

Guidance for writing your school food policy

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How to use this guide...

This guide is to support your journey writing your school food policy. Please ensure the content is applicable and personal to your school. You should answer the questions in full sentences, so each section forms a short paragraph, there is an example of this in section 4.8. Please feel free to add additional information or sections if required, and if any sections don't apply to your school, please remove them. We have highlighted in **red** areas that may need changing or more specific information. Alternatively, you could copy the text into your own template.

1. Introduction

[School name] is dedicated to providing an environment that ensures the healthy choice, is the easy choice. We promote healthy eating and enable pupils to make informed choices about the food and drink they consume. Through effective leadership and a strong school ethos, all elements of the school day are brought together to create an environment that supports a balanced lifestyle. We can be valuable role models to pupils and their families regarding food and drink choices and healthy living.

Policy implementation date:

Signature:

This policy will be reviewed [annually/bi-annually] to incorporate any new developments.

2. Food policy champions

To ensure our food policy is an embedded element of our school community, it was formulated by...

- List staff, governors, caterers, parents, pupils, partners involved in developing the policy.

3. Food policy aims and objectives

Our school food policy aims to...

...ensure that all aspects of food and nutrition in school promote the health and well-being of pupils, staff, and visitors at our school.

The objectives of our school food policy are:

- To provide a range of healthy food choices throughout the school day and in line with the mandatory School Food Standards.
- To ensure that food provision in the school reflects the cultural and medical requirements of staff and pupils.
- To make the healthy choice, the easy choice for the pupils in the school.

Please add any other aims and objectives that you feel are appropriate

4. Food and drink provision throughout the school day

All staff who serve food across the school day are trained in food safety and hygiene.

You could add more detailed information about this e.g., the qualification the staff have completed and how often they complete it. You could also add your kitchens most recent environmental health score which you can find online, or just ask your kitchen staff

4.1 Breakfast club

[School name] has a healthy breakfast club which serves a range of nutritious, school food standard compliant food (including fruits and protein based foods) to support children's health and concentration ensuring they have fuel for learning.

[Insert description of the club's set up – suggestions below]

- Why do you run your breakfast club?
- Who is responsible for running your breakfast club? In house or external?

- How do you ensure the food served complies with the School Food Standards, which falls under the section, 'Food other than lunch'? [Appendix 1]
- If you have consulted with parents, students, worked with an organisation or used any resources that helped in the initial consultation, you could mention how children/parents, individuals or organisation have contributed/consulted towards menu changes.

For more information about the breakfast club [timings, menu, charges] please see here [insert link to webpage/PDF].

4.2 School lunch

For menus, charges and timings please see here: [insert link to webpage]

Food served [Insert description of the lunch service – suggestions below]

- Who are your school meals provided by? In house or external?
- How regularly does the menu change? Same each week or a 2/3-week rotation?
- How is the menu developed and monitored?
- Does the food comply with the mandatory School Food Standards [Appendix 1] How do you ensure this?
- Are your menus Soil Association: Food for Life certified? If so, are they bronze, silver, gold?
- Does the food reflect the religious and cultural needs of the school community? How do you ensure this?
- Do you provide daily planet-friendly options [catering for vegans, vegetarians, non-meat and other non-dairy requirements]? Do you do anything to encourage students to take up the planet friendly option more often?

Dining environment: [Insert description of the lunch set up – suggestions below]

- Have the children named their dining area?
- How do you expect the pupils to behave at lunchtime?
- How do you encourage development of social skills at lunchtime?
- Are staff encouraged to eat their lunch with pupils? Can staff get a free lunch?
- Does your school review the dining environment to ensure it is fit for purpose? e.g., encourages polite conversation and interaction amongst children.
- Who is responsible for lunchtime supervision and how is this managed? E.g., students, teaching assistants, SLT.
- Do you provide additional support for SEND children at lunchtime?

Feedback and consultation:

- Are students are consulted on the menus and the dining room environment?
- How do you ensure their voices are heard?
- How/where can parents' feedback about the school lunches?

Free School Meals:

From September 2014 every child in reception, year 1 and year 2 in state-funded schools is entitled to a free school meal. The government also provides funding for all children who are eligible for free school meals [Appendix 2].

Some local authorities extend this funding to provide all primary aged pupils to access a free school meal, if this is available to your school mention this here. You may also have your own information on subsidies/support for certain circumstances, it is also worth considering your non-payment policy in this section

4.3 Packed lunch

Packed lunches are lunches brought from home as well as those provided by the school and by parents for trips.

- Do you encourage children to opt for a school meal over a packed lunch?
- What should a packed lunch look like?
- What should not be included in a packed lunch?
- What happens if a packed lunch does not meet your school's policy?
- How can parents access further info/support on packed lunches?

4.4 Afterschool club

[School name] has an afterschool club serving **nutritious, tasty, and school food standard compliant food**.

[Insert description of the club's set up – suggestions below]

- Why do you run your after-school club?
- Do you serve a meal or a snack?
- How do you ensure the food served complies with the mandatory School Food Standards for 'Food other than lunch'? [Appendix 1]
- Have children/parents been consulted regarding the menu?

