



School Food Policy

November 2023

Due for review: Autumn term 2026

The Rationale for the School Food Policy

- Schools should promote healthy food and drink choices throughout the school day.
- The school environment, staff and pupil attitudes and what pupils learn in the classroom have a major influence on their knowledge and understanding of health issues.
- Diet is central to health and a child's diet can influence both current and future health, as well as affecting learning potential.
- One key to boosting the capacity to learn is to keep well hydrated throughout the day.
- Poorly nourished pupils, including the overweight and obese, often experience social and psychological problems which can also impact on their behaviour and performance at school.

Aims

- To improve the health of all our pupils, their families and our staff by helping to influence their eating habits through increasing their knowledge and awareness of food and nutrition. This will include what constitutes a healthy and balanced diet and hygienic food preparation and storage.
- To ensure that all our pupils are well nourished at our schools as we recognise how food and drink impact on a child's ability to learn.
- To ensure that everyone in our schools always has access to fresh drinking water and that children are aware of the positive effects it can have on their ability to learn.
- To ensure that food provision in our schools reflects the ethical and medical requirements of the staff and pupils e.g. vegetarian, vegan, medical, allergenic, religious.
- To make eating at lunchtimes an enjoyable and safe experience in all our schools.
- To promote practices within our schools that support these aims and to work to reduce practices that negate them.

Introduction

1. Blackdown Education Partnership provides environments that promote healthy eating and provides pupils and staff with the opportunity to make informed choices about the food they eat.
2. The schools in the Trust will promote healthy eating in curriculum lessons (e.g. Food Technology, PE, Science, PSHE and Citizenship) and in the food served in the school dining halls.
3. All parents have been informed that a School Food Policy has been drawn up and is made available on each schools' website.
4. This healthy eating policy document will be used to reflect the schools' plans to achieve a whole trust approach to food and nutrition.

Healthy Eating for Good Mental Health

All schools recognise the links between a positive relationship with food and good mental health. We are vigilant for signs of eating disorders such as anorexia, binge eating or bulimia and are keen to work with families to ensure that pupils develop healthy attitudes to food and that the food that we provide meets their nutritional needs. Concerns over the attitudes of children and young people to food will be dealt with according to Safeguarding procedures.

Equal Opportunities - In Food and Nutrition education and in the dining hall, as in other areas of the curriculum, we recognise the value of the individual and strive to provide equal access to opportunity for all.

Special Dietary Requirements – The Trust will make every effort where possible to cater for those with special dietary requirements.

Religious and ethnic groups

The school will provide food in accordance with pupils' religious beliefs and cultural practices.

Vegetarians and vegans

All school caterers offer a vegetarian option for lunch every day. When necessary the schools will also provide a vegan option.

Food allergy and food intolerance

The school catering teams do not use nuts and are aware of pupils' allergies. Some food items however include a statement that they may contain traces of nuts.

Food Safety - Appropriate food safety precautions are taken when food is prepared or stored. These vary depending on the food on offer and include; ensuring that adequate storage and washing facilities are available; that refrigerators are used when necessary; that food handlers undergo appropriate food hygiene training; that suitable equipment and protective clothing are available. Any food safety hazards are identified and controlled. We consult our local environmental health department about legal requirements when necessary.

The Food Eating Environment - Though the dining hall doubles as a teaching space in many of our schools, efforts have been made to reflect its purpose as a dining hall by displays of food related posters. Pupils and staff are encouraged to socialise whilst they eat their meal.

Staff continual professional development - The schools and school meals contractors provide ongoing training for the staff appropriate to food and nutrition education, for example food safety, allergen, first aid and health and safety training.

Monitoring and Evaluation - this policy will be reviewed on a 3-yearly basis.

Schools in the trust are aware of the School Food Standards, guidance and checklists which are designed to help children develop healthy eating habits and ensure they have the energy and nutrition they need to get the most from their whole school day.

[School food standards: resources for schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)