

The Beacon CE Primary School



Whole School Food Policy

Spring 2025

INTRODUCTION

The school is dedicated to providing an environment that promotes healthy eating and enables pupils to make informed choices about the food they eat. This will be achieved by our whole school approach to food and nutrition documented in this whole school food policy.

In addition, we strive to meet the varied cultural diversities within our school by creating a menu cycle in partnership with our catering providers, which meets varied tastes and expectations.

WHOLE SCHOOL FOOD POLICY CO-ORDINATOR

This school food policy and healthy eating strategy is co-ordinated by our PSHE leader who is part of our senior leadership team.

WHOLE SCHOOL FOOD POLICY AIMS

The main aims of our whole school food policy are:

1. To enable pupils to make healthy food choices through the provision of information and development of appropriate skills and attitudes.
2. To provide healthy food choices throughout the school day.
3. To ensure our school meets the Government Food Standards for Schools. This will be implemented by adopting a whole school approach.
4. To ensure that our food offer meets and adheres to all allergen regulations but more so that it is based on scratch cooking dishes using wholesome grade a product.
5. To provide food that is nutritious and meets the children's long-term health needs and achieves the government food standards for schools, implemented in January 2015, in an environment that is conducive to ensuring that healthy eating in schools is a positive experience for all children and staff.
6. To equip children with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to make informed choices about food as part of a healthy lifestyle.

These aims will be addressed through the following areas:

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

In healthy eating, as in all other areas of the curriculum, we recognise the value of the individual and strive to provide equal access of opportunity for all.

CURRICULUM

Food and nutrition are taught at an appropriate level throughout each key stage.

This is addressed through:

Teaching methods

Effective teaching requires pupils to develop their understanding of healthy eating issues and appropriate skills and attitudes to assist them in making informed decisions. Teaching methods adopted in the classroom offer a rich variety of opportunities for participatory learning and include debating issues, group discussions and role-play. These decisions are made at teachers planning meetings who work closely with the PSHE Lead to ensure topics related to healthy eating are taught to all groups.

Leading by example and staff training

Teachers, caterers and school nurses have a key role in influencing pupils' knowledge, skills and attitudes about food. It is important therefore that they are familiar with healthy eating guidelines. Pupils work with the catering manager and outside agencies to decide which food is placed onto the menus. Staff are included in these activities and receive minutes from school council meetings.

Visitors in the classroom

Our school values the contribution made by the school nurse in supporting class teachers and appreciates the valuable contribution of outside agencies. We believe it is the responsibility of the school to ensure that the contributions made by visitors to the classroom reflect our own philosophy and approach to the subject. The status of visitors to the school is always checked in order to ensure that the content of the visitor's talk is suitable for the ages of the pupils. The school's code of practice for visiting speakers is adopted.

Resources

Resources for the teaching of healthy eating in PSHE have been selected to complement the delivery of the curriculum in other subject areas. These are stored in the Healthy Schools files on Sharepoint.

Samples from some of these resources are displayed in the PSHE subject leader folder and are clearly linked to the term's programme of work. The range of materials used is available for review on request to the Headteacher.

Evaluation of pupils learning

Teachers are encouraged to use a range of strategies to evaluate the teaching and learning in healthy eating.

These include:

- Discussion of the suitability of resources and methodology at team meetings
- Simple tick sheets for completion by the teacher at the end of a session – on the ‘How did that feel for you?’ model
- Consultation with pupils through the School Council about existing programmes of study and special events
- Questionnaires for pupils at the end of a unit of work or at the end of a special event about the suitability of the programme and resources
- The formation of task groups or focus groups of pupils to look at existing provision and to make recommendations for the future.

FOOD AND DRINK PROVISION THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL DAY

Breakfast

Breakfast is an important meal that should provide 25% of a child’s energy requirement and contribute significantly to their vitamin and mineral requirements.

The school operates a breakfast club that provides a nutritious breakfast before the school day which supports pupils to be ready to learn at the start of each day.

National Food Standards for School Lunches

Allergen regulations came into force in December 2014 and new mandatory food standards were introduced in January 2015. Our Catering Manager, supported by an independent consultancy company, compiles the menus with the knowledge and understanding of the student requirements, whilst adhering to government standards and legal requirements.

The 2015 food standards cover all food served in schools: breakfast, lunch, snacks and after school clubs.

Food prepared by the school catering team meets the National Food Standards for School Lunches.

School meals are planned on a 3-week cycle and always contain a meat, fish and vegetarian option. The school meals menu can be found on our school website.

Packed lunches

Since 2014, all children at The Beacon CE Primary School are provided with school lunches and packed lunches are provided by the school catering services. This is to ensure that all children are provided with healthy school meals that meet the Government Food Standards for school.

