Shirley Manor
Primary Academy

Whole School Food & Drink Policy

Approved by: Head of School		**Date:** September 2025
Last reviewed on:	September 2025	
Next review due by:	September 2026	

Introduction

This policy covers all food provided and consumed in school including before, during and after school and on school trips and in extra-curricular events.

Why a policy is needed?
At Shirley Manor Primary Academy we recognise the important part a healthy diet plays for in child's wellbeing and their ability to learn effectively and achieve.
We believe that the school, in partnership with parents and carers, can make a major contribution to improving children and young people's health by increasing their knowledge and understanding of food and helping them to make healthy food choices.

This policy explains

- How we promote healthy eating and a positive food culture
- What we do to provide healthy balanced food throughout the school day
- How we help pupils eat healthily
- What we teach, so that pupils know how to make healthy food choices

Our approach to improving pupils' health through healthy eating.

We aim to

- Increase knowledge and awareness of a healthy diet through workshops and our PSHE and science curriculum.
- Provide safe, tasty, and nutritious food that promotes health
- Enable all pupils to have a healthy school meal
- Make healthy eating enjoyable and the norm
- Provide safe, easily accessible water during the school day.
- Promote healthy eating/healthy food choices and discouraging unhealthy eating/unhealthy food choices
- Be a role model for healthy eating
- Monitor healthy choices, including packed lunches
- Use a range of opportunities to promote healthy eating
- Ensure consistent messages regarding healthy eating are reinforced throughout the school day

Responsibility:
It is the responsibility of all staff including teaching, support staff and catering staff to implement the food policy and to be active role models to demonstrate positive attitudes to healthy eating and to develop pupils' awareness and understanding of how to make healthy food choices.

Senior members of staff lead on the development and liaise with the lunchtime meals supervisor, cook, kitchen staff and food contractor.

The lead governor on health and wellbeing ensures the policy is implemented.

Caterers and kitchen staff are responsible for providing high quality food that complies with the national nutritional standards for school food and contributing to a welcoming and positive eating environment. Parents receive the catering menu on the Parent Pay system.

This policy will contribute towards other policies in the following way

Behaviour	We use non-food related rewards for positive behaviour
PSHE	Healthy food and choices and practical food education is included in the curriculum
Science	Healthy eating and nutrition is part of the science curriculum
Equality	We take account of the needs of all our children, including those with disabilities and allergies

Development of the policy
This school policy takes account of national guidance produced by the School Food Plan, Children's Food Trust, Change4life and information from the Department of Health and NHS.

Teaching about healthy eating and cooking in the curriculum
Food, its production and preparation is an important part of the curriculum for all pupils and is taught across the curriculum through geography, DT, science, PSHE and PE. We ensure that pupils are taught cooking from Reception up to Year 6, in line with the new national curriculum and emphasise safety issues.

Training staff to deliver practical cooking lessons
Staff are involved in food preparation and cookery lessons, developing their understanding in food related issues including food hygiene. All food preparation is healthy.

School lunches
All our school meals are cooked on site and in accordance with the School Food Standards. A copy of the weekly menu is on display in the dining area and weekly newsletter. The dining area has a calm and positive atmosphere where children socialise and enjoy the dining experience. Staff monitor food choices and encourage pupils to try new foods, having regular discussions with parents about this. We work with families who are eligible for free school meals to encourage them to take this up. Class teachers join their pupils periodically for meals and use this to monitor and encourage healthy eating as well as develop their personal and social skills.

Special Diets: Medical

Under section 100 of the Children and Families Act 2014, school has a duty to support pupils at their school with medical conditions. We recognise that some pupils may require special diets that do not allow for our food policy to be exactly met. In this case, parents are asked to make us fully aware of this. Individual care plans need to be created for pupils with special dietary needs/requirements, including symptoms and adverse reactions, actions to be taken in an emergency, emergency contact details, along with any particular food requirements (e.g. for high-energy diets). The school must be made aware of any food allergies/food intolerance/medical diets and requests for

these diets by parents. Allergy lists are communicated to all staff, including kitchen staff on a regular basis.

All staff are aware of children's dietary needs. This information is also displayed in the staffroom, the kitchen and relevant first aid areas. If a child requires an epi-pen then this is kept in the child's classroom in the green first aid box for easy access and the second epi-pen is located in the first aid cupboard in the IT technician's office by the main office. A number of teachers, teaching assistants and midday supervisors are fully trained first aiders. First aiders attend retraining courses as required.

Children under 5

Food Safety and Supervision during Eating
We take all necessary steps to ensure children are safe during meal and snack times. Children are adequately supervised whilst eating, with at least one PFA-trained member of staff present in the room who maintains sight and hearing of all children. Children are seated safely when eating, facing adults where possible, to enable staff to monitor for choking risks and allergic reactions. Food is prepared in a way that minimises choking hazards, taking into account each child's developmental stage and competency with solid foods.