For more information about our afterschool club **[timings, menu, charges]** please see here **[insert link to webpage/PDF]**.

4.5 Food brought in

Food brought in covers many different times throughout the school journey, mainly food provided at breaktime. **[Insert description of how snacks at breaktime work – suggestions below]**

- Are any of the children entitled to a free snack whilst at school?
- If not, what are they encouraged to bring in?
- What should they not bring in?
- What happens if students bring in a snack that is deemed inappropriate?

All food brought into the school should comply with the mandatory School Food Standards. This applies to the following occasions:

- Breaktimes
- Parents evenings
- Sports days/events
- School council meetings
- Exam or test days/weeks
- End of term
- School trips
- Birthdays **[does your school mark this event in a non-food related way to create equality across students?]**

We also strive to ensure that healthy food and drink options are available at the following school events and celebrations:

- Fundraising events
- Seasonal celebrations [Christmas, Easter, Eid etc.]
- Summer and winter fair
- International events/Cultural week
- Charity weeks: E.g., Macmillan coffee morning

Please ensure all the above are applicable to your school and change where necessary

4.6 Water only policy

We are a water only school [if your school isn't water only this section can be used to discuss how you promote the consumption of water].

- Why has your school chosen to be water only? [or is this a policy set by the local authority?]
- Does the water only policy apply across the school day? [in clubs etc]
- Does the water only policy apply packed lunches?

- How are the school promoting water consumption? E.g., water fountains, jugs on tables, easy access to free water throughout the day etc.
- Does this apply to the staff in the school? Are they positive role models encouraging children to drink water?
- If required for a medical condition, how will the school ensure the needs of these children are met? E.g., diabetic children.

4.7 Plant power day/Save the planet day [choose appropriate or add your own name]

Schools are a great place to encourage students to eat in a more environmentally friendly way, many schools/caterers have adopted one day a week where they don't serve any meat. Use this space to talk about any environmentally friendly food practises you have made.

- Why have you chosen to have [a] meat free day[s]?
- How many days is the menu fully plant based?
- Does this apply to packed lunch pupils?
- How do you encourage children to eat in a more sustainable way?
- How does this link to other sustainable activities going on in the school? E.g., eco-school/committee.

4.8 Dessert free day[s]

- Which day[s] or how many days a week are dessert free?
- Why have you chosen to have [a] dessert free day[s]?
- What is served instead on these days? [Fruits, yoghurt or cheese and crackers for example]
- Does this apply to packed lunch pupils?
- Why is this policy important for the school and children?

E.g., On Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays our school does not serve a dessert. Instead, we serve yoghurt, a selection of fresh fruit or cheese and crackers. This policy also applies to pupils who bring in a packed lunch and we feel this is important to reduce sugar consumption and enable our pupils to have a more balanced, nutritious diet.

4.9 Reward culture

- Do you use food to reward pupils?
- If no, what do you use instead to reward pupils?
- What examples of methods of positive reinforcement do you use?
- Do you consult with pupils/parents to decide on rewards?
- Amongst staff, how do you reward your teams/colleagues? If food, where is this allowed to be eaten? [some schools restrict this to the staff room]

5. Allergies and special diets

- How do you manage allergies and intolerances in your school community?
- Do staff receive any training around allergy management?
- Do children learn about allergies and special diets in school?
- Consider mentioning other special diets that might require support e.g., diabetics.

6. Food education (CONNECTS Food key principle: Food on the curriculum)

Cooking and nutrition is a compulsory subject within the Design & Technology curriculum for KS1-KS3 [Appendix 3]. This is taught at an appropriate level throughout each key stage. There are opportunities for pupils to develop knowledge and understanding of health, including healthy eating, food provenance and practical skills such as designing, preparing, and cooking predominantly savoury food.

- How do you ensure that you are following the curriculum?
- How do you use different areas of your curriculum to teach students about food and health?
- Do you run any projects linked to this subject?
- Does your school have a garden or cooking area? How do these link to food education?

7. Equal opportunities

We recognise the importance of all pupils, staff and visitors having equal access to inclusive opportunities. We want to ensure that everyone is catered for and feels valued when food and drink is provided in school, and across all aspects of food education.

8. Staff and visitors

All adults, including staff and external visitors, influence pupils' knowledge, skills and attitudes towards food and drink. Therefore, it is important that they have a positive attitude and are healthy role models. At every opportunity they should promote healthy choices and reflect our philosophy and approach to food and nutrition.

- Do you ask staff/visitors to only eat/drink certain foods and drinks in front of the students?
- Does this apply across the whole school area or just in pupil facing circumstances?

9. Monitoring and evaluation

At each annual review, we will identify what areas we need to improve on to ensure that we maintain a healthy approach to food & drink.

Next review date:

Signed:

Appendix 1:

The revised standards for school food came into force on 1 January 2015 and are set out here:

[School food standards practical guide - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

[School-Food-Standards-Guidance-FINAL-V3.pdf \(schoolfoodplan.com\)](http://schoolfoodplan.com)

Appendix 2:

[Free school meals: guidance for schools and local authorities - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Appendix 3:

[National Curriculum - Design and technology key stages 1 to 2 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](http://publishing.service.gov.uk)

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