parents.
- Listen to and accept constructive feedback and respond accordingly.
- The dining room is well staffed with midday supervisors who assist the children in a variety of ways such as opening yogurt lids or helping the children to salad, keeping table surfaces clean and tidy.
- Children will be encouraged to develop good eating skills and table manners at lunch time and will be given plenty of time to eat.

This will be achieved by:

- Sitting freely with their friends.
- Being encouraged to try a wide range of foods at lunchtimes to develop a taste for a greater variety of foods and achieve a balanced diet.
- Entering and leaving the dining hall in an orderly way; to show respect for other diners.
- Parents or carers being advised if their child is not eating well.
- Demonstrating good manners in the hall e.g. using quiet partner voices and saying 'please' and 'thank you' to the lunchtime staff.
- Seeking permission from a Lunchtime Supervisor before eating dessert and leaving the table.

THE ROLE OF 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.

Related Documents/Policies: PSHCE Policy; Safeguarding Policy

Amendments:

Version	Date	Updated/reviewed
1.1	February 2016	Reviewed + approved by PSW Govs
1.2	February 2018	Reviewed + approved by PSW Govs
1.3	February 2020	Merged with Packed Lunch Policy as part of review by KE
1.4	August 2022	Reviewed & approved by PSW Govs
1.5	September 2023	Reviewed and approved by PSW Govs