All staff involved in preparing and handling food are required to complete food hygiene training. This training is refreshed annually to ensure staff remain up-to-date with food safety procedures and best practices. Records of food hygiene training are maintained and monitored to ensure compliance.

Before a child starts in our setting, we gather comprehensive information about any special dietary requirements, preferences, food allergies and intolerances. This information is shared with all relevant staff, and allergy management plans are clearly displayed in food preparation areas and classrooms. All staff are trained to recognise and respond to allergic reactions and anaphylaxis.

We maintain ongoing dialogue with parents/carers about their child's changing dietary needs, weaning progress, and introduction of new foods. We never make assumptions about a child's competency with solid foods based solely on their age. Food sharing between children is actively prevented to reduce allergy and choking risks. Any incidents involving choking or allergic reactions are recorded and parents are informed immediately.

We have regard to the government's EYFS nutrition guidance and promote healthy eating habits whilst ensuring all food provided is nutritious, safely prepared, and appropriate for each child's needs.

Celebration Food
We understand that many families like to celebrate their child's birthday and other special

events by bringing food to share with the class. However, with multiple celebrations throughout the year, children may be consuming unhealthy foods several times a week.

To ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children while still allowing for special celebrations, we have the following guidelines:

Food Safety Requirements:

- No chocolate products permitted (allergy and choking risk)
- No products containing nuts or 'may contain nuts' warnings
- All food must be shop-bought with clear ingredient labels
- All items will be checked against our allergy register

Healthy Celebration Alternatives We Encourage:

- Fresh fruit platters
- Vegetable sticks with dip
- Rice cakes or plain crackers
- Non-food options: special birthday crown, bubbles for the class, stickers, or a special story

Distribution Guidelines:

- Celebration foods distributed at end of day only
- Parents can then monitor their child's consumption
- Maximum one food celebration per class per week
- Individual wrapped portions preferred

Universal Free School Meals
From September 2014, all children in reception, year 1 and year 2 in state-funded schools in England have been eligible for free school lunches. The School fully supports this initiative, encouraging children to have their free school meal. Research shows that a school lunch is nutritionally superior to most packed lunches and can lead to improved behaviour and attainment.

Packed Lunches
Appendix A: Packed lunch policy

Primary Snacks
All Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 classes include a morning break time snack of fruit and vegetables. As part of promoting healthy eating, children encourage each other to eat the fruit and vegetables. Children are given responsibility for passing the fruit to others and for helping to clear it away. Parents and carers of Key Stage 2 children are asked to provide their children with a healthy fruit or vegetable snack to eat at morning break. Our guidelines suggest only fruit or vegetable snacks, fresh or dried. Parents and carers are strongly encouraged to adhere to our guidelines to help us in our promotion of healthy eating.

Fizzy drinks, fast food and sweets are not allowed in school or on school trips.

Milk
The new Food Standards require that milk must be available for drinking at least once per day during school hours for pupils under 5 years old. This standard is not met by providing milk at breakfast or after school clubs. This standard can be fulfilled by being part of the Cool Milk Scheme. As part of the School Food Plan, schools are legally required to make milk available to all children during school hours. All pupils have access to milk at lunchtime.

Breakfast Club and wrap around provision
The Breakfast Club is offered to all pupils and we actively encourage pupils who are more vulnerable to attend. The food offered at breakfast and after school clubs is healthy. We request that any food brought onto the school premises by pupils to wrap around club is consistent with the guidance given in the packed lunch policy and conforms to the school food standards for food other than lunches.

Partnership with parents and carers
We inform and involve parents and carers about healthy eating through coffee mornings, school website and ClassDojo posts. The partnership of home and school is critical in shaping how children and young people behave, particularly where health is concerned. Each must reinforce the other. This is not always easy but our school is well placed to lead by example.

Parents and carers are updated on our policies through school ClassDojo posts and on the school website. We ask parents and carers not to send food or drinks which conflict with our food policy and we remind them that only water, low sugar juices or milk be consumed during the school day.

During out of school events, the school will encourage parents and carers to consider the food policy and packed lunch policy in the range of food and drinks offered.

Parents are given information about the annual national weight measurement programme that children in reception and year 6 take part in and we give information to parents about Camden’s weight management services where applicable.

Parents are made aware that we are a healthy school through the prospectus and ClassDojo posts and how our approach to healthy eating is in keeping with this.

Events/Religious Celebrations
We have a number of celebrations including parent and family workshops through the year where refreshments are provided. During these events, we will have some special allowances; however, staff will ensure that healthy options are available and that food is of a balanced variety.

Water for all
During school meal times only drinks which comply with the School Food Plan guidelines may be consumed including water, low sugar fruit juice (water and milk only for under 5s) and milk. If children bring in a sugary drink, they will be asked to take it home and we talk to parents and carers and remind them of the food policy. Cooled water is available to staff and visitors in the staff room.