Packed lunches prepared by the school caterers (when required) adhere to the National Food Standards.

Children are not permitted to bring packed lunches from home to eat in school. Since 2014, all children at the Beacon have had a school lunch provided by school catering services. This policy originally started in our early years and was rolled out year on year. Sandwiches are included within the menu on a daily basis and there is a range of filling options. We do recognise that sometimes children with a diagnosed medical need, may need to be considered for alternative arrangements. If your child has a medical need or a disability that requires an alternative option, this can be discussed on an individual basis.

The standards can be located <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-food-standards-resources-for-schools/school-food-standards-practical-guide>

The school works with the pupils to provide an attractive and appropriate dining room arrangements e.g. all our pupils sit on round tables to promote socialisation.

Snacking

The school understands that snacks can be an important part of the diet of young people and can contribute positively towards a balanced diet.

Fresh fruit is available to all pupils throughout the day.

Drinking water

The National Food Standards for Healthy School Lunches recommend that drinking water should be available to all pupils, every day, and free of charge.

The school agrees with this recommendation and provides a free supply of drinking water.

We have ensured that there is a water supply available within the school. Children are encouraged to bring a water bottle to school on a daily basis. Water bottle boxes are located in all the classrooms.

Free School Meals

We would recommend all families that may be entitled to free school meals to take up the opportunity. By registering for free school meals, the school will secure additional funding.

Liverpool has a simple online checker for parents/carers to use:

<http://liverpool.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/grants-and-funding/free-school-meals/>

REWARDS AND SPECIAL OCCASIONS

Use of food as a reward

The school does not encourage the regular eating of sweets or other foods high in sugar, fat or salt, especially as a reward for good behaviour or other achievements. Other methods of positive reinforcement are used in school.

Instead of using food as a reward we have the following:

- Celebration Assemblies
- Certificates
- Dojos
- Badges
- Books

SPECIAL DIETARY REQUIREMENTS

Special diets, allergies, diet related disorders

The school does everything possible to accommodate pupils' specialist dietary requirements including allergies, intolerances, religious or cultural practices. We recommend you visit the www.allergyinschools.co.uk website for accurate, reliable information on managing allergies in schools.

Parents will be asked to inform the school if a pupil suffers from any medical allergy, identifying the foods to which she/he reacts and the usual symptoms of the reaction. Pupils with allergies are also identified to kitchen and staff. All staff members will be made aware of the school's medical, and health and safety procedures.

Our catering staff have been trained up to the Food Information Regulations 2019 – Allergen labelling and are on site to discuss any allergenic ingredients that may be in the dishes/recipes. Parents can make an appointment through school to meet our catering manager to discuss allergens or any other medically diagnosed conditions that affect food consumption.

We provide a vegetarian option for children who do not eat meat this is covered through the food standards and non-dairy protein items are included at least three times each week on the menu.

Special diets for religious and ethnic groups

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

Vegetarians and Vegans

School caterers offer a vegetarian option at lunch every day. When necessary, the school also provides a vegan option.

Nut Allergy Awareness

We are not a nut-free school, but we aim to be as nut-free as we can. It is impossible to provide an absolute guarantee that no nuts will be brought onto the premises, but we will strive to minimise this as much as we can.

Management

We ask that all members of the school community manage the day-to-day application of this policy in the following ways:

- We request that people coming in to school who have had nut or sesame products wash their hands thoroughly
- Staff will be alert to any obvious signs of nuts being brought in
- Children will be encouraged to wash hands before eating
- Staff training will be provided annually to support understanding and dealing with anaphylaxis (severe allergic reactions)
- The school dinner providers will ensure all cooked food is nut-free

Promotion

The policy will be promoted by:

- Making a copy of this policy available to all parents and carers via our school website.
- Informing staff and providing them with training opportunities
- Informing children through assemblies, teachers, and support staff
- Publishing this policy on the school website
- Issuing the policy in the new to school admission packs

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 food handlers undergo appropriate food hygiene training and 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.

EXPECTATIONS OF STAFF AND VISITORS

The school expects staff to contribute to and support this food policy across the school day. Staff and visitors will be expected to model good practice behaviour around food and drink and in line with the policy, when in the company of pupils. Staff are welcome to eat a school lunch and sit with pupils in the dining hall.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Our school lunch provision is independently monitored for compliance with government food standards by our catering consultant. All audits are sent to school for governors and senior leadership team to review.

We have food available for parents to sample during parents' evenings so that parents can comment and review the food we supply to their children.

Date policy adopted: Spring 2025

Policy review date: Autumn 2026