Curriculum assessment and monitoring
Children's learning about healthy eating is assessed in line with the school's assessment policy through science and PSHE. A review of what is taught includes feedback from staff and pupils.

Monitoring food provision
Shirley Manor Primary Academy is responsible for ensuring the quality of the food offered for school meals. We consult annually with pupils, parents and carers and staff and involve them in reviewing the school meals**.** The results are used to evaluate the impact of the food policy and to further improve the school meals.

We will monitor food waste when appropriate and take relevant measures to reduce food waste.

Special Diets: Religious and Ethnic Groups

The school provides food in accordance with pupils' religious beliefs and cultural practices as required. School caterers offer a vegetarian and Halal option at lunch everyday.

Special Diets: Medical

Under section 100 of the Children and Families Act 2014, school has a duty to support pupils at their school with medical conditions. We recognise that some pupils may require special diets that do not allow for our food policy to be exactly met. In this case, parents are asked to make us fully aware of this. Individual care plans need to be created for pupils with special dietary needs/requirements, including symptoms and adverse reactions, actions to be taken in an emergency, emergency contact details, along with any particular food requirements (e.g. for high-energy diets). The school must be made aware of any food allergies/food intolerance/medical diets and requests for these diets by parents. Allergy lists are communicated to all staff, including kitchen staff on a regular basis.

All staff are aware of children's dietary needs. This information is also displayed in the

staffroom, the kitchen and relevant first aid areas. If a child requires an epi-pen then this is kept in the child's classroom for easy access and the second epi-pen is located in the main office. A number of teachers, teaching assistants and midday supervisors are fully trained first aiders. First aiders attend retraining courses as required.

Disseminating the policy
Key information from this policy will be incorporated into the following documents:

- School Prospectus
- Staff Handbook
- School website

A full copy of this policy is freely available to parents on request. Copies are supplied to other professionals whose work relates to healthy eating or who may be involved in its delivery.

Monitoring and Review
The Head of School will monitor the effectiveness of this policy ensuring that training and resourcing are up to date. We will review this policy every two years.

Appendix A: Packed lunch Policy

Aim

To ensure that all packed lunches brought from home and consumed in school (or on school trips) provide the pupil with healthy and nutritious food that is similar to food served in schools which is in line with The School Food Standards.

This policy applies to all pupils and parents providing packed lunches to be consumed within school or on school trips during school hours.

Why was this policy formulated?

- To make a positive contribution to children's health and reflect a Healthy School
- To promote consistency between packed lunches and food provided by schools which must adhere to national food standards set by the government.

Packed lunches should include:

- At least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetables every day.
- Meat, fish or other source of non-dairy protein (e.g. lentils, chickpeas, hummus or falafel) every day
- A starchy food such as any type of bread, pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes or other type of cereals every day aim for wholegrain varieties.
- Dairy food such as milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais, soya products everyday
- Only water, (pure fruit juice, semi-skimmed or skimmed milk, smoothies, yoghurt or milk drinks are permitted)
- If a pudding is included we ask that it is fruit based, this is in line with the fruit based pudding that children with school meals receive, examples are – fruit salads or tinned fruit with yoghurt or custard, fruity rice puddings (eg Muller Rice), fruit smoothies and fruit based crumbles.
- Savoury crackers or breadsticks served with fruit, vegetables or dairy food.

Packed lunches should not include:

- Confectionery such as chocolate bars, chocolate-coated biscuits, chocolate spread, sweets and chewing gum
- Fizzy or sugary drinks.

Children under 5's packed lunches should not include:

- Confectionery such as chocolate bars, chocolate-coated biscuits, chocolate spread, sweets and chewing gum
- Fizzy or sugary drinks
- Fruit juice
- Whole nuts or seeds
- Fruit must be chopped lengthways in quarters
- Cheese cubes, must be cut into strips

Special diets and allergies

The school recognises that some pupils may require special diets that do not allow for the standards to be met exactly. In this case parents and carers are urged to be responsible in ensuring that packed lunches are as healthy as possible. For these reasons pupils are also not permitted to swap food items.

Packed Lunch Containers

Pupils and parents/carers are responsible for providing a packed lunch container where food items can be stored securely and appropriately until the lunchtime period. Pupils and parents/carers are encouraged to bring packed lunches in reusable plastic containers, rather than disposable plastic bags and bottles.

Foods are at risk of bad bacteria if they are prepared and stored in warm temperature, so it is advised that an **ice pack is included** in the food container.

Monitoring packed lunches

To promote healthy eating, we will regularly monitor the content of packed lunches and involve pupils and staff. We will talk to parents and carers where necessary and offer advice and guidance on bringing healthy packed lunches. If children consistently bring packed lunches that do not adhere to these guidelines, a letter will be sent home with a copy of this policy.